**Series**: Immeasurable Greatness of His Power

**Ephesians** 4:17-5:14

**Title**: 8. Places of Power - Personal Sanctification

**Description**: The Second battle-ground where God's Power is experienced: Sanctification, the victory over sinful behaviour.

# Diagram

* the Scope of this sermon in relation to "This is what God is doing". Show **struggle against sin. Personal transformation "Sanctification"**

# Introduce text 4:17-5:14

* **4:17-19** What went wrong with humanity - condition of unbelievers
* **4:20-5:2** How humanity is transformed - the personal battle for believers
* **5:3-14** Our role in the untransformed world

# Read

# Proposition

* **\*\* ILLUS:** Image= "UNIFORM" - a uniform **REPRESENTS...** **identifies with**, in **solidarity with**. "Now what if I told you he wasn't really prisoner, and the other wasn't really Paramedic - you would think that either I'm lying or they are - something's false. Perhaps "**Identity theft". Or actually, once Prisoner, now Paramedic**. In 4:**17**, "***no longer walk as the Gentiles do***". I'll use this illustration of an An old uniform, and a New Uniform. Removing the one and putting on the other - with Spirit-empowered Labour!
* **FCF:** the Nature is New (not old nature, and new nature), but the Behaviour must follow! We need Power to change what was once habitual in the body. Today we learn - Done through the MIND - the faculty which the Holy Spirit exercises His Power in. Again, Immeasurable Great Power available. To continue wearing the old clothes is 'to grieve the Holy Spirit' - who sealed us for Redemption! (4:30)
* For our purposes, refer to the "Old Self" as "the old uniform"; the "New Self" as "the new uniform"

= **What the Old Uniform represents; What the New Uniform represents; and the Labour required to Change Uniform**

# Pray

# What the Old Uniform represents

* **Read 17-18 again**. (Show the progression of *what went wrong with humanity*, described in reverse order.) Read: "...
  + *'Futility of their minds'* - cf **Ecc 1**. Minds that produce nothing worthwhile. Empty
  + the **CAUSE**: 'having been' darkened in their understanding
  + the **CAUSE**: 'having been' alienated from the Life of God
  + the **CAUSE**: because of the ignorance that is in them
  + the **CAUSE**: due to their hardness of heart - i.e. callousness
  + i.e. empty mind < darkened understanding < alienated from Life < ignorance < hardness
* the Great Doctor is diagnosing the world: Diagnosis: There's been a **progressing condition** beginning with a callous HEART and ending in a MIND of Meaninglessness. Got Brains but Dysfunctional Minds, "*Walking in the futility of their minds*" Each of these 5 steps is significant. (hardness, ignorance, alienated, darkened, empty) It shows the inevitable crumbling of humanity.
* This is what went wrong with humanity
* **Now in v19** - shows the same in forward order, summary:
  + *They have-become Callous* - Callous meaning insensitive to God and His Goodness; [cf same as Hardness of heart]
  + the RESULT: *they gave themselves up*
    - (Who's *they*?) *Whoever* begins with callousness toward God... *Whoever* begins with callousness toward God... *betrays themselves*. Betrays their own Humanity.
    - The World says "Liberate yourself by shaking off the will of God" - **it's a lie**. "*They have become callous and > given themselves up*.
    - **FCF APP**: When you're tempted to disobey the LORD you certainly don't think of it as betraying your liberty! But it is. Is this playing with your mind? Believing a Lie.
  + So what's the END:
  + *they have given themselves up ... to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity*. Let's examine that.
    - ***sensuality*** - I don't think we have a word in our post-modern English language for this word. The word is an emotion-word. That feeling of repulsion when something immoral happens. I don't think we know this very well. But I remember as a child being exposed to certain "adult themes" - gross violence or inappropriate sexual things, and without anyone needing to tell me it was wrong, I remember a distinct horror; An emotional shattering.
    - But those who 'callous themselves' to that sense of repulsion switch to a different kind of sense. A switch takes place - when your heart becomes insensitive to repulsion, your flesh becomes driven by physical sense alone:  
      **Spiritual "repulsion" turns into Sensual"stimulation"**
    - You see, at one time the God-given moral senses were functioning in the heart and guiding the behaviour. But then the heart became callous to God - "in-sensitive to goodness". **Sensuality**: the senses are functioning only on the level of physical sensory stimulation - the same emotional repulsion becomes a emotional drug.
    - **To be "*given up to sensuality*" means** trapped by physical stimuli. Auto-pilot, instinctive. And as one stimulation grows old, a newer or stronger stimulation is sought. [I'm sure you can think of some examples of growing pursuits. Desperations. Increasing stimulations and the speed at which it is delivered. Junkies on food, sex, adrenaline, power, recognition, entertainment].
    - **Read the verse again (19).** "*Greedy*" means the only stimulant that's left is to get what you don't have yet. Covetousness. You've lost the sensitivity in the heart, and become trapped in a cycle of soul-and-body-destroying ***sensuality***. It's a terrible state. Living a Lie! And those who manage to gain the most sensual stimulation find the most desperate existence. Like Solomon. Who said, "Everything is ... MEANINGLESS - not Wonderful".
    - See (**22**), *'corrupt through deceitful desires*' : or 'irreversibly spoiled by the passions of **the lie'**
    - // That's the state of the world... And now we know how we got there. Hardened ourselves to the only true Joy! //
* AND That's what **the old uniform represents**. When you live like an unbeliever, that's what you advocate. A lie.
* v17, "*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do*".

