

Change Worth Celebrating

Ephesians 4:17-24

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / May 2, 2021 (Baptism Sunday)

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:17-24)

Baptism is an **outward public celebration**
of the **inward personal reality**
of the **total transformation** that takes place
when we place our **faith in Jesus Christ**.

I. **Christians celebrate the fact we no longer have to live or die like we used to!**

Ephesians 4:17-19 “Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.”

- A. We don't wander through life lacking meaning and purpose.
 (“...in the futility of their minds.” Eph. 4:17)
- B. We don't live our lives far from God without any understanding whatsoever.
 (“...due to their hardness of heart.” Eph. 4:18)
- C. We don't feel our way through life as slaves to our desires.
 (“...greedy to practice every kind of impurity.” Eph. 4:19)

II. **Christians celebrate the fact we have new life in Christ, and have been changed to be more like Him!**

Ephesians 4:20-24 “But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old

self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

- A. In Christ, we have ***put off*** our old self!
 (“...which belongs to your former manner of life...” Eph. 4:22)
- B. In Christ, we have ***been renewed!***
 (“...in the spirit of your minds...” Eph. 4:23)
- C. In Christ, we have ***put on*** the new self!
 (“...created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” Eph. 4:24)

Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group Discussion:

1. Have you been baptized? Why or why not?
2. Reread Ephesians 4:17-19, and see how Paul describes life without Christ. Which of those descriptions of the “old self” particularly resonate with you? Why?
3. How do you try to celebrate new life in Christ on a consistent basis?
4. Pastor Peter said the one-time total transformation Christ does in us leads to an ongoing transformation in our lives. How is God changing you lately?
5. Pastor Peter said we should be inspired and reminded by people’s testimonies of life transformation to pursue ongoing transformation in being more like Christ. When it comes to the three necessary steps of putting off the old, being renewed in your mind, and putting on the new, which do you find to be the most difficult? What can you do to grow in that area?