

# The Epistle to the Ephesians

## 6. Ephesians Chapter 4:14-32



The leadership of the body, (Ephesians 4:11), the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are to move the flock of God forward. They are called to help nurture and grow the church, preparing the flock to see Satan's attacks and devices. The parents of a child need to teach and protect their children from the predatory threats waiting for them. In the same way, new believers are like babies, they need to be nurtured in the faith, they need to grow and understand the spiritual threats. This is the job of the hierarchy of the church.

The mission is to equip the saints for ministry, to take them to the next level, to build the body of Christ. The writer of Hebrews addressed this failure of maturity. Paul did not want the

church at Ephesus to become stagnant like the Hebrew Church.

Heb 5:12

(12) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food,

Jesus before he departed, he gave authority to the leadership to advance the Gospel in this fallen world, we have the authority but are we using the position we have?

### Ephesians 4:13-16 Purpose of the Gifts

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love



(13) The Hierarchy, the leadership in the church, is commissioned by Jesus Christ to raise up leaders to **unify the faith** of the body. To help the body of the church grow into maturity. Imagine leaving a baby alone without giving them an understanding about the world we are in, what do you think that child would be like in 5, 10 or 15 years? They would be lost and pulled into the world.

Understanding the knowledge of the Son of God is the maturing process of the believer, making them the **perfect man**, a person fully mature and ready to be in the world. The

goal is to take the baby believer, to nurture and train him until he is an adult believer who can then advance the kingdom of God.

This was the “Great Commission”, as believers we need to understand our position, authority and purpose while we occupy this earth. We need to understand fullness of Christ, this is the job of the leadership of the church. It should be our goal to advance in leadership.

Mat 28:18-20

(18) And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

(19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

(20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”



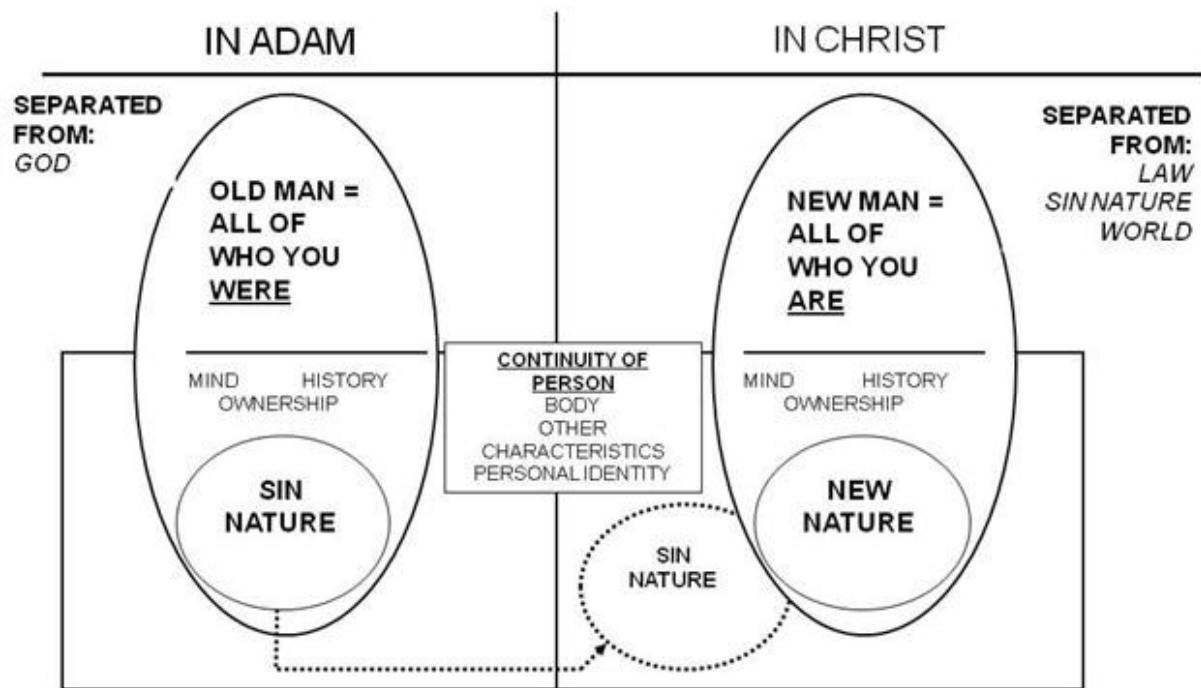
(14) When we grow in faith, we mature, believers should strive to **no longer be children**, the predatory world is always looking to deceive and manipulate children. Innocent minds are not aware of how wicked the fallen world really is. Children have a false perception of security in a fallen world. Even in the animal kingdom, one of the chief jobs of mother lions, bears and deer is to protect, feed and teach their young how to survive in the world.

