

Episode #1029 Ephesians 4 Part 6-Put Off, Put On

I. In Ephesians 1-3, the Holy Spirit revealed to us all the glorious things that are true of us “in Christ.” Now, in Ephesians 4-6, we are told of the “worthy walk” that we should live in love and gratitude to God for the glorious position we have received.

II. In Ephesians 4:1-16, we learned of the unity of the Spirit, which all believers today are to keep. We learned of the unity of the Acts period, when God united all believers through the God-given leaders and gifts they received at that time. Now, we learn of the importance of putting off and putting on.

III. Ephesians 4:22-24. Put off the old; Put on the new.

A. Verse 22. We are advised to strip off the old man like dirty, smelly clothes. This “old man” stands for the old lifestyle that we used to live before we came to faith in Christ.

B. Verse 23. We need a complete renewal in the spirit of our minds.

1. “Of” here is the genitive of apposition, meaning that the “spirit” is the “mind.” Think, “be rejuvenated in the spirit, that is, your mind.”

2. Learning to live like Christ wants us to is not just a matter of changing what we do, but also changing how we think. It is not thinking, “I would really like to still do those old sins, but I can’t because I’m a believer now.” It is changing our minds to think, “Those old sins were disgusting. I’m so glad I don’t do those things anymore. I’d much rather do what is right and please Christ.” This change of mind is not a natural thing. The new mindset comes from God.

C. Verse 24. In place of the old man, we should put on the new man. This is the new lifestyle, that we again put on like a new suit of clothes.

1. This new lifestyle is in accord with God and His ways. It is in accord with truth. Believing that sinful actions are good is simply a lie, and not the truth!

2. This new man is being created in us by God.

3. It is made in righteousness, that is, right living.

4. It is made in loving-kindness. This is both God’s love and kindness toward us in changing us this way, even though we do not deserve it; and it is the loving-kindness that is produced in us that helps us live this new lifestyle.

V. Ephesians 4:25-32. Things we are to put off and put on.

A. Verse 25. Put off lying, put on speaking truth with our fellow men. This is especially true of our fellow believers, for we are members of one another. As believers in the truth, we should each be people of the truth!

B. Verse 26. Next, we are to put off sinning when we are angry.

1. Notice that this does not say that we are to put off being angry. When you lose your temper, you can hardly help but sin. If you are angry but keep your temper, you can continue to act in a Godly way.

2. Put off holding unto wrath. Letting the sun go down on it means holding on to it and letting it continue to fester. If you really let go of any wrath you had that day by the end of the day, you would not let bitterness grow.

C. Verse 27. Holding unto anger leaves room for the adversary, the devil, who can use this as a foothold into your life. Anger and bitterness to let him in!

D. Verse 28. Put off stealing, put on toiling with your hands doing something good.

1. He is not saying to do any work, even if it is bad. Some people will labor very hard to accomplish bad things. God wants us to labor, but only what is good.
 2. We earn money, not to make ourselves rich, but to have to share with those who have need of what we have.
- E. Verse 29. Put off putrid words, put on edifying others. Edifying = “building up.” Putrid words tear down, but edifying builds up and gives grace to those who hear.
- F. Verse 30. We should not cause grief to God’s Spirit by speaking things that tear down. We are sealed in the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption. A seal indicated ownership, or guaranteed a letter to the one it was sent to. Only the owner of a thing could open its seal to take possession of it. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and belong to God. Only He can open the seal when He redeems us into His kingdom.
- G. Verse 31. Put off bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and slanderous speech and malice. These are all too common in our day, but are not part of our worthy walk.
- H. Verse 32. Put on kindness and tender compassion. These are completely the opposite of bitterness and fury and so forth. Instead, we are to put on gracious dealing with one another.
1. An entirely different standard of forgiveness in the dispensation of grace than in God’s kingdom. Compare Matthew 6:14-15. We forgive because we are forgiven, not to receive forgiveness!
 2. Forgiving = Greek *charizomai*, dealing graciously. Remember that grace is showing love and favor to people who do not deserve it.
 3. Our example is God. He in Christ is dealing graciously with us. This gives us a key to God’s work with us today. He is dealing graciously! This means that He will not punish us for our sins, nor reward us for our good behavior. Instead, He only pours out love and favor on us without our deserving them. We are to imitate Him and do the same toward each other.

VI. Conclusion: We are not Israelites, and we do not have the law of Moses to keep. However, in view of all we are in Christ, there is a worthy lifestyle that we should live. That lifestyle involves putting off the old humanity like dirty clothes and putting on the new humanity, which is like Christ. Ephesians tell us many behaviors we should put off, and many others we should put on. Let us strive to do this, and live as our Lord would have us to live!