

EPHESIANS

(Study 7) Ephesians 4:17-32: Week beginning 21 April 2008

Paul has spelt out to the Ephesians the great work Christ has done for them in making them alive, when previously they'd been spiritually dead. Now, in the second half of the letter, he moves on to practical consequences of this great rescue for the way we should live as Christians today. Just as he has shown us what God has done for us in the "before and after" of becoming a Christian, now he shows us how that "before and after" should work out in our practical behaviour.

Note here that *Gentile* is used in the sense of "not God's people", i.e. non-Christians. Note also the tremendous stress on mind/ mindset as Paul talks about the difference Christ makes.

4:17-19

What mustn't we do now we're Christians?

Why not? What can we learn from Paul's analysis of the world about us?

Why do you think Paul is so emphatic in v17?

4:20-24

By contrast, what's happened to the people Paul's writing to?

What picture is Paul making use of to illustrate how we must now live (22, 24)?

Compare this paragraph with the previous one (17-19). What particular aspect of us does Paul emphasise again and again and again? Where, then, does transformed living begin?

4:25-32

Interestingly, Paul puts *truth* at the top of the list; after all, ignorance characterises the Gentile [18] and the truth of Jesus the Christian [21].

Go through the two paragraphs here, in each case seeing:

- * what we need to put off;
- * what we need to put on instead;
- * why;
- * real, practical examples of how this will work out in your life.