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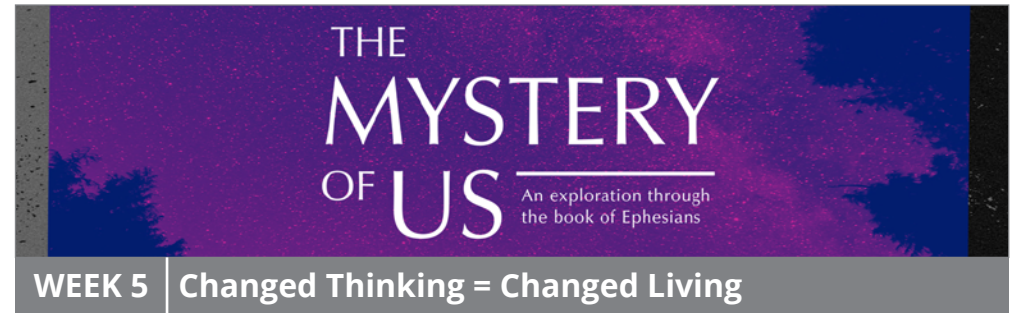
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PRAYER

Dear Father, righteous and holy God, enable me to completely put away my old human nature - the former lifestyle corrupted by deceitful desires. Help me to be renewed in the spirit of my mind, to put on a new nature, created in your likeness in true righteousness and holiness. Father, make me holy like Jesus, righteous with his righteousness! In Jesus' name, Amen.

- [Praying with Paul](#)

WARM UP

(OPTIONAL)

What is something you really like that not a lot of people know about?

NOTES

WORD

¹⁷ So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

²⁰ That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸ Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

[EPHESIANS 4:17-32](#)

In [Eph. 5-6](#), Paul will address, in depth, certain areas of Christian living. Before speaking to particular issues, however, in Eph. 4:25-32, Paul briefly addresses lying (Eph. 4:25), anger (cf. Eph. 4:26), stealing (Eph. 4:28), and right speech (Eph. 4:29). It is not clear why Paul chose to mention these four issues here; yet, it is possible that these topics were subjects about which the Ephesian believers had asked Paul or over which they were struggling. Finally, Paul's summary exhortation in Eph. 4:31-32 is to not sin regarding these moral norms, but to manifest the opposite behaviors—namely, showing kindness, being tenderhearted, and exhibiting forgiveness. The main danger in not "putting on the new man" (Eph. 4:24) is that as we sin against and stray from God; we "grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30) whose role it is to comfort and guide believers in Christ-likeness.

- David W. Jones
(Professor of Christian Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary)

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = none at all; 10 = extreme), how would you rate your ability to change your habits? Why have you rated yourself this way?
2. Vs. 26 says, "In your anger do not sin." What do you think this means, and do you think you find this easy or hard to do?
3. In verse 17, why do you think Paul calls the way of thinking that the "Gentiles" (non-Israelite, non-believers in this case) have is "futile"? What might this say about the way we should think?
4. If wholesome talk is building people up, then the unwholesome talk that Paul references here is talk that tears people down (vs. 29). Think about the deep conversations you have had in the last week. How would you describe the talks you had, and how might you want to change the way you talk this week?
5. If you are not yet a follower of God our Father, would you be willing to acknowledge him as your God, and enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life, and as your Father who loves you? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus? Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PRAYER