

EPHESIANS

Chapter 4:17-32

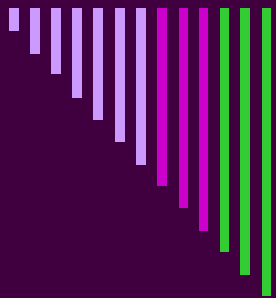
Jim Hoffman



Eph 4:17

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. NIV

- When we come to Christ and become a part of his body it ought to follow that we live a changed and godly life.
 - For those who know Jesus what we **must be** is also what we **want to be** Changed people.
 - 2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. NASB
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So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. NIV

- To 'no longer live as the Gentiles do' is the essence of repentance. We turn from our sin towards God.
 - A change of mind that is so strong that it produces a change of heart and a change of direction.
 - All of our actions are first mental before they become experiential. (what we think about is what we do)
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So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. NIV

- ❑ The unsaved of their city were pursuing what all unsaved people pursue things for themselves, or recognition for themselves. (it's especially sad when we see this in the church)
 - ❑ Futile thinking is thinking that leads no where productive. It is empty and useless though the world fails to see it.
 - ❑ The futile mind tries to reason and resolve the issues of life ***without any room for God.***
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Eph 4:18-19

They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. NIV



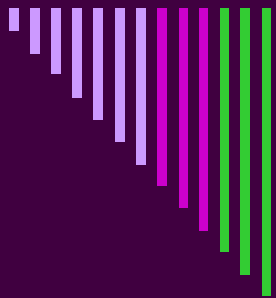
- Another characteristic of the unsaved life is a general ignorance of the Word of God.
 - It is not that the truth is too complex for them, it's that ***they have no interest in it and pay no attention to it.*** (pray)
 - Notice the progression; darkened minds, due to ignorance, brought on by hard heartedness.
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Eph 4:18-19

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- The unsaved can contrive some pretty elaborate theories about the way to heaven, while **they stumble over the simplicity of the gospel.**
 - I do not believe the case here was that they were isolated from the truth as one might be on a deserted island, but they are separated from God by their own rejection of the truth.
 - Rom 1:21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. NIV
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The Old Life

- Futile mind
- Ignorant of the truth
- Hard hearted
- Separated from God
- Sensual living
- Insensitive to sin
- A life that is full of lust



Eph 4:20-21

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, NASB

- All of those things that describe the old life need to be left behind in our new life in Christ.
 - In fact, if we say that we know him, but our lives are unchanged we are probably not even fooling ourselves.
 - I do not want a testimony that is defined **ONLY** by what I do not do, but there are a whole bunch of things that we certainly need to drop when we come to Christ.
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Eph 4:20-21

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, NASB

- 1 John 1:6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. NIV
 - To be a Christian is to be a changed person; there is hardly a more radical change than going from being dead (in our sins) to being alive in Christ.
 - We have a huge opportunity to distinguish ourselves simply by living a changed life.
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Eph 4:20-21

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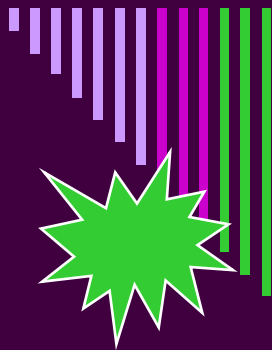
- ‘learn Christ’? Notice that this is not learning about Him, but it is just as it says, learning a person.
 - Before you were married, you knew about your spouse, but once you were joined together you actually learned that person.
 - It is good to know about Jesus, but it’s another level of intimacy to know him.
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Eph 4:20-21

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, NASB

- The text also contains these words, “you have heard Him”. Again, hearing Him is a whole different level than hearing about Him.
 - We have also been taught by Him.
 - So what’s the point? The point is that we have been called to an intimate relationship with Jesus.
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Eph 4:22-24

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. NIV

- ❑ The call of God upon our lives is to drop the old junk so as to make room for some new things in our lives.
- ❑ There is no higher calling upon our lives than the one to be like Jesus.
- ❑ In fact, that is why God redeemed us; so that we could be like His son and enjoy Him forever. (Westminster Catechism)



Eph 4:22-24

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- Rom 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. NIV
 - It begins in our minds; that is where we decided to believe in Him and that is where we decide to live for Him.
 - It is in our minds that our motives and intentions are formed and governed.
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Eph 4:22-24

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- We are also called to ‘put on the new self’; when we trust Jesus we are given a new and godly nature.
 - When we sin, we should understand that there is nothing in the new nature that desires or chooses sin; that is the work of the old nature (the flesh).
 - Rom 7:19 For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. NIV
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- Romans chapters 6 and 7 describe this conflict and the sooner in our Christian lives we understand that we are in a war, the better off we will be
 - 2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! NIV
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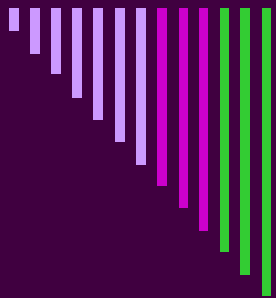
Eph 4:25

25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. NASB

- Eph 4:15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, NASB

 - Two examples:
 - Hey, I see that you have been skipping church lately, don't you love Jesus anymore?

