

"The Practice of the Believer"

Ephesians 4-6

Part 8

Introduction: Last week in our study of Ephesians we began to look at what it means to "put off the old man and to put on the new man".

Notice Ephesians 4:22-24

This is something that is only possible for the believer. The unsaved do not have a "new man" to put on. They only have the "old man" which is the sin nature. They can change their actions through self-discipline, but they cannot change the heart. Only Jesus Christ can change the heart and He changes us from the inside out. The unsaved can conform to a different set of rules but they are NOT transformed by the Holy Spirit. There is a major difference in the two.

Now, before we get into the practical application of "putting on the new man" I just want to remind you of something that we considered last week that is very important.

There is one thing that God is concerned about more than anything else: HIS GLORY! The glory of God is the outward expression of who God is. The glory of God is the making the Person of God. God is a great God and throughout history He has been making Himself known to men and angels.

Top priority for God is His glory. All that happens is for the glory of God.

➤ **Creation declares the glory of God.**

Psalm 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Romans 1:18-21

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

➤ **At the judgments God will be glorified.**

Philippians 2:10-11

¹⁰ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

¹¹ And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

"Let's Move Forward"

Part 4

1. Speak the Truth.

Notice Ephesians 4:25

Here is the practical application of "putting on the new man". Paul begins by exhorting his readers to speak the truth. He chooses to start here because this is one of the greatest temptations that face each of us on a regular basis. There is often the temptation to distort the truth in order to make certain circumstances less stressful, or the temptation is there to distort the truth to escape the consequences of an earlier decision. But instead of giving into the temptation we are to PUT OFF LYING and we are to speak the truth to our neighbors. At the end of this verse Paul gives the reason we are to speak the truth. It is because when a believer lies it damages the reputation of the entire church.

2. Control your Anger.

Notice Ephesians 4:26a

The new man will get angry at times. He will become angry at sinful practices. He will become angry when people are used and mistreated. He will become angry when because of sin. But the new man knows how to control his anger. He will be slow to anger and he will be careful not allow anger to take him to the point of committing sin.

Proverbs 14:29

²⁹ He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

Proverbs 19:11

¹¹ The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

Ecclesiastes 7:9

⁹ Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

A. Righteous Anger

Mark 3:1-5

And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

² And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

³ And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

⁴ And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

⁵ And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

John 2:13-16

¹³ And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

¹⁴ And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

¹⁵ And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

¹⁶ And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

B. Sinful Anger

Sinful anger is self-defensive because it is centered in the self. It is always wrong. Sinful anger is part of the old man, that is to be put off. If we are angry because our feelings have been hurt, or our pride has been injured, or we have been mistreated in some way, perhaps we have not been given the position of the place or the favor that we think we ought to have, this is sinful anger and is to be put off. It arises out of the old man; it comes from the flesh/sin nature.

Jesus became angry but it was never self-centered.

1 Peter 2:21-23

²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

²² Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

²³ Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

According to psychologists there are five stages to anger:

1. Mild Irritation

This stage is marked by some unpleasant disturbance. It can be the children fighting. It can be a slow line at the checkout in the grocery store. Whatever the circumstance there is an irritation that begins to build.

2. Indignation

This is a reaction to something that is unfair or unreasonable. This stage can be manifest by violence of some sort. This would be seen at a sporting event when someone goes after a referee for a call which he has made. They may also choose to throw something at the man as this stage manifests itself with some sort of violence. This could also be seen in a road rage incident when one man punches another man.

3. Wrath

This stage never goes without being expressed. When anger reaches this level, the person has a strong desire to fight back in some way. They will seek to avenge the wrong that has been done.

4. Fury

When this stage is reached there is going to be violence. This stage will often result in a loss of control even possibly a loss of sanity. This stage is often seen in a domestic situation in which the end result is many times the murder of one those involved.

5. Rage

This stage is the most intense level of anger. When a person reaches this stage, they can do things without even being aware of what they are doing. Experts tell us that a person in this stage can commit murder without even realizing they did it. A person who allows anger to get to rage will often blackout during their acts of violence.

C. The Cost of Unrestrained Anger.

Anger that is not controlled is very dangerous and costly. Let us notice two examples.

1. Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 3:16-22

¹⁶ *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.*

¹⁷ *If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.*

¹⁸ *But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

¹⁹ *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.*

²⁰ *And **he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.***

²¹ *Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*

²² *Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, **the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.***

2. Moses

Numbers 20:1-11

Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

² And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

³ And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD!

⁴ And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?

⁵ And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

⁶ And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.

⁷ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

⁸ Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

⁹ And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?

¹¹ And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

D. The Fruit of Anger

Numbers 20:12

¹² And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

Moses later prayed that God would reconsider.

Deuteronomy 3:23-28

²³ And I besought the LORD at that time, saying,

²⁴ O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

²⁵ I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.

²⁶ But the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

²⁷ Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

²⁸ But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

Conclusion:

Notice Ephesians 4:26 again.

Anger must be addressed, before it is used by Satan. The idea here is that we must not allow Satan to have anything that he can use against us.

Unforgiveness is fertile ground into which the devil can sow sinister seed!

I will end with the words of Pentecost:

*When a mountain climber scales a mountain, he does not need a four-lane highway to allow him to get to the top. If you have watched a climber in a movie you can see that he or she can use the smallest foothold and inch-by-inch has victory over the mountain. **In your life, Satan does not need a huge opening, and you are not safe if there is the slightest foothold for him to begin inching his way to your defeat.***