

How To Live Out My New Nature

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[0 : 0 0] All right. Keep going in Ephesians. Would you take your Bibles and turn to Ephesians very quickly? If you'll notice just a moment ago, I want to see how many of y'all were paying attention, we had the slide up right before the offertory began, dismissing kids to children's church.

We had the old ages on there, so we're going to get that updated, all right? But right now, if you obeyed the slide and not my announcement earlier, that's okay. I'll forgive you. But kindergarten through second grade can be dismissed off the children's church now.

So if you're K-5 through second grade, if you'd like to make your way out, they're still hanging out back there and you're not going to be on your own. So that's what it looks like everybody did. Okay, there you go.

Good. All right. And then those younger ages, three and four, they can remain back for the duration of the time. They can just stay back there after Sunday school and they'll have programming for them as well now.

So Ephesians, all right? How many of y'all have been enjoying Paul's letter to the Ephesians, getting something out of it? Yeah? Wonderful. Before we get into it here, let me quiz you a little bit.

[1 : 1 1] You ready? I'm excited. Let me quiz you a little bit. Ephesians. How many parts, how many sections are there?

Two. There we go. Anybody remember what they stand for, what they teach? First one is? Who we are. Second part? How we live. Y'all have been paying attention.

I love it. You are a wonderful congregation. Well, that is what we're talking about. And we are, are we in the first part of the second part now? Second part, that's right.

First part was chapters one through three. And the second part is chapters four through six. We are finishing up Ephesians chapter four today. So if you will go to Ephesians chapter four and beginning in verse 25, we will read down through the end of the chapter and dive into it.

So I'm still waiting for this thing to connect here. For some reason it's not wanting to. All right. I may need y'all to have manually advanced the slides for me.

[2 : 1 9] If you would just kind of listen to what I'm talking about and we will go on from there. Jump ahead to that first slide. This one's not wanting to cooperate this morning.

All right. I have been studying through Ephesians primarily out of the Christ-centered exposition. That's that book that you'll see on the slide in just a minute, Exalting Jesus in Ephesians.

And that whole series is an outstanding series on expository commentaries of the Bible. So they'll take a book of the Bible and a well-known pastor, theologian, writer will break it down.

And usually with the help from some others as well. And that is an awesome series. I also use some other series. How many of y'all remember I recently got the Warren Wiersbe commentary set?

Because I bragged about it last Sunday when somebody said, What was your favorite gift? And I really got Billy Carlton and Bruce Cochran upset because they took me to the Big 12 championship game in Dallas to watch the Longhorns win the Big 12 championship.

[3 : 26] And they assumed that was going to be my favorite gift. But as much as I loved that, no, it was wonderful. So I think it's an awesome thing.

Let me tell you this just for a moment. Let me tell you this. Commentaries are not only for pastors. Commentaries are books that are written about books in the Bible.

Oftentimes as we read through, the Holy Spirit will move in our hearts and minds and he'll teach us things that are important for us to know from the scriptures. It can also be helpful to read what he's taught others.

So when there are men and women who have walked with God for many years and they have a great track record of walking with God and God using them in their ministry, sometimes God tasks them to write down what they've gleaned from the scriptures.

Sometimes it's a cooperative effort. There'll be several of them get together and put together a commentary on a book of the Bible. And that can be a very helpful thing to read as you read through the scriptures.

[4 : 35] So sometimes there's more devotional commentaries, more practical commentaries. Sometimes there's more scholarly commentaries. That's the kind of stuff I had to read in seminary and all that kind of stuff.

But commentaries are very helpful and I use them significantly as I prepare sermons. So the background of the book, of course, it was written by Paul around AD 62.

And are we able to advance through those slides physically or no? Just no slides? All right, don't worry. Not going to worry about it. Hey, would you exit out of that and start it over again?

It may just need to update. All right, that's okay. So it was written by Paul and the setting was when he was in prison in Rome.

And he knew this church well in Ephesus. He had been their pastor for about three years. And the account of that is found in Acts chapter 19. So let's move ahead now to Ephesians 4 and verse 25.

[5 : 39] Would you, if you're able to, would you join me in standing and let's read verse 25 down through verse 32. Ephesians 5, 25.