 - I haven't seen you at church in a while. We've missed you, is everything OK?
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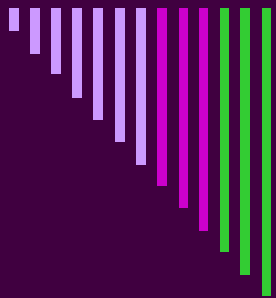
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- Eccl 3:7 a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, NIV

- Two examples:
 - Does this dress make me look fat? (a time to be silent)

 - Since God is a God of love he will let everybody into heaven won't He? (a time to speak the truth in love)



Eph 4:25

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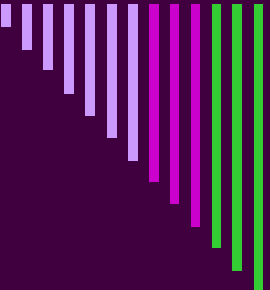
- We live in a society where truth is elusive. Politicians, business people, and often in the home.
- I have found in my own life a great temptation to make incomplete statements because to tell the whole truth would mean conflict.
- In the church, we ought to be able to trust each other enough to be honest with each other.



Eph 4:25-27

26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity. NASB

- Ps 4:4 In your anger do not sin; NIV
 - There are times when we should be angry; when injustice occurs, when people are brutalized, etc.... We probably do not get angry often enough over such things.
 - More often our problem is getting angry over the wrong things. (when our pride is hurt, or our image is wounded)
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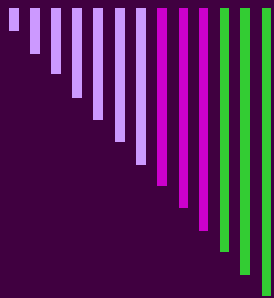
Eph 4:25-27

26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity. NASB

- When we allow our emotions to run away with us and get bent out of shape over the wrong things we give the enemy a foothold.

 - Mountain climbers understand the power of a ‘foothold’.
(gets us to the next level)

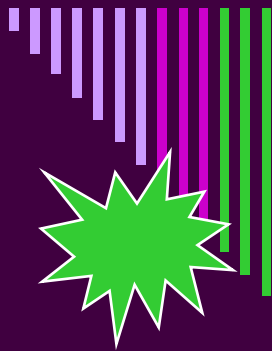
 - It is never OK to be angry without a just cause. We dare not use excuses like;
 - That’s just how I am!
 - I’m Italian!
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Eph 4:25-27

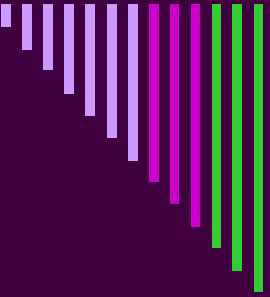
26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity. NASB

- When you find yourself angry, deal with it as quickly as possible and, by all means, before the day is over.
- Unattended anger festers, spreads, and can cause great harm. If you shot your mouth off, apologize.
- Of all places, there can be no room for unjust anger in the church. (unity draws people to Christ)



Eph 4:28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. NASB

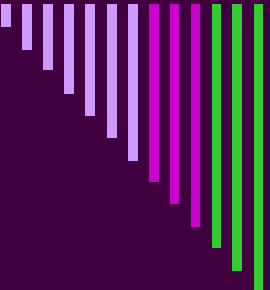
- The simplest truth from this is ‘stop taking that which does not belong to you’.
- Not things
- Not people (your neighbor’s wife)
- Not time (employment)
- Not worship



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- Interestingly enough this is more than a negative command. Along with ‘stop’ comes a ‘start’.

 - Start working
 - Start sharing
 - Start using your time wisely

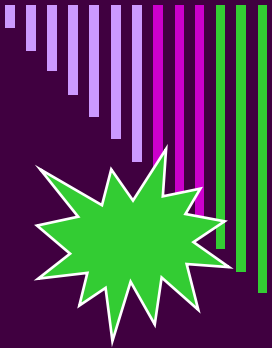


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- There is a stated purpose and an implied purpose to this instruction.
 - So that you have something to share. (give away)
 - So that your testimony is not discredited.
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Eph 4:29

29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. NASB



- As a bare minimum, the day we get saved should also be the day that the 4 letter words stop coming out of our mouths.
 - The next step then is to cease all innuendo and euphemisms.
 - We should not ‘wink’ at those who speak like we know we shouldn’t. (stop laughing at dirty jokes)
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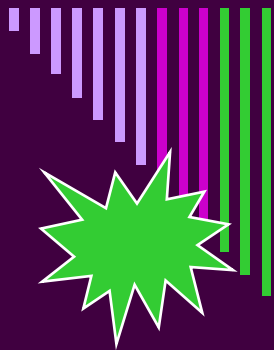


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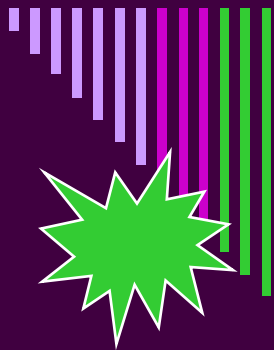
- Now for the hard part, stop saying obnoxious things in our attempts at humor. (my personal downfall)
 - Know your audience, there are people you can joke with and people who will not appreciate it.
 - When in doubt, be nice.

 - We are to use our words to build up and to comfort those around us. There are plenty of other people around to say the wrong things.
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Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. NASB

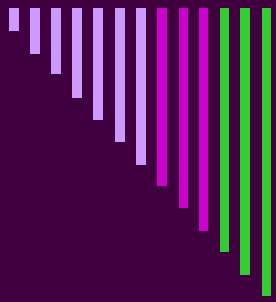
- The ultimate 'catch-all' verses for this section.
- Stop being loud, bitter, obnoxious, and angry. It doesn't look good on those who claim to be saved from wrath and headed for heaven.
- Start being genuinely nice. Love, share, and forgive so that others can see Christ in us, instead of us.



Eph 4:30

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
NASB

- When we sin, we grieve the Holy Spirit.
- When we disobey, we quench the Holy Spirit.
- So what? The so what is that all of the things we are being asked to do in the passage become standard fare for the person who will yield to the Holy Spirit each day.



What do you think?
