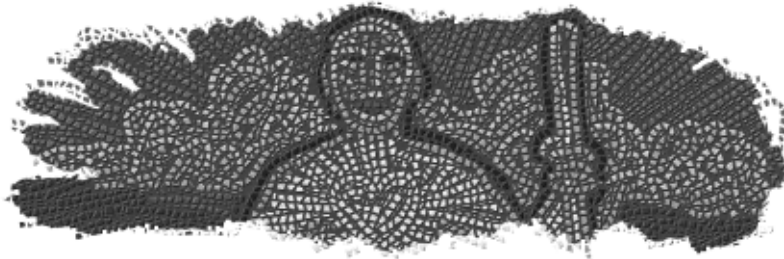


# Living the New Life



## SABBATH—NOVEMBER 19

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Romans 1:26-32; Romans 3:10-18; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; Ephesians 4:17-32; Philippians 4:8, 9.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Be kind and tender [gentle] to one another. Forgive each other, just as God forgave you because of what Christ has done” (Ephesians 4:32, NIV).

**PAUL'S LIST OF USEFUL STEPS** for Christian unity began with a call to Jewish and Gentile<sup>1</sup> Christians. Christians are to “walk worthy of the calling with which you [they] were called” (Ephesians 4:1, NKJV). This walk includes many important things. The first is that the unity of Christ's body is to be protected among the differences within the church (Ephesians 4:1-12). The second deals with walking in a new way. This new way is very important for keeping the unity Paul talks about.

This new way is not a slight change or an improvement of the old way. The new way is a complete change that does away with old values.<sup>2</sup> The new way is a totally new lifestyle in thought, character, values, relationships,<sup>3</sup> and reasons. It is passing from death to life. It is a change of owners from Satan to Christ.

**A LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** How does Paul describe worldly people? How does the life of a person change after she or he accepts Christ? How is the new life to be shown among Christians? How is the new life related to the unity of the church as a whole? What part does the Holy Spirit play in the new life? How are we to be “imitators” (copiers) (Ephesians 5:1, NKJV) of God?

\*Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, November 26.

<sup>1</sup>Gentile—a person who is not a Jew.

<sup>2</sup>values—ways of thinking that govern what we do.

<sup>3</sup>relationships—the connections we have with other people.

**SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 20****PUT AWAY THE OLD  
(Ephesians 4:17-22).**

A life “worthy of the calling” (Ephesians 4:1, NKJV) is a life of unity and growth. But it is also a new life. This new life is a series of negatives and positives. The first negative is to “put off . . . the old man”<sup>4</sup> (Ephesians 4:22). The Christian life begins with a clean, clear break from the past. Paul asks the Ephesians to “no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk” (Ephesians 4:17, NKJV). To the Romans, Paul spoke more seriously. He called upon them to crucify the old man “that the body of sin might be done away with” (Romans 6:6, NKJV).

**List some of the ways of the old man (person) as listed in Ephesians 4:17-24. Also read Romans 3:10-18. How does Paul describe worldly people? Are worldly people this way today? Explain your answer.**

In his description of the Ephesians, Paul uses words such as darkness, ignorance (lack of knowledge), and blindness that led them into sin. Because of sin, their minds could not understand spiritual truth. As a result, their lives were wasted in looking for

God in themselves or in worthless idols or in foolish ways of thinking. They were involved in false teachings and lived in spiritual darkness (Ephesians 4:18; Romans 1:19-21). They were so hardened in sin, they could not tell the difference between good and evil. The pleasures of the body became their favorite hobby. They lived in “lewdness [evil pleasures],” “uncleanness,” and “greediness [selfishness]” (Ephesians 4:19, NKJV; Romans 1:26-32). Paul tells the believers: Do not ever go back to the old life.

**What is Paul saying in Ephesians 4:19? How does a person lose “all feeling for what is right” (NIRV)? Was there a time when you “lost all feeling for what is right”? Why is losing “all feeling for what is right” a danger even to a person who claims to be a Christian? What is the only protection against this problem?**

**MONDAY—NOVEMBER 21**

**“PUT ON THE NEW” (Romans 12:1, 2; Ephesians 4:20-24).**

**Paul has told the believers to “put off . . . the old man [person]” (Ephesians 4:22). What advice does Paul give next? Ephesians 4:22-24.**

<sup>4</sup>put off the old man—when a person accepts Christ, he or she throws away the old way of life and accepts the new life in Christ.



