

LG | Leader

[Ephesians 4:17-32]

WARM-UP (10 mins)

It is likely that everyone present had a very busy day, maybe even a trying day. Let's take a moment to still our minds and go to the Lord in prayer.

- After hearing the sermon from Sunday, what most resonated with you? What were the takeaways for your family as a whole?
- In light of Sunday's message, have you resolved to make any life changes?

ILLUMINATE (40 mins)

Open your Bibles to the primary text.

1. Read Ephesians 4:17-32. Let's first gain some context for this passage. Who is the author and who is the audience? What genre of literature is this? Who recalls the theme and purpose of Ephesians?
[Let's take a moment to find these answers]

Paul is the author of the book of Ephesians as evidenced by the Greeting. The genre of literature is New Testament epistle (letter). Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, sent to Rome and is writing this letter from a Roman prison. Since this letter is not addressed to one person, it is likely that it was circulated amongst the churches located in Ephesus that Paul had planted several years earlier (see Acts 19). There was no specific occasion for the letter other than displaying the redemptive work of God in Christ and the unity in the church among diverse peoples.

2. Given that verse 25 begins with "therefore," let's re-read verses 17-24. What is the therefore, there for?

Since Paul has many Gentile readers, he addresses those Gentiles who see themselves as "enlightened" and ignore the gospel due to their hardness of heart. Paul is using these unbelieving Gentiles as an example for the believing Gentiles and asking them to put off that "old self", to put away their former manner of life and to be renewed in the spirit of their minds. This is the falsehood he describes later in verse 25.

3. How would you describe the “old self” and the “new self” in this passage? How would you describe your “old self” and “new self”?

[Congratulate anyone who answers this question, they just shared their testimony, which could be a big accomplishment for some]

Old Self – hard heart, corruption, deceitful desires, living in falsehood.

New Self – renewed in the Spirit, likeness of God, true righteousness, holiness

4. It seems in verses 17-24 that Paul is emphasizing something. What do you think is the main point of this block of text? Why?

Paul continues to re-visit the theme of the mind. The heart is addressed, but the mind is emphasized throughout. As Jesus taught, Paul teaches that we are to love and serve the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, and MIND.

5. How do we practically love God with our mind? What scripture gives evidence to this? What verses do you tend to return to for meditation?

Meditation on the word – Psalm 1, Joshua 1:8, Jeremiah 15:16, Philippians 4:8-9, etc.

6. According to this text, why is speaking truth to one another so important for us?

We are the body of Christ and the body and its members must be built up into the head, which is Jesus Christ. The truth leads us to Christian maturity, which leads to growth, which allows the body to build itself up in love (see Eph 4:11-16).

7. How would you put this text in your own words? Or how would you explain this text to an adult/young adult/child?

[Allow for internalization of the text. Sharing God’s word takes practice, this is where we practice]

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. Pray for the needs of others; locally and abroad.