

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2025**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
EPHESIANS**

Message Eleven

**Learning Christ as the Reality Is in Jesus
and
Putting On the New Man**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 3:10-11

Eph. 4:17-24—This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind, ¹⁸Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; ¹⁹Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness. ²⁰But you did not so learn Christ, ²¹If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, ²²That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, ²³And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind ²⁴And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Col. 3:10-11—And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

I. The matter of learning Christ as the reality is in Jesus is difficult to comprehend, and we need to consider it very carefully:

- A. Verses 17 through 19 in Ephesians 4 are a dark background for what Paul says in verse 20: “But you did not so learn Christ.”

Eph. 4:17-19—This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind, ¹⁸Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; ¹⁹Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness.

- B. Christ is not only life to us but also an example—John 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21:
John 13:15—For I have given you an example so that you also may do even as I have done to you.

1 Pet. 2:21—For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

1. We learn from Him (Matt. 11:29) according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection.

Matt. 11:29—Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

2. During the thirty-three and a half years of His life on earth, He set up a pattern, a mold, a model; this is a matter of great significance.
3. When God put us into Christ, He put us into the mold—Eph. 4:21, 24.

Eph. 4:21—If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

Eph. 4:24—And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

4. God intends to form us into the mold of Christ:
 - a. Romans 8:29 indicates that we are to be conformed to the image of Christ, the Firstborn among many brothers.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

- b. To be conformed is to be molded.

- c. The Firstborn is the pattern, and the many brothers of the Firstborn are those who are to be conformed to this pattern.

5. To learn Christ is simply to be molded into the pattern of Christ, that is, to be “conformed” to the image of Christ—v. 29.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

- C. *The reality is in Jesus* refers to the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels—Eph. 4:21:

Eph. 4:21—If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

1. In the godless walk of the nations, the fallen people, there is vanity.

2. In the godly life of Jesus there is truth, reality—John 8:32.

John 8:32—And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

3. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God.

4. God was in His living, and He was one with God; this is what is meant by *the reality is in Jesus*.

5. We, the believers, who are regenerated with Christ as our life and are taught in Him, learn from Him as the reality is in Jesus—1:14, 17; 14:6, 17; 15:26; 16:13.

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 1:17—For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:17—*Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.*

John 15:26—But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;

John 16:13—But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.

II. “That you be renewed in the spirit of your mind”—Eph. 4:23:

- A. According to Ephesians 4:23, a verse that is vital and crucial for us, the key to putting off the old man and putting on the new man is in being renewed in the spirit of our mind.

Eph. 4:23—*And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind*

- B. A regenerated spirit is a renewed spirit; this renewed spirit must be strengthened to invade, subdue, and occupy every part of our soul—3:16-17.

Eph. 3:16-17—*That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,*

- C. Christ as the life-giving Spirit is now in our spirit, and these two spirits mingle together to form the spirit of the mind—2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17:

2 Tim. 4:22—*The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.*

1 Cor. 6:17—*But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.*

1. When the life-giving Spirit spreads into our mind, this mingled spirit becomes the spirit of our mind.

2. It is by this mingled spirit that our mind is renewed.

- D. To be renewed in the spirit of our mind is inward and intrinsic—Rom. 12:2.

Rom. 12:2—*And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.*

- E. The more we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, the more the new man with the divine essence will spread from our spirit to our soul—Eph. 4:23:

Eph. 4:23—*And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind*

1. This spreading within us is according to Christ, who is the image of God, the expression of God.

2. The more the renewing takes place in our soul, the more we will have the image of Christ, and the more we will be able to express God.

- F. The only possibility of God’s purpose being fulfilled in this age is that we would all be willing to be renewed in the spirit of our mind—v. 23.

Eph. 4:23—*And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind*

III. “Put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality”—v. 24:

- A. Verses 22 and 24 show us what we have been taught: that we put off the old man and put on the new man.

Eph. 4:22—That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,

Eph. 4:24—And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

- B. Our putting off of the old man and putting on of the new man is a manifestation of our having learned Christ.
- C. It was in baptism that we put off the old man and put on the new man—Rom. 6:4b.

Rom. 6:4—We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

- D. The new man is of Christ—Eph. 4:24:

Eph. 4:24—And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

1. It is His Body, created in Him on the cross—2:15-16.

Eph. 2:15-16—Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace, ¹⁶And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

2. It is not individual but corporate.

3. In this corporate new man Christ is all and in all—He is all the people and in all the people—Col. 3:10-11.

Col. 3:10-11—And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

- E. The old man was created outwardly according to the image of God but without God’s life and nature (Gen. 1:26-27), whereas the new man was created inwardly according to God Himself and with God’s life and nature (Col. 3:10).

Gen. 1:26-27—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. ²⁷And God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Col. 3:10—And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

- F. As the Body of Christ, the church needs Christ as its life, and as the new man, the church needs Christ as its person—John 14:6.

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

- G. This new corporate person should live a life like that which Jesus lived on the earth, that is, a life of reality that expresses God and causes God to be realized as the reality by man.
- H. Righteousness is to be right with God and with man according to God's righteous way, while holiness is godliness and devoutness before God.
- I. In Ephesians 4:24 the article before *reality* is emphatic:
Eph. 4:24—And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
 - 1. As the deceit in verse 22, related to the old man, is the personification of Satan, so the reality here, related to the new man, is the personification of God.
Eph. 4:22—That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,
 - 2. The deceit is the devil, and the reality is God.
 - 3. This reality was exhibited in the life of Jesus, as mentioned in verse 21.
Eph. 4:21—If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,
 - 4. In the life of Jesus, righteousness and holiness of the reality were continuously manifested.
 - 5. It was in the righteousness and holiness of this reality, which is God realized and expressed, that the new man was created.