

The Change Lifestyle of the Christian.

By Nick Bibile

Ephesians Chapter 4 Continuation

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,

Last week we saw that Christians do not behave as the unbelievers, the unbelievers are alienated with God, and the result is they have a heart that is sinful, and out of the heart comes impurity sinful behavior.

Why did Apostle Paul remind us of the unbelievers who are darkened in their understanding, alienated from God and their hardness of their hearts? Why did he mention of their sensuality, greediness and impurity?

Because you will remember how you lived before Christ. We need to be reminded how we loved darkness of sin, how we lived to gratify our flesh as we had a great appetite for the flesh and for this world and not for the Lord. Before we lived just like the unbelievers. We spent time in eating, drinking, parties, sports, movies, TV, living for the flesh. We had a religion on Sunday but never had a desire and a hunger for the Lord. But there was a change, not a small change but a radical change. A new heart was given.

But some may say, "I always have been a good person in my life." The Bible says there is no one good, none righteous. (Rom 3:9-12) Also the Bible says there is a change when Christ comes to our heart; there is a change when you are born again.

Even when you look at the calendar it is divided into two. B.C (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini – in the year of the Lord) Jesus Christ is the dividing line of History. Not only he is the dividing line of history but also he divided our personal life at one point we were before Christ and there was a point when Christ came and how we were brought from darkness to light and there was a change.

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

The old nature has passed away. The old practices, old conduct and behavior has passed away as the old heart is passed away. There is a new heart and a new soul, we have new rules, new practices in Christ Jesus.

V 20) This verse is the dividing line of your old nature and the new. It is the contrast. You never learned of Christ in your old nature, as Paul said, that is not the way you learned of Christ!

Only in ESV (English Standard Version) translation you will find an exclamation mark at the end of

this scripture. Exclamation mark is used to emphasize something and here we see Apostle Paul is emphasizing the sharp contrast of the unbelievers life to the Christian, reminding us that is not the way you learned of Christ!

John Calvin said on this verse, "He now draws a contrast of a Christian life, so as to make it evident how utterly inconsistent it is with the character of a godly man to defile himself regardless with the abominations of the Gentiles."

The unbelievers their hearts are corrupted, selfish, greedy with sinful desires of this world, living according to their flesh, pleasing the flesh but that is not how we learned of Christ. We did not learn of a Christ like this! I learned of a righteous and holy Christ. The Christian living is living a Christ like lifestyle pleasing to God. There is a contrast.

The contrast is like black and white. The adulterers, prostitutes, drunkards, drug addicts, thieves, flesh pleasers by the grace of God learned of Christ and there was a change of life, they who were unholy became holy in Christ. Jesus is the great divide.

V20) **you learned Christ!** You did not learn of a subject or a philosophy but you learned of a person, the person Jesus Christ. This means we the true Christians have entered into a personal relationship with the living Lord Jesus Christ, it is learning of him and knowing God only through him.

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

The word learn here in Greek is 'manthano' is related to the Greek word mathetes which means a disciple. All true Christians are Disciples of Christ Jesus. A disciple is a person always learning of Christ and increasing in the knowledge of Christ.

Colossians 2:3

in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Learn of Christ not only learning the doctrine of Christ but learning Christ himself, getting to know Christ in a personal way, intimately, abiding in him. There are many who know all the doctrines of Christ and they can be teachers but do they live in him? Have they applied the knowledge what they have learned to their behavior? It's a matter of learn and change.

How did you learn of Christ? The next verse will tell you.

V 21) Assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus.

First you heard of him. How did you hear? It is from the preacher, preaching the word of God or when you began to read the word of God. How many times you hear the word of God and it never brought any conviction of sin, this is external hearing. But one day suddenly you realized Jesus is

speaking to you, this is internal hearing.

The word heard of him is not the external hearing but the internal hearing of Christ. Many people have heard of Christ externally with their ears but never understood. Internal hearing is hearing, understanding the truth and believing in him.

Eph 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

True hearing is to hear internally, hear not only from the ears but to see it from the heart, so as to know him, understand his word, and distinguish his voice; so as to approve of him and love him, and believe in him; feel the power of his Gospel, relish his truths, and obey his commandments, and bring fruits for his glory.

Taught of him.

When you have a personal relationship Jesus, you learn of him, you hear him and you are taught of him. All three very important verbs, learn, hear and taught are to people who have a personal relationship with the Lord. When you learn, hear and taught of him you will follow him.

John 10:27

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Who teach us of Christ? Christ did not say when I am gone you shall find the great infallible teacher the Pope of Rome! It is not the pastor or the preacher they are just instruments the ultimate teacher is God the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer has to do with the inner man, that no soul will be able truly and really to understand what I say, unless it has been taught of God.

The word of God, the Bible is heavenly in origin. The natural man cannot understand as it is spiritual. Once the natural man is converted by God the Holy Spirit comes in lives in him. Then we can understand the word of God as the Spirit of God in us will give us the understanding.

John 15:26

"But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me."

Christ Jesus met the demands of divine justice as we are saved only by his works alone, there is nothing we can add to salvation, it is finished. But we are still living on this earth, although we have a new heart this old flesh is still here with the world and the enemy. But we have Christ in heaven not just looking at us and saying 'I hope they can make it to heaven.' He has given us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit continues to carry out Christ's redemptive work to completion.

Not only Holy Spirit that regenerated us, convicted us from sin but now indwells in all believers, lead us to faith in Christ Jesus.

What does the Spirit teach?

Spirit of God teaches and directs our souls for righteousness, the Spirit of God will sanctify us and supply us grace, and He will glorify Christ! He is the greatest teacher and there will be none like him as he teaches only the truth in Jesus. He will not teach worldly things which please the flesh. He will teach only the pure unmixed gospel of truth, the genuine not the counterfeit.

1 Corinthians 2:10

These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State in Woodrow Wilson's Cabinet, was interviewing a man who was seeking a diplomatic post in China. Bryan warned the applicant that it was necessary to qualify as a linguist. "Can you speak the Chinese language?" he asked.

The man was equal to the occasion. Looking Bryan squarely in the eye, he replied, "Try me. Ask me something in Chinese."

We know the truth as the Holy Spirit teach us only the truth. Holy Spirit gives, gifts for the ministry, boldness, love and self discipline produces fruits in the believer.

Spurgeon was giving a sermon on how the Holy Spirit will abide with us forever.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

At the end of the sermon he said, "I wish I could get an Armenian here to finish my sermon." Spurgeon went out to say, "I fancy I see him taking that word "forever." He would say, "For—forever;" he would have to stammer and stutter; for he could never get it out all at once. He might stand and pull it about, and at last he would have to say, "The translation is wrong." And I suppose the poor man would have to prove that the original was wrong too. Ah! But blessed be God we can read it—"He shall abide with you forever." Once give me the Holy Ghost, and I shall never lose him till "forever" has run out; till eternity has spun its everlasting rounds.

Lastly we were hostile to God's teaching, the word of God made many asleep before we came to Christ but now we are joyful and excited to hear the word of God.

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