

Week Eight: "New Clothes"

Day One: "You Are Jesus People"

Read: Ephesians 4:20-24 *"You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Reflect: How, exactly, did you come to know Christ?

Dig: look up Matthew 11 verses 27 through 29. How does this passage help you understand the way that we come to know Christ?

The word "however" in Ephesians 4:20 is meant to help us contrast God's way with the way the world acts. How does James 4:4 describe the contrast?

This text assumes that we have not only heard about Christ but have been taught in him. What do you think it means that the text says we have been taught in him?

According to 1 John 5:20, how are truth and Jesus related to each other?

Apply: Ask God to give you a Jesus-centered day. How can your burden be easy today because you're following Jesus?

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Day Two: "Put Off Your Old Self"

Read: Ephesians 4:20-24 *"You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Reflect: What habit of thought or what activity should you quit, in order to be consistent in your life?

Dig: According to Ephesians 2:8-9, is this "putting off" something that we mainly do or that God does for us?

How does Isaiah 55:6-7 help you understand this process of "putting off"?

What further insight do you receive from Matthew 19:16-22?

The verb "put off" in the Greek is in the aorist tense (that means a once and for all action is in view). What single action in the past, that God has done, is in view here?

How is the old self described in this text?

How are desires described? According to Ephesians 4:22, is it accurate to say that our desires are neutral and it just depends on what we do with them?

What other terms does Paul use in Romans Chapter 6:1-7 to help us understand what it means to put off the old self?

Apply: What has died from your old life that you keep trying to resurrect? Ask God to take away what should have been put off long ago.

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Day Three: "Be Renewed"

Read: Ephesians 4:20-24 *"You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Reflect: What do you think about when you first get up in the morning and how does that affect your mind the rest of the day?

Dig: Quickly scan the entire chapter of Ephesians 4 and count how many times mind and thinking are referred to. What does that tell you about the importance of our minds?

What capabilities do we have as Christian thinkers that even the most educated mind apart from Christ, can never achieve? (see 1 Cor.2:9-16)

How do we gain the mind of Christ? (see Col 3:16 and Phil. 2:5).

Ananeo (to be renewed) appears only here in the New Testament. The best rendering of this verb is that it is a modifier of the main verb put on so that it would read "and being renewed in the spirit of your mind, put on the new self." This makes clear that such renewal is the consequence of laying aside the old self.

Apply: Ask God to give you a deep desire to set your mind on Jesus and his beauty, his love, his truth and his way each morning as you begin your day.

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Day Four: "Becoming like God"

Read: Ephesians 4:20-24 *"You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Reflect: Are you being formed like Christ? In which ways?

Dig: The word new (kainos) does not mean to be renovated but to be made entirely new. How have we been made entirely new?

According to 2 Peter 1:4, what has God done for us so that we are made in his likeness?

What are the two adjectives that are used in Ephesians 4:24 to describe this new self?

In the Greek, the word truth is placed last to contrast with deceit in verse 22. Where else in this chapter are truth and deceit contrasted?

According to this passage, if we sin, is it accurate to say that we are no longer acting in character?

Apply: Take some time to thank God that your essential nature has been changed so that your inner self has integrity, because of what Christ has done.

How can you show this new nature today by living righteously and in holiness?

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Day Five: "Lectio Divina"

Read: Ephesians 4:20-24 *"You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Lectio divina (a Latin expression which means Sacred reading) is done in three stages:

- reading: you read the passage slowly and reverentially, allowing the words to sink into your consciousness: after you have memorized the text, write down one word which strikes you and draws your attention and note why you chose that word.
- meditation: you allow the passage to stir up memories within you, so that you recognize in it your own experience or that of people who have touched your life: write down memories of events or conversations or other scripture passages.
- prayer: you allow the meditation to lead you to prayer -- thanksgiving, humility and petition. Write out a prayer based on the passage.