



Good People Struggling With Bad Habits (Ephesians 4)

October 6, 2016

I. The Old Struggling Me (Did not Face)

(Five common Issues)

- 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**, 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.
- 1. Lifestyle issues (no longer walk)
- 2. Thinking issues (mind, understanding)
- 3. Ignorance issues
- 4. Blindness issues
- 5. Selfishness issues (feelings, lewdness, and unclean)

II. The New Struggling Me (Still Fights)

(Four Surprising Issues)

- 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.
- 1. Fights to **do** what I have learned
- 2. Fights to **put off** my former conduct
- 3. Fights off deceitful **lusts** or cravings
- 4. Fights to be **renewed** in my mind

III. The Big Four Struggles We Face

(Answer these Questions)

- 25 Therefore, putting away **lying**, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. 26 "Be **angry**, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your **wrath**, 27 nor give place to the devil.

Inverted order:

- ☐ 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor (arguing), and **evil speaking** be put away from you, with all **malice** (malice is the "I hope you die thought")
- ☐ 28 Let him who stole **steal** no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.
- ☐ 29 Let no corrupt **word** proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

Four Practical Questions:

1. Are you **truthful**? (v25)
2. Are you **angry**? (v26)
3. How do you **talk about** people? (v31)
4. How do you **communicate with** people? (v29)

IV. Seven Things That Will Help Us In the Struggle (Ephesians 5:15)

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 4:32 And be **kind** to one another, **tenderhearted**, **forgiving** one another, even as God in Christ forgave you

1. Walk carefully (circumspectly)
2. Don't be foolish
3. Be smart (or wise)
4. Respect time (you don't have forever)
5. Be kind
6. Be tenderhearted
7. Be forgiving

Conclusion:

V. What Paul Taught That Helps With The Struggle "Be Honest" (Romans 7:15-25, Message Bible)

15 What **I don't understand about myself** is that I decide one way, but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise.

16 So if I can't be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God's command is necessary. 17 But I need something more! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if **the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions**, I obviously need help!

18 I realize that I don't have what it takes. **I can will it, but I can't do it.**

19 I decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway.

20 **My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions.** Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time. 21 **It happens so regularly that it's predictable.** The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up.

22 I truly delight in God's commands,

23 but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. **Parts of me covertly rebel**, and just when I least expect it, they take charge. 24 I've tried everything and nothing helps. **I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me?** Isn't that the real question?

25 **The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does.** He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where **I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.**

- I don't **understand** myself (v15)
- I keep **sabotaging** myself (v17)
- I **can** will it, but I can't do it (v18)
- I need to make better **decisions** (v20)
- I struggle regularly and secretly **rebel** (v21,23)
- I need **Jesus** to help me manage my struggle (v25)

