

## Ephesians 4:20-24

We just finished looking at how we are not supposed to “walk” and behave. Paul has given us 9 specific behaviors that we need to avoid. Now here, Paul is telling us how we are to live and behave.

2. Do walk differently as Christ walked – vs. 20 – I don’t think that anyone will disagree that Jesus Christ lived differently, walked differently, treated others differently and just had a different attitude about things than did the people He interacted with.
  - a. You can’t learn about Jesus living like the devil – vs. 20 – How many times do we try to do what is right in the wrong place? How many times do we deliberately go someplace we shouldn’t and then are surprised that we have no strength or power to resist temptation? How many times are we disappointed that a situation turns out badly when we knew we should have done something different? How many times do we look for someone else to blame for a disaster in our lives, when we knew all along that it was our lifestyle that needed to be changes? God cannot and will not bless our lives when we are controlled by Satan.
  - b. Notice that Paul says, “But you”. He is recounting the fact that the Christians there had not been taught about Christ through the ways of Satan, but through the ways of Christ. How often do we find ourselves doing things we shouldn’t and yet trying to justify them. How often do we say, “BUT”?
    - i. But I can handle it
    - ii. But I have always done it
    - iii. But my friends do it
    - iv. But my friends will reject me
    - v. But my friends will make fun of me
    - vi. But it’s not that bad
    - vii. But my boyfriend/girlfriend won’t pay attention to me unless . . .
    - viii. But it is just this once
    - ix. But no one will see/know
    - x. But it’s just the way I am
    - xi. But it is expected of me
    - xii. But this is just life
    - xiii. But it just my hormones
    - xiv. But I can’t help myself
    - xv. But you don’t understand
  - c. If you truly profess to be a believer, you need to act like one – v s. 21-22 – This one really hurts. We seem to think that just because we profess that we believe that Jesus in the only way, we are good to go! When we are challenged about

our life style, we just talk louder or with more passion. Paul is really giving you the once over here. He says, "If you have heard, if you have been taught, and you understand that Jesus is Truth, then you have to give up your old life." So have you heard? Have you been taught? Do you understand that Jesus is Truth? If so, you have no excuse not to put away your old life for the new life found in Jesus. Look at your life. What is old and what is new? What has changed and what are you refusing to change? We are to act on the truth that we know. So if you do not change, is it because you do not really know the truth or that you refuse to act on the truth that you know?

- d. The only true way to live "like Christ" is by renewing your mind" – vs. 23 - The hardest thing to do is to keep doing the same thing over and over again. As humans we tend to want to do something once and then move on. It is the Ron Popeil attitude. "Set it and forget it!" Have you ever asked someone if they are a Christian and they say, "I walked the aisle once." Christianity is not just a onetime decision. It is a daily decision. Jesus said, "take up your cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23) We are basically lazy and do not want to do the work it takes to be a successful Christian. Then we get discouraged and disappointed and that leads to depression and despair, and that then leads to rejection of the Truth! Romans 12:1-2 tell us that we must renew our minds daily or even more often.
- e. To be successful in our Christian living, we need to "put on" a new self – vs. 24 – To put on a new self means that we must "take off" the old self. That requires "spiritual surgery" as Susan says. What does it mean to "put on"? The idea here is that not only our outward appearance become like Christ but our inside spirit as well. We have all put on a costume and pretended to be something or someone else. This command goes way beyond that. It is to dress, act, think, and behave in such a way that others will mistake you for a new person. Have you ever known someone to "accept" Christ and not be a new creation? If you have it is because they let God change their head but not their heart. When you have a heart change, you become that changed person. (Romans 13:14; Col 3:9-18; 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 2:10)