

PUTTING OFF THE OLD MAN Ephesians 4:17-24

I. INTRODUCTION-

- a. A tremendous change happens when a person gives their life to Jesus Christ...in 2 Corinthians 5:17 the Bible says that when a person comes to Christ ... they become a “new creation.”
- b. *2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*
- c. The New Testament says that when a person comes to Christ they receive a new will ...a new mind...a new heart...a new power...a new knowledge...a new wisdom ...a new perception...a new understanding...a new life...a new inheritance ...a new relationship...a new righteousness...a new love...a new desire ...and a new citizenship.
- d. When we are saved...God doesn't add something to us...He transforms us... He changes who we are.
- e. The question is...if Christians are such a new people...why do we still sin? ...we still sin because while we are new creations in Christ...we still live in physical bodies that have not yet been redeemed.
- f. While we are brand new on the inside...we are not yet new on the outside ... our souls are saved...and we are new people in Christ...but our fallen bodies will not be redeemed until the resurrection.
- g. The New Testament pictures believers as new people...who are still clothed with the smelly old coats of our fallen flesh.
- h. And as saved and as brand new as we are...we are going to have to endure and deal with the temptations of our fallen flesh...until we go to be with the Lord.
- i. *2 Corinthians 4:7 (NIV) “But we have this treasure in jars of clay...”*
- j. Satan tries to use our fallen flesh to hinder and discourage everything God is doing in your life as a Christian...and he uses it to try to drag you back into the sin you have been saved from.
- k. The Bible says that believers are not to allow our fallen flesh to dominate or be in control of our life...*Galatians 5:16 (KJV) “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”*... *Ephesians 4:22 (NKJV) “that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt*

according to the deceitful lusts.”... , 1 Peter 2:11 (NKJV) “Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul...”

1. So how can believers grow in spiritual victory over sin...and the temptations of the flesh?

II. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS-

- a. If believers and unbelievers both sin what’s the difference between the two? ... first, the sin of those who believe in Christ have been forgiven by God...while the sin of those who don’t believe in Christ are not forgiven.
- b. The Bible says of believers in *Colossians 1:14 (NKJV) “in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”* The Bible says of unbelievers in *John 8:24 (NKJV) “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”*
- c. The difference between a believer in Christ and one who does not believe...is the difference between Heaven and Hell.
- d. Another difference between believers and unbelievers is their attitude toward sin ... unbelievers want to sin...they desire to sin...they run to sin...they are in bondage to sin...it is their nature to sin.
- e. The Bible says as pigs love the mud...so unbelievers love to sin...*2 Peter 2:22 (NKJV) “But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”*
- f. But when a person is saved their attitude towards sin changes...Christians can and do stumble and fall into sin...but because they have been changed by God ...sinning against Him is not really what they want to do...it’s not their desire.
- g. Because God has made believers new creations...true Christians don’t love sin and desire to sin like they did before they were saved...*1 John 3:9 (NLT) “Those who have been born into God’s family do not make a practice of sinning, because God’s life is in them. So they can’t keep on sinning, because they are children of God.”*
- h. And when a believer does sin...immediately their heart is grieved and they begin to be convicted by the Holy Spirit.
- i. Yes, believers can get prayerless and careless and fall into the trap of sin and temptation...but true believers are not running after sin...they are running from sin.

- j. Another difference between believers and unbelievers...is that while unbelievers are locked in bondage to sin...believers can grow in victory over sin in their life.
- k. The Bible says of unbelievers in *John 8:34-36 (GW)* “*Jesus answered them, “I can guarantee this truth: Whoever lives a sinful life is a slave to sin. 36 But if the Son sets you free, you will be absolutely free.”*...the Bible says of believers in *Romans 6:22 (NLT)* “*But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life.”*
- l. So how can believers grow in victory over sin?

III. HOW CAN BELIEVERS GROW IN VICTORY OVER SIN?

- a. **#1, Recognize your potential for sin**...recognize that as saved as you are...if you become careless and prayerless and neglectful of your walk with Christ...you can and will sin...if King David could sin...if Peter could sin...don't assume that you can't sin.
- b. **#2, Understand the consequences of your sin**...yes, the believer's sins are fully, finally and forever forgiven...but there are still great consequences for a believer's sin...our sin grieves the Holy Spirit...it offends the God who saved us ... it causes our prayers to be unanswered...it makes our life spiritually powerless ... it renders our praise inappropriate...it withholds our blessings...it removes our joy...it brings chastening from God...it hinders our spiritual growth ... it limits our service...it pollutes our fellowship...and if our sin is severe enough and we are unrepentant...sin will endanger our life.
- c. **#3, Refuse to follow the desires of your fallen flesh...and refuse to feed the fallen flesh**... *Romans 13:14 (NKJV)* “*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”*
- d. **#4, Daily fill your life with the things of God**...fill your life with prayer, praise, Bible reading, worship, service, abiding and walking in the presence of God.

IV. CONCLUSION-

- a. What is your attitude toward sin? Are you growing in victory over sin?
- b. What should we do if we fall into sin?...*1 John 1:9 (NIV)* “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*
- c. Are you clean and right before the Lord?