I'm reading from the Christian Standard Bible. Therefore, putting away lying, speak the truth, each one to his neighbor. Because we are members of one another.

When we see the word therefore in the scriptures, what do we ask? What is it there for? Right? So that means you've got to look at the verses prior to that and see why it's saying therefore.

And what we talked about last Sunday is our new nature in Christ. So we understand that we have this new identity, a new self, the one created according to God's likeness and righteousness and purity of the truth.

Therefore, because of this, let's put away lying. Speak the truth to our neighbors. Because we're members of one another. Verse 26. Be angry and do not sin.

[6 : 44] Well, y'all were having fun for a minute there when it said be angry, right? Yes, I knew I was justified in being angry. But the caveat is do not sin in your anger.

Don't let the sun go down on your anger. Don't give the devil an opportunity. Verse 28. Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands so that he has something to share with anyone in need.

No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need so that it gives grace to those who hear. And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit.

You were sealed by him for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, anger, and wrath, shouting, and slander be removed from you along with all malice.

Bless and be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ. Let's pray together.

[7 : 48] Lord, we thank you for this day. This is the day that you have made. We're going to rejoice. We're going to be glad in it. We thank you for bringing us to this place.

Thank you for providing this house that we get to gather and worship in every Sunday. Thank you that we are not alone, that you've given us your Holy Spirit, that you've given us one another for encouragement, for edification, for fellowship, for enjoying each other.

God, I pray that you would unite us as a church. And I pray that you would open up the windows of heaven and pour out your blessings on this church. Individually and together. Let every family, every individual person receive the reality of how good and how great you are, God, in visible ways this year.

We're going to trust you for it. And do our best to walk with you and live by faith every day. In Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. We are up and rolling. Look at that.

I love it. Thank you guys. Thank you all so much. All right. We're going to jump on ahead here to last Sunday. We talked about, I'm sorry, this Sunday, we're talking about how to live out our new nature.

[9 : 10] Last Sunday, we talked about the new nature. New year, new nature. We're reminding ourselves that if we are in Christ, if we have accepted Christ Jesus, his payment on the cross for our sin, and we've chosen to turn from our sin, repent of it, and put our faith in Jesus for forgiveness and become his child, then we have a new nature.

Now, we don't always live in that new nature. Sometimes we act like the old version of ourselves, right? But the reality is we are indwelt by God. The Holy Spirit of God lives inside of us, goes with us everywhere we go.

When we look at those things on the computer, God's there. When we say those things to that person, God's there. When we think those thoughts, God's there. He's with us. But you know what? He's also there in the good times.

He's also there, and we see his manifold blessings displayed in our lives. He goes with us everywhere. And so that new nature is always with us. Let's try to live in that nature.

How do we do that? How do we live out our new nature? Number one, replace lying with the truth. Replace lying with the truth. Let's look back at verse 25.

[10 : 22] Therefore, putting away lying, speak the truth, each one, to his neighbor, because we are members of one another. You understand that idea that we're members of one another?

Why would one body part lie to another body part? That's not going to help the body, is it? It's not going to help your eyes to lie to your hands.

Then your hands are going to do something they shouldn't do because your eyes aren't communicating correctly with them. And vice versa. So when we understand, remember back in the fall when we did a series on we are the church, and God looks at us as a body with every member of the body having equal value and importance to the church.

So when we understand that, then we understand that there's no reason to lie to one another. There's no reason to deceive one another. We should live honestly and openly with each other.

So we replace lying with the truth. We're understanding that there's an old nature and a new nature at war in ourselves, in our physical bodies, in our minds.

[11 : 37] All of this works together to either go with our old nature or our new nature. So if we understand that our old nature will lead us to the path of destruction, and we understand that our new nature will lead us on the path that God wants us to walk, then we have to replace the old way with the new way.

You can't just stop doing something without replacing it. You understand that? They teach that in addiction therapy. When you stop doing illegal drugs or you stop alcohol or tobacco or whatever it is that has been binding you in addictions, then you have to replace that with something else.

So we replace lying with the truth. George Orwell, famous author. How many of you guys read 1984 Animal Farm? There's some far out there literature that he wrote.

However, and I don't believe that he was a believer in Jesus. However, this truth is very powerful in a time of universal deceit. Would you say that the world we live in is a time of universal deceit?

