

HOW TO LIVE OUT OUR NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST

Ephesians 4:17-24

When you become a Christian it is like getting a new identity and a new set of clothes. How do we live out that new identity?

1. REJECT LIVING LIKE AN UNBELIEVER – Ephesians 4:17-19

- Unbelievers are darkened in their understanding – verse 18a. Total depravity does not mean everyone is as bad as they could be, but that every part of us is corrupted by sin and twisted, including our minds – Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9. None of us can reason ourselves up to God – Romans 3:11; 8:7. In fact human wisdom is opposed to God – 1 Corinthians 1:18-21. Unbelievers think about life in a futile, empty, meaningless way. *“He does not know God; so he cannot think properly. Everything is out of place, and his disordered and sinful conduct reflects his disordered, sinful mind.” – James Boice.*
- Unbelievers are alienated from the life of God – verse 18b. Unbelievers are dead in their sin – Ephesians 2:1-3. They are deliberately ignorant! They do not desire true knowledge of God – Romans 1:20 -22. This ignorance is linked to a hard heart, literally a heart of stone. They prefer sin to a Savior!
- Unbelievers are calloused and hard-hearted – verse 19. Not only do unbelievers think wrongly, they live wrongly! Without God and His Word, there are no absolute boundaries. The floodgates of immorality and license are now open! – Galatians 5:19--21; 1 Peter 4:3-5. Those who reject God often do so in order to live immorally. They descend into debauchery willingly. Examples include Rousseau, Marx, Tolstoy, Hemingway, and Bertrand Russell. Atheist Aldous Huxley said *“I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning; consequently I assumed it had none, and was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption...(the philosopher) is concerned to prove that there is no valid reason why he personally should not do as he wants to...for myself...the philosophy of meaningless(ness) was essentially an instrument of liberation, sexual and political.”*
- Do you want to live like this? Is this how you have been living? If you are indulging in the sensuality of our society – pornography, immorality, etc. – you are not heading to true life and satisfaction, but rather a calloused hard heart in rebellion against God. Repent and believe the gospel. True believers must not and cannot live like pagans. We “no longer” live this way.

2. EMBRACE LIVING FOR CHRIST – Ephesians 4:20-24

- Put off your old self -verse 22. Believers are to daily battle with the flesh, the old ways, and put them off- Romans 8:12-13. Salvation is God’s work, but we who are saved in and by Christ begin the fight, struggle, and war to daily victory over ourselves – Galatians 5:16-17..
- Be renewed in your mind. – verse 23. We need a renewed mind daily. In Christ we receive a new heart, a new spirit, a new power, and a new purpose – to serve Christ! – Luke 8:35. We don’t receive a new brain, but a new desire for God and His Word. We want to know Him more and need to daily renew our minds in our battle with worldly thinking and our old sinful ways. How do we renew our minds? – Romans 12:1,2. Renewing our minds means thinking in new ways based on the truths of God’s Word, the Bible. We begin to think “Christianly” about God, Christ, life, sin, death, eternity, money, power, and sex. We must preach the gospel to

ourselves every day. Remind yourself: you have been born anew, you have Christ living in you, you belong to Christ, you died with Christ to sin reigning over you, you are risen with Christ to walk in newness of life, you have the Holy Spirit within you, and you can put on God's power and armor.

- Put on the new self – verse 24. We are to take off our filthy clothes and in Christ put on new clean clothes – Colossians 3:8-10, 12-14. This is the dress code of a Christian. Christ has already clothed the true believer in new clothes of His righteousness – Zechariah 3:1-5, 8,9. Then we are to live out this newness in our daily life. We are to daily walk in the newness of Christ. *“We all start out in Adam; then if we become Christian and are born again, we are in Christ; and if we are in Christ we are no longer in Adam. It is either one thing or the other, and the fact that we are in Christ means we are dead to the Adamic nature, dead to sin, dead to the Law, dead to any possibility of condemnation; we are new creatures in Christ. In other words what the Apostle is really telling us here is that we ought TO BE WHAT WE ARE.”* – D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

Concluding applications:

- Are you sure you are really in Christ? Is He making a difference in how you live?
- In what ways has Christ changed you or is changing you?
- How are you renewing your mind with God's Word?
- Do you daily preach the gospel to yourself?