MESSAGE OUTLINE



Where Are You Now?

IN THE LORD

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind

What Paul means by walk is our lifestyle: **Ephesians 4:1** ***"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called..."***

Paul tells the Gentile believers not to act like Gentiles, this might sound like he is saying to act Jewish.

Afterall, Paul is Jewish: **Romans 11:1,** ***"I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."***

But Paul is unifying the Jews and the Gentiles into the one Body of the Messiah. ***"Testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."*** **Acts 20:21**

So how does Paul want these Gentiles to now see themselves?

Remember Paul rebuked Peter, ***"If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?'"*** **Galatians 2:14**

Paul is explicitly calling out the hypocrisy of forcing Gentiles to adopt Jewish customs.

What does he mean? He says to no longer walk as Gentiles walk in the futility of their minds:

21 ...Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools... 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. **Romans 1:21-25**

Futility isn't zero truth, it is knowing the truth and living as if it wasn't true.

In marriage counseling, I remind couples that their love is not only focused on each other, but that they need to love the Lord first, and then each other.

"Tell me where all the good people go?" "They go to church."

I know what you are thinking... Too good to be true. But...

John 6:66-70 - *"From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and <u>one of you is a devil?</u>"*

Church is not perfect, no, and it was not expected to be. But we are coming to church, to be IN Christ.

My question is, are you committed to this body of believers?

But it should not end there. The rest of the world is **living in futility.**

Small Groups are our answer, they are lifeboats in society. An antidote to broken relationships.

But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. **1 Corinthians 1:24, NLT**

Church is what our identity is, not in the world, but In Christ, right here and in Small Group.

ALIEN NATION

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Paul says of them, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God…

It is a completed action in the past. It has resulted in their continued state. **A Godless Nation.**

How did they become this way? Their hearts are hard, unable to comprehend what love is.

Having a lack of feelings, v.19. Meaning they are without mercy.

This is what the faithful have, something the world does not comprehend—the Power of Love.

Is Paul pointing his finger at the unsaved? **No, that's *YOU,*** to stop being worldly and judgemental.

He warned the Romans that looking down on the unsaved Jews, would risk being cut off.

We should never look at the world or any nation with *eyes of scorn*.

Romans 11:13-22

13 I am speaking to you Gentiles. In as much as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry 14 in the hope that I may provoke my own people to jealousy and save some of them. 15 For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 If the first part of the dough is holy, so is the whole batch; if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 Now if some branches have been broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others to share in the nourishment of the olive root, 18 do not boast over those branches. If you do, remember this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20 That is correct: They were broken off because of unbelief, but you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will certainly not spare you either. 22 Take notice, therefore, of the kindness and severity of God: severity to those who fell, but kindness to you, if you continue in His kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

There is no nation even today who is not in need of Christ.

11:32 - *For God has consigned everyone to disobedience so that He may have mercy on everyone.*
This is **Romans 3:23,** but with a twist… so that God may give mercy to everyone.

John 3:16, *For God so loved the World!* **Is there anyone that you don't have the capacity to love?**

If they are not beyond the capacity for an all righteous and holy God who hates sin and everything that is evil, how can you place them in a category that is beyond His mercy and love?

Is your heart so callous?

We are all pretty good at worshipping God! But we still need to work on loving each other.
Paul knows how evil our hearts still are, yet he believes you're capable of being better.

Because we have a relationship with the living God through Jesus Christ.

THE APPLICATION

20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

"Learned Christ," is personal. More than just *in Christ*. Meaning, He is now one with you.

The new person is inside every believer, ready to come forth, renewed from the grave.

So that, your dead flesh falls off, and you will emerge clothed with a new person that now moves and lives a *lifestyle* according to God in true righteousness and holiness.

So what emerges, like in circumcision, is a heart that is sensitive to feeling and not calloused, able to no longer live as the world does in corruption and deceitful lusts.

The Holy Spirit lives in us, our true righteousness. And now He goes wherever we go.

But there's a catch to this: His presence to those on the outside of you, comes from where you go.

If we want people to know Jesus Christ, it happens through us as Ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

Pointless are Christians who don't share the Gospel wherever they go during the rest of the week.

Story of the Ark & The Mercy Seat - **<u>That's supposed to be you.</u>**

2 Corinthians 5:20 - *we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us.*

CONCLUSION

25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

Notice, he said neighbors. The word is really talking about proximity. The ones who are near you.

And who is my neighbor? Someone challenged Jesus with this question.

Colossians in 4:5 *Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.*

So the question really isn't "Where are you now?" but "Where is Christ now?"

Will you show Christ to the world? Not with eyes or scorn, but of mercy - the same mercy you received? Let me tell you... they need it. It's falling apart fast, and they all really need it.

INVITATION

Are you depressed? Confused? Lost? Tired? Lacking power and love? or Unable to change yourself? Let me invite you to come, see, and walk with Him.

When you are in Him, He will be with you wherever you go.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **Ezekiel 36:26**

He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. **John 7:38**

Jesse Mark Cesario
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