Its the same in the spiritual realms, new believers are not aware of the spiritual war waging on around them. They become targets of false teachings or **doctrines**, with demonic origins. Paul uses the word *methodeia*, translated as **deceitful** because Satan has a system of to his pursuit. He uses false doctrines and the **trickery of men** to pursue the child believers. Young believers, without instruction can easily be manipulated, their lack of knowledge and understanding makes them targets of Satanic attack.

(15) The perfect man, understands the spiritual realms and the attacks, and the truth can be offensive. For example, a parent that tells their child to not hang around a group of kids can become the object of attack. No one wants to be a source of strife, its easy to want to be quiet, but the parent knows the end result is harm will speak up. It's the same in the spiritual realms, **Speaking truth in love** means being spiritual mature to call out issues that is going to harm the growing believer.

In our culture, its easy to just accept the cultural views of same-sex marriage and relationships, even in the church. Don't make waves, don't get people angry at you, but that is not what mature believers are called to do. How is the young believer to **Grow up in all things** if the those appointed to raise up the believer are afraid to confront the issues. Paul set the example in Ephesus, he challenged the pagan worship of Diana and he faced death for it, but if he did not speak up, the result would have been an immature body. While the goal is make the body of the church grow in all things, **to Christ**.

(16) Christ is the head; we are the body. Like our body, we have many parts, all the parts work together for our greater good. It's the same with the church, every believer has a purpose and a part just like our physical body. The **whole body** is the body of Christ, we are part of Team Jesus, our physical body works together is a model of the spiritual. The **effectual working** comes from the Greek Word, *energeia*, where we get the word energy, here is applies to the supernatural energy from the Holy Spirit, with empowering our walk with the goal of **edifying** or building up, growing the body in love.



*Walking in Holiness (Ephesians 4:17-32)*

The Old Man



. 17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. **Ephesians 4:17-19**

We live in a fallen world, our very nature is fallen, only through the blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, do we have power over our nature. As believers we have a choice over our actions because we have power to overcome the old nature.

**(17) Therefore** Since we have this Holy Spirit power, we are not at the mercy of our fallen nature, Paul proclaims this to Ephesians, using the Greek word *marturomai*, meaning to bring forward a witness to **testify**, that as believer we have power and choice. From the fall of Adam to today, the nature of man remains the same. We want glory, power and fame, we seek to fulfill the lusts of our nature, and we will do what it takes. Cain was witness, killing Abel because he stood in his way of recognition, at least as his mind was concerned.

As believers, with the Holy Spirit, we **no longer walk** must walk in this fallen nature because we have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside. We have power over our nature. **Gentiles walk** in the old nature

because they don't have a choice. This old nature creates a **futile** or vain perception of reality in the **mind**, like a gerbil on a wheel, running but not going anywhere.

(18) In Paul's day there was a struggle between two main philosophies the Stoics and the Epicureans, both, the Stoics<sup>1</sup> a school founded by Zeno of Citium taught that the "Good Life" *Eudaimonia* is achieved by practicing four virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice.

Act 17:16-19

(16) Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

(17) Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

(18) Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

(19) And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

While the Epicureans<sup>2</sup> taught that the greatest good was to seek modest sustainable pleasure in the form of *ataraxia* (tranquility and freedom from fear) and *aponia* (the absence of bodily pain).

Both views were vanity of the mind, without God's intervention we cannot understand our reality. Our **Understanding** is **darkened** because of the **blindness** of our **heart**. This was the case in Paul's day and it's the case in our own day. Today we deal with Atheism, Islam and Gender Identity as major issues, all this stems from an alienation or estrangement from God. Our philosophies are attempts to find reality, without light.

(19) Without the power of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of reality that only comes from God, our blindness gives us a callousness to sensitivity, we are **past feeling**, we have a numbness to sin. We therefore have a desire to fulfill the flesh through **Lewdness**, or unbridled lust, shamelessness and insolence along with all its forms of **Uncleanness with greediness**. This is our old nature, this is the nature of every person without Christ.



### The New Man

20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

**Ephesians 4:20-23**

For the follower of Christ, this is not the case we have a new nature with the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of us. **(20) Not so learned Christ**; with Jesus

every follower of Christ has power over the this fallen nature.

