Study 5
Ephesians 4:17-32
A changed Life

What motivated you to get out of bed before you 'learned Christ' and is it any different now that you know Jesus as your Lord?

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Read verses 17-32 and circle the contrasting conjunction 'but' every time it comes up. Underline any key ideas you think contribute to the meaning of this passage.

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17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, **that you must no longer walk** as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 **They are darkened** in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 **They have become callous** and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

20 **But** that is not the way **you learned Christ**!- 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 **to put off your old self**, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 **and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds**, 24 **and to put on the new self**, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you **speak** the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; **do not let the sun go down on your anger**, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 **Let the thief no longer steal**, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let **no corrupting talk** come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may **give grace** to those who hear. 30 And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 **Let all** bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander **be put away from you**, along with all malice.

32 Be kind to one another, **tenderhearted**, forgiving one another, **as God in Christ forgave you.**

Read verses 17-19 again and discuss the characteristics of the 'gentiles'.

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Where does the source of their futile existence lay? (v18)

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As people who once lived as the gentiles lived and are still 'sinful' in our humanness, what is the key to transformation (20-23)

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What are some practical ways we can put off the old and put on the new? (25-32)

OLD	verse	NEW	verse

Although the acts of sins are many and varied, Paul instructs his readers to put off these acts in line with the new life they have received in Christ. His emphasis in the last few verses are addressed in the area of speech (25-30) and the implication that wholesome speech has in defeating the corruption of sin in our lives and the relationships we have with one another.

What does the writer mean by 'speak the truth to your neighbour?(v25)

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How would you rate the way you speak to your spouse when you are angry, in terms of forgiveness and harshness of speech? Let your spouse answer for you.

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The actions of love begins with 'a renewed spirit of the mind' (v23) and continuing to have a hunger to know the truths about Jesus and His teaching through scriptures. This is the way through the Holy Spirit's help that we build up godliness in us. If the mind is corrupted by secularism and in an unhealthy way is bombarded by television, trashy magazines, worldly philosophies and no scriptures, good and godly change cannot happen. It's like trying to get a degree in a Chinese language but attending Indian lectures. The ways of the world and the ways of God are totally at odds with each other. The two cannot stand side by side.

How often do you read the word of God in comparison to other books, television, internet etc?

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Prayer

Spend some time discussing and then praying as a group about how you can make each other accountable about getting hungry for the word of God.