

LESSON 28: EPHESIANS 4:1-6:9
JULY 5, 2017

OVERVIEW

- . The believer as a member of the Body of Christ – Ephesians 4:1-16
- . The believer in his individual life – Ephesians 4:17-5:21
- . The believer in his individual relationships – Ephesians 5:22-6:9

THE BELIEVER AS A MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST – EPHESIANS 4:1-16

- . A life worthy of our calling – Ephesians 4:1-6
 - . Worthy means to have value
 - . A Christian whose life is worthy of his calling is one whose conduct shows that he has been made alive in Christ and is his disciple
 - . These verses show character traits of one who is striving to be alive in Christ and allowing the Holy Spirit to direct us through every thought
 - . Humility and gentleness
 - . Humility was thought of as more of a vice than a virtue in the pagan world
 - . Even today, self expression is advocated everywhere
 - . Christians sometime mistakenly equate outward self-disparagement with humility
 - . Humility is never to be mistaken as weakness
 - . Patience, bearing with one another in love
 - . If we are to be Christ-like, we must be patient, since He is patient
 - . When dealing with others, we are to accept even the most jarring things with patience, bearing with the other person in love, not painfully resigning and complaining
 - . Striving to keep unity in peace
 - . The unity Paul speaks of here is the unity of the Holy Spirit, the unique unity found only in the community of believers in whom the Holy Spirit dwells and is allowed to reign
 - . It is so easy for this unity to be broken – therefore we need to make every effort to maintain it
 - . We need to recognize that what we have in common is far more important than what does or might divide us
 - . There may be minor points of theology, or Christian matters, that are not fundamental to our faith that we need to keep in perspective

- . Christ's gifts to His church – Ephesians 4:7-13
 - . Although there is unity that Christians can find, through the Holy Spirit, we never lose our individual uniqueness that has been blessed by God with certain gifts that the Church needs to remain healthy and vibrant
 - . Apostles and prophets
 - . The church was founded upon the New Testament apostles and prophets
 - . God's Church today no longer has the need for the type of apostles and prophets we had in the immediate aftermath of Christ's resurrection
 - . Evangelists
 - . An evangelist is a person who has been given a special ability to communicate the gospel to strangers
 - . Pastors/teachers
- . Maturity in Christ – Ephesians 4:14-16
 - . The goal to which Christ's gifts point is to prepare God's people for works of service
 - . The danger of immaturity for the individual and the Church is instability described as being tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every false teaching
 - . Maturity comes only through a disciplined study of God's Word and a determination to take up one's cross daily in order to follow and obey Jesus Christ
 - . Learning to speak the truth in love – Ephesians 4:15

THE BELIEVER IN HIS INDIVIDUAL LIFE – EPHESIANS 4:17-5:21

- . If each believer in the church is to fulfill this function, each must be progressing toward maturity by deliberately rejecting the world's patterns of behavior
 - . Moving in harmony of shedding your old clothing is putting on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness
- . The negative characteristics of one-self that we are to shed include futile thinking, a hard heart, insensitivity, sensuality and impurity, deceitful desires, falsehood, sinful anger, stealing, unwholesome talk, bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, malice, sexual immorality, impurity, greed, obscenity, foolish talk, coarse joking, foolishness, drunkenness and debauchery
- . Renewing the mind to think on a spiritual level is possible only by the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit
 - . As our thinking changes, our actions will change in a way that will be a true reflection of our thoughts
 - . We must stop using excuses like "God made me this way", or "I guess I'm just a hopeless case"

- . We must also search the Scriptures to better know what God is really like, to correct our misconceptions about His character and plan
- . Knowing and understanding the truth of God's Word, will lead to a changed life that manifests itself in different attitudes and actions
- . The positive characteristics of a new self include righteousness and holiness, truthfulness, hard work, sharing with those in need, kindness, compassion, forgiveness, love, thanksgiving, goodness, righteousness and truth, wisdom, making the most of every opportunity, understanding God's will, being filled with the spirit, joyful worship of God and submission to one another

THE BELIEVER IN HIS PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS – EPHESIANS 5:22-6:9

- . Christianity is never merely an individual matter but always involves other people
- . In this third section Paul highlights three important sets of relationships
 - . If one is serious about putting off the characteristics of fallen human nature and putting on the character of God, here is the arena in which you need to do it
 - . Here are the places where your godliness must be tested
 - . Living by God's standards in these relationships requires a change in our thinking and behavior that have been shaped by our culture and our own sinful nature
- . Wives and husbands – Ephesians 5:22-33
 - . God established marriage
 - . From the very beginning His design was for man and woman to be united in marriage
 - . "It is not good for man to be alone – I will make a helper suitable for him" – Genesis 2:18
 - . Is it any surprise that this most foundational relationship is under attack on many fronts
 - . In considering the relationship, it is helpful to remember that God, not man, instituted marriage and that He, therefore, is the one to determine the standards and rules for marriage partners
 - . Wives need to submit to their husbands just as the church submits to Christ
 - . Husbands need to love their wives just as Christ loves the church
 - . The most important truth about Christian marriage is that it is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church
 - . Christian marriage is a very high calling
- . Children and parents – Ephesians 6:1-4
 - . Children are called to obey their parents just as we are called to be obedient to the Lord
 - . Children are also called to honor their parents, treating them with respect,

caring for them when they need care, and living in a way that brings honor to them

- . Parents are called to act toward their children in a manner that is worthy of that honor

- . Parents have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that will foster this kind of respect and honor
- . Parents are to put off exasperating their children
- . Parents are called to bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord

- . Slaves and masters – Ephesians 6:5-9

- . Slaves are to work, not as if they are being watched by the masters, but to work wholeheartedly as slaves of Christ, their true master, expecting His reward
- . The master is to treat the slave as fellow slaves of Christ, not showing a heavy hand or favoritism
- . The principles that Paul gives here may apply today in the area of employer-employee relationships

NEXT LESSON: JULY 12, 2017 – EPHESIANS 6:10-24

**** I WOULD LIKE TO FLIP FLOP JULY 12 AND JULY 19. I WILL TAKE JULY 12 AND MOVE THE OTHER STUDY TO JULY 19. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SWITCH JULY 26 AND AUGUST 2. I WILL TAKE JULY 26 AND THE OTHER STUDY WOULD MOVE TO AUGUST 2. THEN WE WOULD GO BACK TO NORMAL SCHEDULE WITH MY STUDY ON AUGUST 16.**