



²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:25-32 ESV)

Let us pray.

Remember Larry spoke on Sunday about the Old Self. It is the nature that was you before you were saved. Paul told us to PUT IT OFF and he tells us to put on the New Self. That is the process of being transformed into Christ-likeness.

How do you put on the New Self? Paul is going to give a laundry list of practical ways to “put on the new self”.

V. 25 NO MORE LYING – Believers words need to be trustworthy

Stop playing games with each other with falsehoods and nonsense. We’re talking about all kinds of dishonesty. Not keeping our word, etc. Borrowing money that you don’t pay back. Making commitment to other church members that you do not keep. Our word needs to be trustworthy.

Our yes should be yes and our no should be no. Why? We are all members of one body. Just imagine how dysfunctional your own body is if it isn’t working right. Lately, in my own body my nerves are not working just right. It’s not sending truthful signals to my brain. That’s just like what happens if someone in the church is communicating falsely to another part of the body.

We need to be careful about passing on info that we’re not sure of whether or not it is true to others. (Facebook, etc). We need to be people who are people of truth who don’t pass on falsehoods.

v. 26 DON’T BE ANGRY RESULTING IN SIN – believers are not to be hotheads

Be angry but do not sin. We know that anger isn't always a sin, but most of the time when we get angry it is sin. We have all said, "Well Jesus got angry at the people selling stuff in the Temple. Well, the problem is your not driving people out of the Temple and you're not Jesus. Paul tells us to be careful that our anger doesn't cause us to sin.

We are not supposed to hold a grudge. "Sinning in your anger" means you're holding a grudge. You've got to talk to God about it when someone does us wrong. We've got to take those issues to the Lord.

Paul is saying that if we don't keep our word and we get angry with one another, we are giving an opportunity for the devil to disrupt our own peace and the peace of the Body of Christ.

V. 27-28 DON'T BE STEALING – WORK SO YOU CAN BE GENEROUS!

Paul is talking to us telling us that we should be staying away from schemes and deceptions and just engage in honest work. What is honest work? It is doing a good job and getting paid for it. There is nothing wrong with working hard and being compensated properly for it. In fact, that is what we're commanded to do. Did you know that believers should have no part in scheming to get money out of the government. That's not us. So why are we supposed to be working hard?

So that we may have something to share with anyone in need. This speaks to the fact of part of what we work for is to have the wherewithal to do ministry. We work TO BE GENEROUS! We're not supposed to spend it all on ourselves. The purpose for getting is giving.

Proverbs 19 He that lends to the poor lends to the Lord. That means when you help those less fortunate than you YOU ARE LITERALLY GIVING IT TO THE LORD

v. 29. Clean up your speech (no vulgarity-no coarse talk-no dirty jokes) – "Every human encounter you have is an opportunity for courtesy or conflict" – Choose courtesy

Imagine how beautiful this church would be if all that we said was things that would build each other up. Wow! What if married couples decided to never say another thing that tears their partner down. We need to make a decision to not say anything that will hurt another. I have learned in life that people that are very hurt are the ones that hurt others greatly. If a hurting person dumps on you, don't hurt back.

¹⁹ You know this, my beloved brothers and sisters. Now everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; ²⁰ for a man's anger does not bring about the righteousness of God. (James 1:19-20 NASB)

v. 30 Don't grieve the Holy Spirit

This is the Putting on the New Self. We resist the old life and yield to the New Life. He's saying that the things that we think, do, or say can hurt the heart of God. The Holy Spirit is not a "force". He is the third person of the Godhead. He is a person. You grieve Him when you conduct yourself in a way born from your flesh.

THIS CONDUCT GRIEVES THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Conviction is the Holy Spirit telling us that He has been grieved.

V. 31 *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you*

Bitterness is holding on to a grudge. When bitterness (unforgiveness) is in you, there is poison in your heart. There are 5 things here: Bitterness is disappointment from a person or even God. Bitterness is poisonous. It is a root of poison that will grow into a horrible thing in the church.

Acts 8 – Simon the Sorcerer

¹⁸ When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money ¹⁹ and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

*²⁰ Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. ²³ **For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.**"*

Paul then talks about wrath....that means RAGE. Clamor means someone who gets into it with everyone else. Don't be argumentative. That's not the New Man. Slander is when you use angry words that have the intent to drag someone through the mud.

These are ALL part of the old life. SO WHAT DO WE DO WHEN SOMEONE ELSE HURTS US? We talk to the Lord. That is what we do. Don't talk to others. Malice – means the intention to do harm to another. PUT THESE THINGS AWAY.

v. 32 ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

WOW! Let me tell you something about my marriage. It is easier to love my wife than to be kind to my wife. It is easier for me to love each of you than it is sometimes to be kind to you. God has been working on me lately to make me kinder to each of you. As

a pastor, I sometimes get fed up with people and situations. His Holy Spirit is teaching me to be kind in those moments. I've asked the Lord to help me be a kinder, gentler soul. He is doing that. That's what the Holy Spirit does.

Be Kind

Be Tender (compassionate)

Be Forgiving

JUST LIKE YOU HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN.

Unwillingness to forgive has a horrendous effect on the person who is unwilling to forgive. It will destroy you from the inside out. It will make you sick. I went with one of our church members this last Sunday to visit his brother. This brother had been extremely hurtful. He did unspeakable harm to one of us. Although the brother was laying in a bed seemingly unconscious, a church member began to whisper forgiveness to him. He forgave him of everything and told him that God loved him. On the way out of the hospice unit, our member said something like, "Well at least now he knows that he is forgiven."

I reminded him that the forgiving was for the person giving the forgiveness. People will hurt us that never will admit it to themselves. FORGET ABOUT IT. DON'T WAIT FOR THEM TO BE REMORSEFUL AND TO FORGIVE. You forgive and be healed. God has forgiven you for all you have ever done, so extend that forgiveness to others. It will cleanse you and set you free. When we carry unforgiveness in our hearts you allow the person that has hurt you to live inside of your heart and mind. And guess what? They don't even pay rent to occupy your mind. Get rid of it and give it to God!

You will know the truth and the truth will set you free! This is what it means to PUT ON THE NEW MAN. So this evening, in this room, PUT OFF THE OLD MAN AND PUT ON THE NEW MAN. Claim who you are in Christ.

You might want to print out this scripture said as a prayer and read it every morning for the next month.

²⁵ Lord, because I am a new creation, I put on the New Man. Lord, today I will speak truth. I will do what I say I will do. I will not gossip or talk about anyone else. ²⁶ Lord, when I become angry because I am human, take that anger from me quickly lest I sin. God I renounce right now my right to hold a grudge because ²⁷ I will not give any opportunity to the devil to destroy my life. ²⁸ Lord, help me today to be industrious, and to get off of my backside to do some honest work with my hands so that I may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ Lord, put a clamp on my mouth so that no corrupt talk will come out of me. Guard me from gossip or slander. ³⁰ Holy Spirit let nothing I think, say, or do grieve you. You have sealed me for the day of redemption. ³¹ I set aside all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander and I place it before your throne. ³² Lord, turn my heart to be kind and tender. Help me to forgive all others, if for no other reason because you have forgiven me of so much. I love you my Lord and my God.