

## Ephesians 4:17-19

Now we move into what Paul is telling us why we are not what we should be.

1. Don't walk as the Gentiles do – vs. 17 – In other words, don't do what they do.
  - a. Futility in their minds – vs. 17 – Lack of purpose or meaning; lack of success; The mind of a Gentile was considered to be one that lacked learning, education and the capacity to be worthy of anything. They were considered barbarians and heathens. So when Paul says for the Christians not to be as Gentiles, he was specifically talking about their behavior.
  - b. Darkened in their understanding – vs. 18 – To the Gentile the Jewish faith was foolishness. God even says that the Spiritual things of God will seem foolish to the unbeliever because their “spiritual eyes” are blinded.
  - c. Alienated from God – vs. 18 – According to Jewish tradition, all unbelievers were called Gentiles. If you were not a Jew, then you were considered to be a Gentile. That is still true today. And we know from Romans that all unbelievers are alienated from God. “For all have sinned”.
  - d. Full of ignorance – vs. 18 – We know that one of the reasons for the unbeliever to remain an unbeliever is because they do not know Jesus as Savior. Therefore they are ignorant of God's love and grace. Yet God tells us in Romans 1 that even the earth tells of His attributes. And while there is no excuse for ignorance, we see God extending His love, mercy, and grace to all who will seek. Jesus said, if you seek, you will find.
  - e. Hard of heart – vs. 18 – The problem with us humans, we tend to want things our own way so badly, that we often will harden our hearts away from the truth. Remember Moses and Pharaoh? The Bible says that he “hardened his heart”. It is a dangerous place to be; in God's universe but with a hard heart.
  - f. Callous – vs. 19 – Callous means hard, unmovable, and a general pain in the neck. If you have ever had a callous on your foot or elbow, you know it isn't fun. We get like that where we are just plain stubborn and stupid about spiritual things. The real problem with being callous is we will never hear God's voice because it cannot get through the hard callous nature of our minds.
  - g. Sensual – vs. 19 – Today our society has made a concerted effort to blur the lines and confuse the meanings of many words. Sensual, sexy, sexual, lustful, and other words have taken on the same meaning. Webster's defines it as: pertaining to, inclined to, or preoccupied with the gratification of the senses or appetites; carnal; fleshly, lacking in moral restraints; lewd or unchaste, worldly; materialistic; irreligious, of or pertaining to the senses or physical sensation;

sensory. Paul here wants to use the worldly, materialistic, and irreligious here more to encourage the new believers to forsake the old way of doing things.

- h. Greedy – vs. 19 – Greed is something that every advertiser depends on to sell you something. Stop and think about what the purpose of an ad is. It is to make you believe three things. *1. You do not have something you need, therefore you have a problem. 2. If you had this thing your problem would be solved and your world would be better and easier if you had this thing. 3. They had just the thing that will solve your problem. And at a good price!* They depend on all of us believing that we can be richer, thinner, and better looking than we are. They depend on us believing that we have a right to make ourselves richer, thinner, and better looking. They also depend on us wanting to be just a little bit better than someone else and they know we only need a little push to spend what we have on making that happen.
- i. Impure – vs. 19 – Paul had strong words for people like this. The impure were people who said, thought, and did things contrary to God's word as a life style. I emphasize life style. Because we all sin and from time to time royally screw up, it is the heart and the intention of the person that determines the life style. 1Cor. 5:9-11. Paul says do not even eat with those types of people.