**Put away the old life. Put on the new life  
Christ gives us.**

When people accept Christ, they put off their old lifestyle. But putting off the old lifestyle is not enough. Christianity is not a religion of negatives. Christianity expects the believer to rise to a higher standard of moral and spiritual living. So Paul says: “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind and . . . put on the new man” (Ephesians 4:23, 24, NKJV).

The life of the old person is marked by a useless mind. But the life of the new person is marked by a renewed mind. “Do not be conformed to [the same as] this world, but be transformed<sup>5</sup> by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2, NKJV).

**How are believers to renew their**

**minds? Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; Philippians 4:8, 9.**

Paul describes the useless, dark, and sinful life of the unbelievers (Ephesians 4:17-20). Then Paul adds that unbelievers were taught to give up such a life when they came to Christ. By using the words “learned,” “heard,” and “taught,” Paul reminds the Ephesian Christians that they already know the results of salvation and the new birth on their lifestyle. This knowledge did not come to them from humans but from Jesus Himself (Ephesians 4:21). Paul’s use of Jesus’ name is not an accident. He wants the believers to know that the real Jesus is Himself the Truth and the Teacher of truth (John 14:6).

“Those who receive the Savior become sons of God. . . . Their minds are changed. . . . From loving themselves, they come to love God and Christ more than they love anything else.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White Comments, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1117.

**In your experience as a Christian, did you find that suddenly your heart, thoughts, motives,<sup>6</sup> and actions became pure? If not, what useful, day-by-day things can you do to help you reach this desired goal? At the same time, what are you doing to slow down the work of making yourself pure?**

<sup>5</sup>transformed—to have been completely changed.

<sup>6</sup>motives—reasons for what we do.

**TUESDAY—NOVEMBER 22****LIVE THE NEW LIFE  
(Ephesians 4:25-29).**

Paul is not too much of a dreamer. One minute he can lift us up to the most noble thoughts of God. But a minute later he can bring us down to the real issues of Christian life. Paul lists four things the new life must have. These things are so simple. But they are so important to good relationships.

1. *Put away lying. Speak the truth* (Ephesians 4:25). Lies hurt relationships and destroy trust. Truth builds trust, strengthens relationships, and protects unity.

**How has lying hurt your relationships with others?**

2. *“When . . . angry, do not sin”* (Ephesians 4:26, NIV). Sometimes we face situations that make us angry. When we do, we need to be careful about three things: (1) Do not sin. Do not let your anger lead you to breaking the law. (2) Do not let the sun go down without making things right. (3) Do not give Satan a chance to use your anger to destroy unity and relationships.

**How has Satan used anger against you and your relationships?**

3. *Do not steal, but work* (Ephesians 4:28).

There are many kinds of stealing. Taking what is not yours, keeping what belongs to another, and destroying a person’s name or character are all stealing. Christians have a high standard of righteous (holy) living. Honest work, an unselfish life, kindness, and protecting others are marks of the new life in Christ.

**How has stealing influenced you or someone you know in a negative way?**

4. *Guard your tongue. Be edifying (positive) in speech* (Ephesians 4:29). Words are powerful tools. Words can be a great blessing. But Paul warns against corrupt talk. The Greek word for corrupt also means rotten. Rottenness, swearing, and gossip have no place in our speech. A Christian’s speech should always be encouraging.



**Gossip has no place in the new life Christ gives us.**

**When was the last time you were hurt by negative words? How important is living the “new life” (Ephesians 4:24, NlrV) for church unity?**

### **WEDNESDAY—NOVEMBER 23**

**“GRIEVE [SADDEN] NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT” (Ephesians 4:30).**

The church at Ephesus began when Paul put his hands on the believers to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-7). So it is no surprise Paul speaks at least twelve times about the Holy Spirit in Ephesians.

**Use the verses below to learn what Paul says about the Holy Spirit.**

Ephesians 2:18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 6:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paul says that the Holy Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6), sonship (Romans 8:16), understanding (1 Corinthians 2:10-16), fruit (Galatians 5:22), hope for the future (Galatians 5:5), spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), sanctification<sup>7</sup> (Romans 15:16), and power (Romans 8:11), et cetera.