Telling the truth is a revolutionary act. And that is very true. Our God is a God of truth. Jesus said, I am the way, the what?

[12 : 55] Truth and the way. Jesus is the truth. His way is always the truth. Truth, Satan is the father of what? Lies. So let's not live that way.

Let's not live that old, satanic, sinful nature. Let's walk with Jesus. And the world will actually see it as a revolutionary truth. You mean you didn't pad your resume?

You mean you didn't embellish? You mean you didn't lie to make yourself look better? You mean you didn't lie to get out of trouble? Wow, who are you? I'm a Jesus follower. And I'm not perfect. But I've got to stick with the truth.

Telling the truth is a revolutionary act. Zechariah chapter 8 and verse 16. These are the things which you should do. Speak the truth to one another.

Judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates. Do you understand that peace comes from the truth? Now the truth might stir things up.

[13 : 54] It might shake things up initially. But eventually it will bring peace. Because it's the truth. And people have to accept it.

And people have to learn to live with it. When there's deceit, there's no solid ground. There's nothing that will ever be ultimately resolved. There's no peace that can be found there.

Because we can't trust each other. We can't believe each other. So we must speak the truth to one another. And when we judge, we must do it with truth.

And that will bring peace in our midst. Ephesians 4.15, just a few verses before. Ten verses back. Speaking the truth in love. This is a great note that I'm glad God inspired Paul to include in this chapter.

Because as we talk about speaking the truth, we must learn how to do it. We must speak it lovingly. Jesus never lied to us. Jesus never lied to the sinners he encountered.

[14 : 59] He told them, go and sin no more. He didn't whitewash their sin. But he spoke the truth to them lovingly. And we must do that to each other.

When we see each other in error, we should not go from our high horse shaking our finger at somebody. Or going behind their back and talking to others about them.

We must speak the truth in love. True love for that person. Born out of God's love for them. And we love God because he first loved us.

So when that heart, when our heart is full of God's love, then we will genuinely care about that person and not just want to take them down. Not just want to bring the truth out.

Not just be angry at them or feel betrayed by them. We will speak the truth to them in love. So, how do we live out our new nature? We replace lying with the truth.

[15 : 59] Number two, we replace fleshly anger with spiritual anger. We replace our fleshly anger, which comes all too easily, with spiritual anger.

Which is very hard. Back in verse 26. Be angry and do not sin. Don't let the sun go down on your anger. And don't give the devil an opportunity.

Check this out. The husband says, I know the prince's small. When I get mad at you, you never fight back. How do you control your anger? The wife says, I clean the toilet. Husband says, how does that help?

And she says, I use your toothbrush. Look, we have anger problems, don't we? We don't always work them out in the best ways. In the healthiest of ways.

Half of y'all need to go to anger management. I hear it's all the rage these days. I'm sorry. I apologize for that. Puns are the lowest form of humor.

[17 : 00] They're not very punny. All right. So yes, we do not usually address our issues, our conflicts, in the most healthy ways. Oftentimes, we resort to fleshly anger.

And that drives our reactions, our decisions, our words. And usually, it compounds the problem, makes things worse rather than better. This verse is a direct parallel passage with Psalm 4-4.

So you can look at it on the screen or turn there if you'd like to. But Psalm 4-4, be angry and do not sin. Reflect in your heart while on your bed and be silent. This was a Psalm of David.

He was writing probably to his mighty men. There's some conflict on maybe who this Psalm was written to. But more than likely, he was writing it to his warriors, his soldiers.

And so he's telling them, as you're facing this opposition, these wicked opponents of God, and you're literally going to battle with them, be angry but do not sin.

[18 : 00] Reflect in your heart while on your bed and be silent. Folks, can I tell you, that is a wonderful bit of advice for when we're angry. Reflect in your heart while on your bed and be silent.

That doesn't mean turn it over in your mind and get yourself all worked up and think of all the different angles of why you were wrong. Reflect in your heart on how good God has been to you, how many times he's forgiven you, how many times you failed yourself and failed others and failed God, but how God doesn't hold that against you.

God has never treated you with anger, and it's a good idea to be silent in those moments and let that new nature, the Holy Spirit of God, become real, become alive.

