



Metamorphosis – How change happens

Eph 4:17-24

vs. 17-19 The dangers of rejecting God

17 Now this I say and (A) testify in the Lord, (B) that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, (C) in the futility of their minds. 18 They (D) are darkened in their understanding, (E) alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to (F) their hardness of heart. 19 They (G) have become callous and (H) have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

If you could change anything about your character, what would you change?

Introduction

5 Sections where Paul instructs us to 'walk' out the Christian life (4:1, 17; 5:2; 8, 15)

This week the issue is how we walk out change in our lives.

What Paul is saying is if you are going to change, it's going to mean 2 things:

- i) Stopping some practices. (Walking as the Gentiles do)
- ii) Commencing alternative practises. (Being renewed in the spirit of your minds)

1. Old Life

The **battleground** for change is in our minds. To leave our old ways of thinking behind.

Proverbs "As a man thinks within himself so he is."

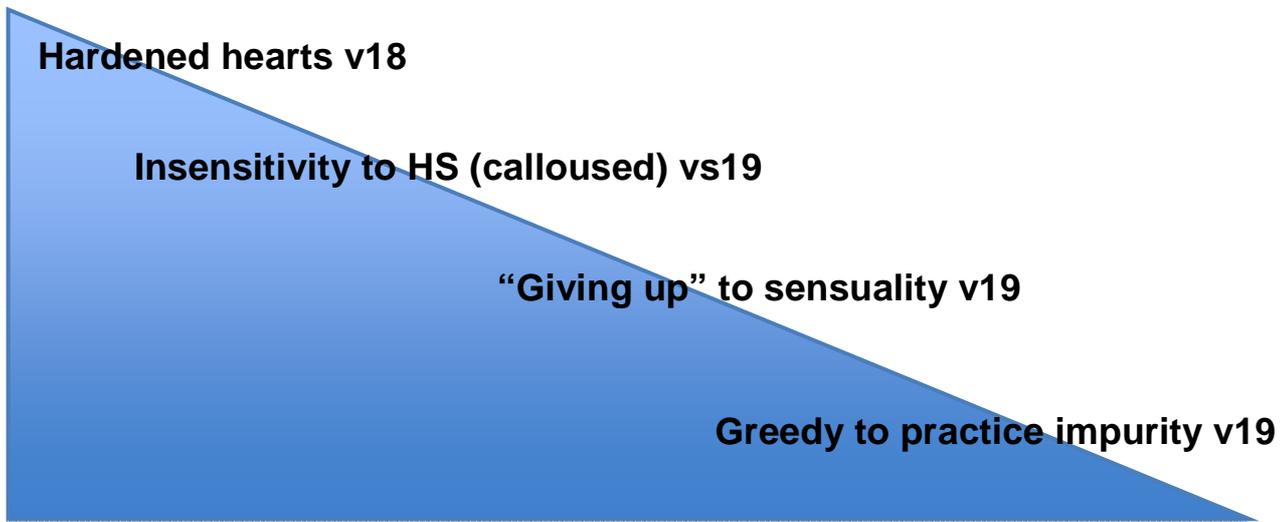
Losing the battle:

Verse 18 he gives us some of the **consequences** of rejecting God.

- Darkened understanding
- Separated from God
- Ignorant

Romans 1 :21 "For although they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened."

Slippery slope



The truth is if you start holding on to sin, pretty soon it will have hold of you.

Sin Grows

- If you're like you are now, and you keep living like you are what will you be like in 20 years time 30 years time?
- Unless something miraculous happens you will be like you are now, only more so.

You cannot manage your sin. It won't stay static.

So what do we do? How do we get out of this?

2. New Life

*Eph 4:20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to **put off your old self**, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to **put on** the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Like driving in a car you can't go both East and West at the same time.

- The other direction is Jesus.

i. Two False goals

- Moralism+ Legalism

The goal of your life is not self improvement, or even becoming a nicer person. It's knowing Jesus.

ii. How change happens

- Image of clothing

“you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” Colossians 3:9+10

Condition before salvation: Old clothes

“We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.” Isaiah 64:6

We stood filthy, corrupted and defiled

But.... “ the punishment that has brought me peace was now on him”

Isaiah 53:5 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24(AJ) and are justified(AK) by his grace as a gift,(AL) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God(AM) put forward as(AN) a propitiation(AO) by his blood, to be received by faith. Romans 3:23

“ It is because we have already put off our old nature, in that decisive act of repentance called conversion, that we can logically be commanded to put away all the practices which belong to that old and rejected life.” John Stott

That means we leave behind sinful behaviour not because we want to be good but because we are good. Not because we want to be pure and holy but because we are pure and holy.

Recognising who we are

“As we are called to put off our corrupt nature as a ragged and filthy garment, so we are required to put on our new nature as a garment of light. And as the former was personified as an old man, decrepit, deformed, and tending to corruption, so the latter is personified as a new man, fresh, beautiful and vigorous, like God.” Charles Hodge.

“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience” Col 3:2

Biblical change comes through acknowledging who we now are in the light of what Jesus has done.

1 Jn 2:2(A) He is the propitiation for our sins

Implications

Warning signs

- hardening your heart dangerous – unforgiveness of others – key indicator
- isolates us from the “life of God” and others
- sin management doesn’t work. It grows.

How change happens

- putting on the new self
- created in all righteousness and holiness
- remembering who we are
- being renewed in the spirit of our minds

Setting our minds on things above

- Gal 3:25- 4:7
- Col 3: 12
- 1 Jn 3:1-3
- Eph 5:1