Sermon Notes for February 8, 2015

Live in the Freedom of Christ

Ephesians 4:17-24

Introduction

How Now Should We Live? By Chuck Colson and Nancy Pearcey

How are we to live as Christians in a fallen world?

I. Turn from sin. Ephesians 4:17-19

Paul describes a world that is very much like our own.

Paul calls it futile – empty, vain, good for nothing.

There is a progression in sin that we see here.

- Hardness of heart – They refuse to acknowledge God or worship him.
- Darkness of heart – There is an absence of spiritual understanding.
- Deadness of heart – They are separated from the life of God.
- Recklessness of heart – They give themselves over to sensuality with a continual lust for more.

20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.
21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.
22 Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks,
23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent.
24 Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay and their flowers blow away like dust, for they have rejected the law of the LORD Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel.” Isaiah 5:20-24

“Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush.” Jeremiah 6:15

II. Be renewed in your mind. Ephesians 4:20-23

“You did not come to know Christ that way.”

In this “School of Christ”, Jesus is:

- The Subject – You came to know Christ.
- The Teacher – You heard him (not of him).
- The Atmosphere in which we live and learn.
“Christ, once known and understood and loved, brings with Him into a man’s life a different atmosphere, an atmosphere in which, spontaneously, the evil things begin to droop and the fine things burst to bloom.” David Brainerd

What does he teach us?

- To put off the old self.
- To be made new in the attitude of our mind.

Abide in Christ – “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.” John 15:7

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2

It is a choice we make daily – to put off the old and put on the new.

III. Strive to be holy. Ephesians 4:24

Scripture speaks of our new self in two ways.

- As a present possession – “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” II Corinthians 5:17
- As something to be put on – “Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” Ephesians 5:24

Instead of progressive corruption, there is to be progressive renewal in our mind and attitude and actions.

“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this (the return of Christ), make every effort to be spotless, blameless and at peace with him.” II Peter 3:14

“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14

One of the lies of Satan is that holiness is dull and boring.

“How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets the real thing…it is irresistible. It even 10% of the world’s population had it, would not the whole world be converted and happy before a year’s end?” C.S. Lewis

The only thing that will break the power of sin in our life is our love for Jesus and our delight in him.

Conclusion

How do we live as Christians in a fallen world?

- Turn from sin.
- Be renewed in our mind.
- Strive to be holy.