Show itself. Live through you. Transform your thinking. Change your thinking from selfish, fleshly anger into God's peace.

So what do we mean, then, if it says be angry? There are some things which should cause anger in us. David's men were facing some of those things.

[19 : 24] Nations rising up against the people of God, trying to worship other gods and force the children of Israel into that kind of worship. There were things that were causing righteous anger or righteous indignation then.

And there are things still alive in the world today which should stir up righteous anger inside of us. Over the break, my wife and I finally got an opportunity to watch The Sound of Freedom.

And so we did. How many of you guys have seen that movie? Yeah, a bunch of us. One of our church members very generously provided an opportunity for many people in our church to go up to Wichita and watch that movie together.

But listen, The Sound of Freedom, all about child trafficking. One of the worst sins, most damaging sins you can possibly think of. That was a hard movie to watch and get through.

But that stirred up righteous anger in me as I watched it. And I think many of you as well. There are terrible things in the world today which should stir up anger.

[20 : 29] But you know what's also coupled with that anger? Grief. Sorrow. That this world is so wicked and sinful and lost without Christ that they're doing these unspeakable things and hurting each other so terribly.

And so this is the kind of anger that is righteous anger. So that's what I believe, before we get on to the next one, that's what I believe God's talking about when he says be angry because we see moments where Jesus was angry without sin.

And usually, it was directed toward the religious people. Those who were making it hard for others to come to Christ. Those who were painting a deluded or changed picture of the grace and love of God and what Jesus' salvation was all about.

So usually, he would exhibit some kind of righteous anger toward them. But he always reminded them of who he was and he always gave them an opportunity to put their faith in him.

So we must be angry, but not sin. And sometimes it's a good idea when we're angry to just be silent. Number three, replace stealing with working and sharing.

[21 : 48] Replace stealing with working and sharing. Well, let's look back at verse 28 real quick. Ephesians 4 and verse 28. Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he's to do honest work with his own hands so that he has something to share with anyone in need.

You understand there's a mind shift here. There's a mind shift. Philippians, Paul writes about it again in his letter to the church at Philippi. Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.

First Corinthians 10, 24. Paul had to hit this with all these churches, okay? It was this concept. No one is to seek his own good, but the good of the other person. You understand this shift in our mindset, in our thinking?

I don't know how many of us sitting in the crowd today are going out and stealing things from stores. Now, maybe some of you are. You need to stop that, okay?

You might go to jail, all right? Stop. But it goes beyond that. There's a whole mind shift here in thinking I'm going to get what's good for me.

[22 : 54] I'm going to get what I want. That's that flesh. That's that old nature. Instead, we replace that thinking with hard work and sharing. I'm going to work hard and receive God's blessings on my life, not so I can have the retirement home I want or I can do all the traveling I want.

If God brings those things to me, wonderful. But I'm going to work hard and receive God's blessings so I can share and be a blessing to others.

That's the concept. Now, that's hard, okay? Before we get on, that's hard. That is not easy. That's a mind shift. It actually goes against the American dream, doesn't it?

Got to work hard, get everything you can and then retire and live the good life. Well, how good is the good life if you're not helping anybody else? So God wants you to receive and experience that fulfillment that says stop fighting and scrapping over the little things that you can accumulate on this earth.

Instead, understand that I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I have vast unlimited riches. I can take care of everything you need and give you so much more.

[24 : 15] But I want you to experience my way. I want you to experience the joy of giving, the joy of sharing. And Jesus was the ultimate example of that when he sent his one and only son, his greatest, most treasured possession as a gift to you and me.

He said, I will hold nothing back from you. To forgive you of your sin, I will allow my son to be sacrificed so he can pay the punishment for your sin.

But Jesus didn't stay dead, did he? Because he's God. He arose from the grave. He's alive today. He can hear us when we call on him. And if today is the day for you to repent of your sin and put your faith in Jesus to save you, please make that decision today.

Don't leave this place without taking care of that business. You'll have a chance at the end to come talk to me about that. That's the mindset. It's giving. It's holding nothing back.

When we experience that mind shift, that's our new nature coming out from the Holy Spirit of God. Finally, second to last, replace words of destruction with words of grace.