# What the New Uniform Represents

* Read 24 - *and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness*
* Notice the word "True". And see the contrast with **22** *Deceit.* The New Uniform represents True Life.
* **APP FCF:** Which uniform are you wearing?
* **Minister Grace**: Minutes before he writes this, he has penned **2:1-5,10 (read)** emph: *you once walked... lived in passions of our flesh... God made alive... created in Christ Jesus for good*
* 4:24 *Righteousness* = Right standing before God; *Holiness* = the God-given Moral value system. God did it when He raised Christ, applied to you when believed. Uniform doesn't make a New Person. But Uniform represents the New Person! Advocates God's will.

(Review: ch1-3 inward invisible, ch4-6 outward visible, power at work. I said we'd see that the Power of the Spirit engages as we labour forward in faith expecting Him to undertake.)

# Labour to Change your Uniform

* ILLUS: 22,24 *to put off your old self... to put on the new self*
* ILLUS: depends on the number of buttons, ties, laces... Truth is we've all had our own journey of giving ourselves up to sensuality. Some very deep habits, chemical effects, unknown thoughts - so labour varies. But it is labour. ILLUS: need others to help! And a quick glance at the imperatives in this passage show the scope and depth. But here are 3 labours we all require to change our uniform.

## Disciple One Another (4:20-25)

* Discipling is the first step to changing your uniform. Read 20-21. ("learned" = "discipled")
* The second thing to say is that this teaching and learning is to be done by one another. Read 25, and explain,
  + This is not about stopping lies and telling truth. Though that would be a valid labour. But the falsehood he's talking about is the deception - the Lie - which the Old Uniform represents. So, having put away "the LIE", let EACH ONE OF YOU speak THE TRUTH with his neighbour, for we are members one of another
* How does one person remove their complicated uniform and fit the new one? Through the discipling, teaching, learning, speaking of the truth with the other members of Christ's body. That building that builds itself up in love as each part does its work.
* **APP:** 2 people in the last week greatly helped by this 'speaking the truth'- 1. 'taking every thought captive' 2. 'encourage ...as you see the day approaching'. Even now - learning Christ through His powerful Word, minds being renewed. Neither of the 2 happened on Sunday or in a church / Bible study setting.
* The Labour is in committing to Christian relationships; Being vulnerable to ask for help; Committing to encouraging others; Doing all that transforms the mind - Reading, Prayer, Worship... Together.

## Give (4:26-5:2)

* At the root of sensuality is self-focus; The DNA of sin is "Me First". And the opposite erodes its power.
* One example is (28). Read. Indeed, If you're a thief, here is great counsel. The thief is driven by easy gain for himself. And the counsel is, change the laziness to labour - Gain by Labour, and then let your gain benefit Others by GIVING.
* But this theme of GIVING is all over the passage. See v29 "that it may GIVE GRACE to those". And v32 "forgiving one another" LIT: GIVING GRACE, "as God in Christ "GAVE YOU GRACE". And 5:2, "and GAVE HIMSELF UP for us... to God"
* So we labour against Sensuality by chopping away at the root of our self-centredness: Giving instead of Taking. Being others-concerned instead of self-concerned. The Old Mind needs to be coached, trained, by labouring for others.
* The behaviour that needs to change is all self-focussed, and harms others:
  + corrupt talk against others
  + bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, slander, malice
  + immorality
* Contrast: 4:19, "given themselves up to sensuality" 5:2 "loved us and gave himself up for us" - His blood shed for our sins to save us and reconcile us to Himself.
* GOSPEL GRACE MINISTERED - Friends, the reason you have Hope of Transformation today, the ridding of sin, is the GRACE-GIVING of CHRIST - Look at those incredible words at the end of v32, "As God in Christ Forgave You"! Imitate Him - Labour to see the same in your life. Forgiveness, Only speaking what builds others, Looking for needs and giving to it!,

## Expose Sin, Be Light (3-14)

*(8) for at one time you were darkness but* ***now you are Light in the Lord - Walk as Children of Light***

* Unfitting clothes need to be thrown away. And everything in our mind and body which is unfitting for the New Man has no place. (5:3 - *as is proper* (fitting) *among the saints*) (v4 - *which are out of place*). And so we need to be rigorous in examining what we're wearing - what our behaviour represents and putting off and putting away what is contradictory to the reality of our new nature.
  + 2 core ones: Sexual immorality - Porneia; Covetousness = that kind of insatiable consuming
* It's a labour because the whole world has lost its sense and convinced of the profit of sin. But there is a grave warning, **in v5-6, Read.** Ref the diagram. Those are empty words from empty thinking because everything unsubmitted to Christ will be thrown into the "Lake of Fire"
* 2 imperatives:
  + Do not become **partners with those** who live like that (7) - ILLUS: *Bad Company ruins good morals* **1 Cor 15:33,**
  + Do not **take part in sin** (11) - Here's a litmus test which a sensitised heart from the Spirit will discern: (9) *Is this Good? Is this Righteous? Is this True?*