Paul clearly put great importance on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and the church. So his advice is: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. Paul’s advice shows that the Holy Spirit is an active Person in the Godhead,<sup>8</sup> sensitive to relationships. To grieve the Holy Spirit is the same as making the Father and the Son sad. All we have to do is read the Bible to see how much God cares about our actions. We also can see how our sins cause Him pain. Every person who is brought into God’s family by the Holy Spirit has responsibilities. When we fail in those responsibilities, we grieve (sadden) the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son. It is hard for us to understand that God could really be saddened and hurt by what we do. But that is what the Bible tells us. Jesus’ life shows us the loving care God has for His people. If God loves us and cares for us, it is not surprising He could feel hurt by what we do.

<sup>7</sup>sanctification—becoming like Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit. Jesus living in us so we develop His character; Jesus’ work of making us holy.

<sup>8</sup>Godhead—God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), God the Holy Spirit.



Jesus' life shows us how much God loves us.

What things might you have done in the past twenty-four hours that would have made the Holy Spirit sad? Were these things unavoidable? If they were not unavoidable, why did you do them?

### THURSDAY—NOVEMBER 24

**“BE JUST LIKE HIM [GOD]”**  
(Ephesians 4:31–5:1, NIrV).

Paul commands those who are saved and now living as one united body of Jews and Gentiles to walk in the new life. This new life involves many details: putting off, putting on, continuing in faith, not making the Holy Spirit sad. In today's lesson, Paul presents a one-sentence summary of the new way: “Be just like him [God]” (Ephesians 5:1, NIrV).

**How can sinful humans be just like God?**

Paul tells us to be like God. Then he asks us to be “as dear children” (Ephesians 5:1, NKJV). When a parent and child have a very close relationship, often the child becomes like the parent. So, the more time we spend with God in prayer and study, the more like Him we will become.

“Just as children copy their parents, so we should copy Christ. Christ's great love for us led Him to sacrifice Himself so that we might live. Our love for others should be like Christ's love. This is love that goes above personal feeling to self-sacrificing service.”  
—Adapted from *Life Application Bible*, on Ephesians 5:1, 2.

What three attitudes<sup>9</sup> should make our lives? Ephesians 4:32. How does each attitude reflect God? What could you do to better show each attitude in your life?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**It was Christmas Eve. A child in torn clothes stood looking through the window of a store. She was looking at a pretty doll. But she**

<sup>9</sup>attitudes—how you think and feel about something.

had no money to buy the doll. Just then, a man removed the doll from the window. The little girl's face became sad, but soon brightened up when the man came out of the store and gave the doll to her. She looked up and asked, "Are you God?" Maybe no one has ever said something quite like that to you. But how have you reflected God's character to someone recently?



### FRIDAY—NOVEMBER 25

**ADDITIONAL STUDY:** *Christ's work on changing our lives:* "Jesus Himself, in His unlimited mercy,<sup>10</sup> is working on human hearts. He is bringing on spiritual changes so wonderful that angels look on with surprise and joy. The same unselfish love of Jesus is seen in the character and life of His true followers. Christ expects that people will reflect His glory to the world. Then they will bring light to the world with the glory of heaven."—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 731.

<sup>10</sup>mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

<sup>11</sup>standards—rules for Christian living based on the Bible.

*Unrenewed church members:* "Members who have not been renewed in heart and changed in life bring weakness to the church. People often overlook this weakness. Some ministers and churches are so interested in church growth that they do not deal faithfully with disciplining members for un-Christian habits and practices."—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 172.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How would you answer someone who believes the Christian idea of basic human sinfulness is wrong?
2. Have someone in class read aloud the second Ellen G. White quote listed above. Then discuss what she is saying. How do we keep the right balance between (1) having a church that welcomes sinners and brings them to the Cross, but (2) at the same time, keeps the standards<sup>11</sup> of Christian life high?
3. Ask class members to talk about someone they knew who truly reflected God's character. Who was that person? What did he or she do? What influence did that person have on their life?
4. Have class members name one great change Christ has brought into their life. Discuss the different answers.