

Westwood Baptist Church *Grounded. Growing. Going.*



Worship Guide for May 1, 2022

Sermon Notes

The Nitty Gritty of the New Self Ephesians 4:25-32

The central theme of Ephesians 4 is the unity and purity of Christ's church. Through Christ, God has reconciled us to himself, and he has reconciled us to one another as "one new man". By grace he has redeemed and adopted us as his beloved children, making us members of his family. Once we were pagans, lost and separated from God. But we are not who we once were. We are different people who have been called to live differently. Our new identity as God's people involves new standards, a new way of life that is radically different than the old way of living. To "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called" (Eph 4:1) is to live according to God's character, according to "the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph 4:24)

While we are saved by grace alone through faith in Christ, we are not passive spectators in the Christian life. *"Holiness is not a condition into which we drift. When God recreates us in Christ according to his own likeness, we entirely concur with what he has done. We 'put off' our old life, turning away from it in distaste, and we 'put on' the new life he has created, embracing it and welcoming it with joy. In a word, recreation (what God does) and repentance (what we do by his grace) belong together and cannot be separated."* (John Stott)

In today's passage, the work of putting off the old man gets down to the nitty gritty of everyday life and relationships. It's practical and it's personal: don't lie - tell the truth; don't lose control of your anger; don't steal - instead work hard; don't badmouth others - instead be upright and kind in our speech; don't grieve the Holy Spirit; don't be unkind and bitter - instead be kind and loving. This is what it means to "put on the new self". This is what it looks like to imitate God as his beloved children and to "walk in love". (Eph 5:1-2)

The Structure:

These behaviors are relational:

Others within the community are impacted negatively or positively.

These behaviors need replacement:

The negative behavior is replaced with a positive command.

These behaviors have a reason:

Biblical theological reasons are the basis for these changes.

The Specifics:

Don't lie - instead tell the truth (4:25)

Don't lose your temper - instead be righteous, don't hold it, don't give the devil a foothold (4:26-27)

Don't steal - instead work hard and give generously (4:28)

Don't badmouth - instead build up and be gracious (4:29)

Don't grieve the Spirit - instead consider all He has done for you (4:30)

Don't be a bitter hothead, instead kind and forgiving (4:31-32)

The Applications:

Weekly Discipleship Guide

Know

**What does God intend for me to know?
In your journal, use the following prompts to write
some truths that stood out from this week's message.**

I never knew...	I was reminded...	A question I still have...
I was challenged...	I was convicted...	A truth I could share...
I was encouraged to...		I need to dig deeper into...

Be (Consider)

**What does God's Word lead me to prayerfully consider?
In your journal, use the following questions to write
some prompts to use in praying through this week's passage.**

Is there a command to obey? How am I compelled to exalt God? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a principle to follow? Is there an example to follow?	Am I convicted to confess any sin? Is there a sin to avoid? How do I need to rest in Jesus/the gospel? How can I pray for someone else? What am I compelled to love or desire?
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Do (Yield)

**How does God's Word call me to yield my life? In your journal, write
your answers and thoughts in response to the following questions.**

Take some time to work back through the specific ethical commands in this passage. For each one, try to determine what the root of each of these sinful practices is. Why is it important for us to practice a pattern of consistent confession and repentance in our battle against these?

How are each of these ethical exhortations reflected in the life of Jesus? How does his life offer a picture of perfection and wholeness in each?

What must we let go of ourselves in order to pursue this picture together as the church? Why is mercy and grace such a key component to our pursuing this vision together?

**Use this guide to help you internalize this week's message & to prepare for Life Group.*

Westwood Staff

Gerald Hodges: Lead Pastor
Jonathan Taylor: Associate Pastor
Jim Fulp: Counseling Pastor
Jason Engle: Pastor of Students
& Discipleship
Deborah Rudd: Children's Ministry
Coordinator

Contact Us

336.599.1982
westwoodroxboro@gmail.com
www.westwoodfamily.org

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00am - 4:30pm
Other times by appointment.

Mailing Address
970 Leasburg Road
Roxboro NC 27573-5470