[25 : 28] Replace words of destruction with words of grace. Verse 29. No foul language should come from your mouth. Only what is good for building someone up in need so it gives grace to those who hear.

And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. You were sealed by him for the day of redemption. Let all that bitterness, anger, wrath, shouting, and slander be removed from you along with all malice and extreme hatred.

And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another just as God also forgave you in Christ. I'm reminded of the 19th Psalm. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

That is our prayer. God, let the words of my mouth not undermine, not destroy, not tear at the foundation of someone's life. There's been things going on in the school online with kids bullying each other and making fun of each other and mocking each other.

That must stop. Our words can hurt. Whoever said sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me was the biggest lie. Okay?

[26 : 40] That was absolutely not true. Words can often do more harm than sticks and stones. Because the body can heal. The mind and soul is much more difficult.

So we must put a watch, put a guard over our mouths. And today, we can speak not only to those who can physically hear us, but we can speak online, can't we?

Our words can go to a much broader audience. And man, if you've spent any time on social media, you know how damaging that can be. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6, 45, what you say flows from what is in your heart.

Another translation would say, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. What comes out of you, what comes out of your mouth or what comes out of your fingers on that computer keyboard or phone texting screen, whatever you say, that shows your true nature.

What's really happening in you. What a terrifying thought. So, here's the point to ponder. How often do my words or my actions cause grief to the God who loves me so deeply?

[28 : 05] We saw that back in verse 30. Don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. You understand verse 30 is tied back in with verse 29 where it said, no foul language should come out of your mouth.

And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. This is one of the most devastating things that you can do. This is one of the most grievous sins that God can do.

I'm sorry, that you can do. And it grieves God so deeply when our words cause such harm, such destruction. So, we have to ask ourselves, how often does that happen?

How often do my words, do my actions grieve the God who calls me so deeply? Even if we think they're justified. Even in that fleshly anger, we think that we were in the right and we've got our both barrels loaded and ready to just give them everything that they deserve.

We understand that while we are hurting that person, we're also grieving God. Because we're not living in our new nature. We're going back to our old nature where it's all about us.

[29 : 17] So, last week, we said new year, new nature. Here's a chance for a reset. To look at our values and say, what is really important to us?

Is pleasing God important to me? Then I'm going to strive to live by the leading of the Holy Spirit and live out my new nature. How do we do that? We do that by replacing lying with the truth.

Replacing fleshly anger with spiritual anger. Replacing stealing with working and sharing. Replacing words of destruction with words of grace. That's our new creation.

When we are converted, then that process is transforming us. The growth process, the walking with God process transforms us. Romans chapter 12 and verse 2, we read it last week.

God transforms you into a new person by changing the way you think. But back up and look at verse 1. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, because this is your true worship.

[30 : 24] How many of you guys like to worship God as much as you can every day by uplifted hand? Anybody like to worship God? How many of you plan on worshipping God when you come to church on Sundays? Together, right? Yeah, of course.

Here's the reality. Our true worship is how often we put ourselves to death and we live by the Holy Spirit. You understand we're not talking about a physical death with yourself.

we're talking about killing off your own flesh that causes you to sin to go to your old nature and saying I sacrifice that a living sacrifice so I can be pleasing to God.

I can be holy and I can truly worship Him. Here's the takeaway. My true nature is revealed in my words, actions, and attitudes toward others.

all three. Our words, our actions, and our attitudes. That reveals our true nature. Let's let God bring that new nature alive in our church.

[31 : 33] How amazing would it be if in 2024 people said man, those first Baptist people in Henrietta are just different this year. They're just nicer.

I don't know. How amazing would it be if God did a work in my heart, in your heart, and together we see God do incredible things in our lives and throughout this community and beyond because we're surrendering to the new nature.

Amen? Let's pray together. God, I ask that you would do just that. I ask that you would not leave us alone, God. Convict us every day. Convict us every moment when we fail.

God, we're gonna fail. There's no doubt. We're gonna respond in anger at some point. It's gonna happen. But I ask that you would not leave us alone in those moments. That you would convict us deeply.

That you would remind us there is a better way. There's a more joyful, more pleasing to God way. Help us to trust that and walk in that.

[32 : 39] And more and more every day surrender to your spirit not our own flesh. We'll give you all the glory for it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Would you stand here?