

Live the Reality

Ephesians 4:22-24 Sunday AM, October 29, 2023

Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 4:17-24 (NASB95) So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Walk worthy of the calling to which you have been called. You are to do this inside relationships starting with those others God has called to Himself. God provides all necessary to fulfill your calling. ⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. But we don't determine our own service for God. God graciously gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers for God's goal of equipping each saint for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. These goals keep us from aimless wandering because of different voices of truth with different goals. We grow to the fullness of Christ by speaking the truth in love leading to each member carrying out their part of the growth of the body under the headship of Christ. There is life, love, and above all, growth among the people of God when Christ is given His position as Head of the church. What does it mean for Christ to be head of the church? Christ is the focus, the enabler—His goals are ours and they are accomplished by His means. Each member of Christ's body finds hope and life when they look to Christ. He is our everything! Church, sing the gracious mercies of Jesus given to those called by God!

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Come Praise and Glorify

If Christ is truly your Head, there WILL be change and that change will be distinctly different from those outside Christ. While the change WILL be external and noticed, the saving difference of this change will be internal. Christians are glad to be under Christ. The love received from God leads to willing submission to God as the source of all truth, goodness, and provision for living the purposes He saved us to fulfill. Christians under the Headship of Christ are not unstable and distracted, but purposeful in their work among the people of God where they speak into each other's souls with the goal of each growing in ALL aspects into Christ. Christ is the focus for those who treasure relationship with God. I'm just starting Elisabeth Prentiss' biography with my family and want to join her in her hymn of desire and prayer to God. More love to Thee, O Christ, More Love to Thee.

*Hymn #363: More Love to Thee

***Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Choir: Hide Thou Me Scripture: 1 Chronicles 16:7–36** (NASB95) Then on that day David first assigned Asaph and his relatives to give thanks to the LORD. 8 Oh give thanks to the LORD, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples. 9 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders. 10 Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad. 11 Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face continually. 12 Remember His wonderful deeds which He has done, His marvels and the judgments from His mouth, 13 O seed of Israel His servant, Sons of Jacob, His chosen ones! 14 He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth. 15 Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, 16 The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac. 17 He also confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant, 18 Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan, As the portion of your inheritance." 19 When they were only a few in number, Very few, and strangers in it, 20 And they wandered about from nation to nation, And from one kingdom to another people, 21 He permitted no man to oppress them, And He reproved kings for their sakes, saying, 22 "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm." 23 Sing to the LORD, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. 24 Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. 25 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He also is to be feared above all gods. 26 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. 27 Splendor and majesty are before Him, Strength and joy are in His place, 28 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 29 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him; Worship the LORD in holy array, 30 Tremble before Him, all the earth; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. 31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." 32 Let the sea roar, and all it contains; Let the field exult, and all that is in it. 33 Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before the LORD; For He is coming to judge the earth. 34 O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 35 Then say, "Save us, O God of our salvation, And gather us and deliver us from the nations, To give thanks to Your holy name, And glory in Your praise." 36 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. Then all the people said, "Amen," and praised the LORD.

Offering: *Doxology:

Today, we focus on the work resulting from learning Christ. We lay aside the old self, the part corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit. This means real desires, but wrong desires. Those desires eat away at us, even when we think we want God, and keep us focused on either getting those desires fulfilled or wallowing in the hopelessness of never achieving them. And all this misses the new self, the one which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. THIS put off, put on is the focus of each Christian. Ray Orlund and Sam Allberry's new book, *Your Not Crazy*, speaks to the reality that "While we're quick to assert what the gospel says, we're often too slow to admit what the gospel should do for our churches: reflect Christ's beauty through a godly, grace-filled culture." In order to reflect Christ's beauty, we must see it. Look at Him—not for anything other than than for the beauty of His holiness.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): O Lord, You're Beautiful

You may be seated. Do you feel weird saying that God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is beautiful? What was the divinely inspired David seeing as he sought to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and called on all to give thanks to the Lord, call on His name, and make known His deeds among the peoples? The promises/covenant to Abraham renewed to Isaac and Jacob were not merely for them but were a covenant which included promises to a thousand generations?!? The powerful God described by David, the One we are to worship in holy array, the splendor of holiness—He is the One enabling you to put off, put on. This is the One to whom you pray as you fight the sin which so EASILY entangles making you doubt God's promises and the sufficiency of His provision for you to carry out His will willingly and joyfully. To live the reality of the Headship of Christ by the power of the Spirit is to say with the choir, There is no other refuge can save, Lord but Thee—Oh Rock of ages, hide Thou Me. As pastor prepares to preach on your responsibility, think on God's provision for you to be in fellowship with One so holy as Himself.

*Hymn #65: The Wonder of It All

Message: Live the Reality Ephesians 4:22-24

*Hymn #372: Living for Jesus

*Prayer