

LESSON 66

Putting Off the Old Self

EPHESIANS 4:20 – 5:20



BIBLE TRUTH

CHRISTIANS SHOULD IMITATE CHRIST IN ALL THEY DO

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Ephesians 4:20—5:20 from the Scriptures or read story 144, “Putting Off the Old Self,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Putting Off the Old Self and Putting On the New Self

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ two adult-size heavy winter coats (one should be bulky, but old, tattered and torn; the other, brand new.)

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Follow the Leader

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 66—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Put On and Put Off

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ twenty-two index cards prepared as follows: list the “put-offs” (see lesson) along with a frowning face and the “put-ons” (see lesson) along with the symbol of the cross (one per card).

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

We need to put off the old self—Having warned the Ephesians against having callous hearts Paul tells them that they were taught differently than the unbelieving Gentiles (Ephesians 4:17–20). To help them understand how to live, Paul gave the Ephesians a picture of taking off their old nature (the self), much like they would take off an old, tattered coat. Then they were to put on their new nature or self, much the same way as they might then put on a brand new coat (Ephesians 4:22–24). Since Jesus died to destroy the work of sin, we who have the knowledge of Christ should put off the sinful deeds we once knew and live for Jesus.

Each person who has been recreated by God has been recreated to be like him in true righteousness and holiness. The power of sin has been broken, so we should strive to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. As Christians, we are called to live for Christ and not for ourselves or the unbelieving world around us.

We need to live for God—God didn't leave any room for the Ephesians to be confused. After telling them, through Paul, to put off the old self and put on the new, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to list a number of areas of godly behavior so that Christians would understand just what living for Christ looks like. For example, put off falsehood and speak truth, and put off stealing and work (Ephesians 4:25–29). Aware of the dangers of legalism—trying to earn favor and standing with God through good works—Paul reminds them that their motivation is Christ (Ephesians 4:32). Each time Paul mentions Christ, he reminds them and us of the cross and our salvation in Christ. We put off sin, not because we are trying to get right with God, but because through the work of Christ we have already been made right with God.

Paul sets the standard high—In Ephesians chapter 5, Paul goes after remaining sin with a vengeance. There must not even be a hint of sin! Paul is aware of the deceitful way sin works in the life of a believer. Sin begins with a little compromise, then a little more, until the whole person is given over. Through the book of Ephesians God tells us we should live as children of light, watching carefully how we walk, always giving thanks. Again and again Paul reminds the Ephesians that Christ is the foundation of all that we do (Ephesians 5:20). The truth is, there is no way anyone could live up to Paul's standard apart from the help of the Holy Spirit.

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Even though Paul challenged the Ephesians to put off their old selves and live holy lives, he never forgot the gospel of grace. Paul continually reminded the Ephesians that they are following Christ's obedience, not striking out on their own path. Notice that in Ephesians 5:2, Paul reiterates that Christ willingly gave up his life. The men who crucified Jesus did not force death upon him. Jesus could have called down angels in his defense. Instead, he died willingly that we might all be saved.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Ephesians 4:20—5:20 from the Scriptures or read story 144, "Putting Off the Old Self," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Putting Off the Old Self and Putting On the New Self

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ two adult-size heavy winter coats (one should be bulky, but old, tattered and torn; the other, brand new.)

The object of this lesson is to help the children see that our growth in holiness involves both taking off sin and putting on righteousness.

Wear the ugly coat into class. Place your nice coat off to the side on a chair. Explain to the class that our sin is like a coat that is fastened and cannot be taken off because we don't know how to unfasten it, nor do we want to. When we become Christians, we are given the ability to unfasten it and to put on a new coat—to live differently. Show them your new coat. Tell them the new coat is called righteous living.

Tell the class that before you can put on your new coat you have to do something. Ask them what they think that is. (First take the old coat off.)

Ask for three volunteers to demonstrate. First ask them to help you put your new coat over the old one. (This will be very difficult if you picked a real bulky one.) Then take your old coat off and have them help you put your new coat on.

Read through Ephesians 4 and then talk about “putting-on” and “putting-off.”

These are merely opposites. If we want to put on truth we must first put off lying. If we want to put on kindness we must first put off being mean. Some are a bit more involved. If we want to put on meditating on God's Word we might need to put off (turn off) our television or computer.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESON 2 10 MIN

Follow the Leader

Use this exercise to help the children understand that when we choose to do the right thing, we are following Christ. It is as though we are walking on a path—a path of righteousness—that Christ has cut through the jungle of sin. We do not need to cut a path of our own. We could never get through the jungle ourselves.

Have the class line up single file behind one of your helpers. Tell them that they are to watch the person in front of them and do just as they do. Have your helper lead them in marching around the room to where you are and shake your hand. (Each child following the helper should then shake your hand.)

Then just for fun have your helper do several funny movements like jump up and down, turn around, wave, shake back and forth, etc. Then have everyone sit down.

Read Ephesians 5:1 and ask the class to explain how your exercise was like this passage. Draw them out as to what it means to follow God. Ask them if they can find examples in Ephesians 4 of how Jesus lived. Ask them if they can remember stories from Jesus' life where he lived these things out.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 66—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Which of the men in the picture is the “old self” and which is the “new self?”**
(The old self is the one with the gold and old rags for clothes.)
- **How is the old self trying to tempt the new self away from Jesus?**
(The old self is trying to tempt the new self with money.)
- **What is the new self saying to the old self?**
(The new self is saying “no way,” pushing away the old self because he wants to follow God.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Put On and Put Off

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ twenty-two index cards prepared as explained below

Prepare the index cards by listing all the “put-offs” along with a frowning face and all of the “put-ons” along with the symbol of the cross (one per card).

“Put-offs”: old self, corrupt desires, lying (deceit), falsehood, anger, stealing, corrupting talk, bitterness, wrath, slander, malice.

“Put-ons”: renewed mind, new self, righteousness, holiness, truth, work, sharing, encouragement, kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness.

One by one, hold the cards up and ask the class if it is a put-off or a put-on. Help the children understand the meanings of some of the more difficult words, i.e., malice.

Once you have gone through all the cards, ask the children how anyone could hope to be able to do all the put-ons. The answer of course is the only way any of us can obey is with God’s help. Help them to see that some of the put-ons are outward while others reveal heart attitudes, like righteousness, that can’t be faked.

LESSON 66 - PUTTING OFF THE OLD SELF

