

Text: Ephesians 4:17-24

Title: A Line in the Sand

ETS: Paul commanded his audience to avoid living as the Gentiles and instead put on the new self.

ESS: If we do not live as though Christ has made a difference in our lives, how can we expect to convince others of the need to accept Him into theirs?

OSS: I want the hearer to abandon their old life and embrace their new life in Christ.

Question: What is required of us in this new life in Christ?

Unifying Word: Considerations

OUTLINE

I. The command expressed

- A. Paul returns to the subject that has been on his heart since the beginning of the chapter.
- B. Paul's return to the subject comes in the form of a strong command that is set off in two ways.
- C. The command is simple: "You must no longer walk as the Gentiles do."
 - 1 Peter 1:14-16- ***As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."***

II. The old life explained

- A. Paul indicated six ways in which the Gentile lifestyle conflicted with the Christian life.
 - 1. They were futile in their thinking.
 - Lynn Cohick, "There is much sadness, pain, and regret packed into the word 'futile'—endlessly striving and never arriving, forever searching and never finding."
 - 2. They were darkened in their understanding.
 - 3. They were alienated from the life of God due to their ignorance.
 - 4. They have become hardened and calloused to the things of God.
 - 5. They pursued sensuality over holiness.
 - 6. They were greedy to practice every kind of impurity.
- B. Just as the Gentile Christians had to guard against falling back into their ungodly lifestyle, we too have to be on guard for any moral and spiritual slippage in our own lives.

III. The new life expected

- A. Paul goes beyond a prohibition against the Gentile way of life and explains what is expected of believers.
 - 1. Lay aside the former life.
 - 2. Be renewed in the spirit of their minds.
 - 3. Live the new life.
- B. The expectations for Christians are the same today.
 - 1. We have to leave the old life behind.
 - Philippians 3:13-14- ***Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to***

what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

2. We have to allow God to transform our minds.
 - Romans 12:2- *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
3. We have to fulfill the life God intended for us at creation.
 - 1 John 1:7- *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*