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<sup>1</sup> The name Stoicism derives from the Stoa Poikile "Painted Porch", a colonnade decorated with mythic and historical battle scenes on the north side of the Agora in Athens where Zeno of Citium (334-262 BC) and his followers gathered to discuss their ideas.

<sup>2</sup> This school was founded by Epicurus (340-270 BC)

**(21) Taught by Him;** the purpose of the hierarchy of the Church is to edify the body, to instruct the believers into the reality of our new nature, but the Holy Spirit also teaches the believer the reality of our identity.

Rom 8:26-28

(26) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

(27) And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

(28) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

**The Truth:** Jesus is the end game of truth, all roads lead to Jesus. Human philosophy is our attempt to find truth in darkness.

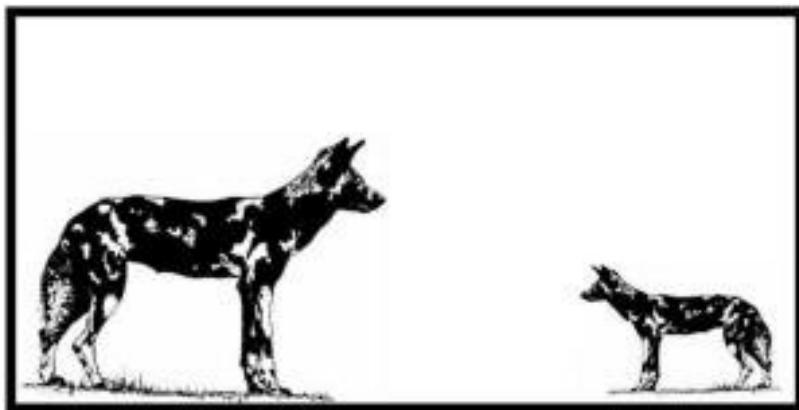
**(22) Putt off;** Every believer has power to change, because of the power they now have. We only need to exercise this by choosing to subdue **the Old man**. This is our fallen nature with our lusts and desires.

**(23)Renewed in the Spirit of your mind:** Jesus gives us a rebirth of our mind, we now have a new nature dwelling inside of us, Paul calls him the "New Man".

**(24) Put on the new man:** We have power to change the way we act and think because we have the Holy Spirit, he empowers our new nature to counter the "Old Man".

**In..righteousness and holiness:** The struggle between these natures and understanding the reality of our position as believers is key to victorious living. We have the power to choose how we live. We have power to conquer false mindsets, addictions, lusts and wrong thinking.

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin **Romans 6:2-7**



### The Two Dogs in the Room

This inner struggle of the believer between our Old Man and New Man, can be pictured as two dogs in a room, one is called Old Man and the other New Man. Both dogs want to dominate the room, you own the room and the dogs. You have three options:

1. If you choose to feed the Old Man and starve New Man, Old Man will dominate and take control of the room, and New Man will hide in the corner.
2. If you choose to feed Old Man and New Man, then there will be fighting for control of the room, continual conflict.
3. If you choose to feed New Man and starve Old Man, the New Man will dominate the room.

The same is true with our walk, why can't we experience victory, its because we are feeding Old Man, this is the point Paul is making, we must put off the Old Man. We have to choose to do this, it's not automatic.





### *The New Man in control*

25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. 26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil. 28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. **Ephesians 4:25-32**

**(25-32) Therefore:** How do we accomplish this victory? By choosing to take action against our old nature.

**1. Putting away lying;** Say no to the fallen nature, stop lying speak truth.

**2. Be angry and do not sin:** Anger is part of our nature, but the actions which follow the anger are under our control, anger is not an excuse to sin. Try to resolve the issue, **do not let the sun go down on your wrath;** We have power over the fallen nature, over the anger, over the revenge, we are in control because we have the Spirit of God inside of us. **(27)** Anger gives Satan, **the devil** an opportunity to take control.

**3. Steal no longer**

**4. No corrupt word proceed** "*Sapros*" *rotten*

**5. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit:** Everything we do, the Holy Spirit is right there with us, the Holy Spirit of God witnesses to us about our actions.

**6. Put away from you:** (*vices*)

- a. Bitterness
- b. Wrath
- c. Anger
- d. Clamor
- e. Evil speaking
- f. Malice

**7. Be:** (*Virtues*)

- a. kind to one another
- b. tenderhearted
- c. forgiving