

Ephesians Series

Lesson #156

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Dean Bible Ministries

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Spiritual Blindness or Callousness?

Ephesians 4:17–19



EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK
& WARFARE
OF THE BELIEVER

Eph. 4:17, “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,

Eph. 4:18, “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;

Eph. 4:19, “who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” ~NKJV

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This = the statement: you should no longer walk like the Gentiles walk.

Therefore, takes us back to the first three verses.

Eph. 4:1, “Therefore, I, the prisoner of the Lord, strongly urge you to conduct your life in a manner worthy of the exalted position to which you were summoned,” [~RD amplified]

Eph. 4:2, “with all genuine humility and gentle kindness, with patience, putting up with one another in love, [~RD]

Eph. 4:3, “Being diligent to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” [~RD]

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περιπατέω *peripateō*

**pres act infin (imperative infinitive)
to walk, walk around; figuratively of
a person’s way of life, lifestyle, the
way a person conducts his life**

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a. The authority or starting point. Different authority in knowledge, our authority is now the Word of God, the Bible and not empiricism, rationalism, or mysticism.

Psa. 36:9, “For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.”

1. The believer should and ought to think differently. By that I don't mean what he thinks about, but how he thinks. His thinking will be based on ...

b. The content of our thinking.

Phil. 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Phil. 4:9, “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

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c. The renovation or overhaul of our thinking.

We ought not to think like the world's culture around us.

Rom. 12:2, “And do not be pressed into the mold of the thinking of the world (the *zeitgeist*), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind [*nous*], that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Eph. 4:17, “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 [*nous*],

Eph. 4:18, “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;”

~NKJV

2. The result is that what the believer does, and how he should do it will change.

1 Cor. 10:31, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

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**Futile: 1: serving no useful purpose:
completely
ineffective
~Merriam Webster**

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ματαιότης *mataiotēs*

fem sing dat (f)

futility; absurdity;

purposelessness

Rom. 8:20, “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;”

2 Pet. 2:18, “For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.”

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**futility; absurdity;
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Old Testament

Hebrew: vanity,

purposelessness,

absurdity,

worthlessness

Rom. 1:20, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Rom. 1:21, “because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Rom. 1:22, “Professing to be wise, they became fools,

Rom. 1:23, “and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”

σκοτίζω *skotizō* 3 sing aor pass indic to darken

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διαλογισμός *dialogismos* masc plur dat thought, opinion, reasoning, consideration, argument; discussion

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**νοῦς *nous*, mind,
intellect,
understanding,
reason, thought**

Eph. 4:17, “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the purposelessness of their thinking,

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σκοτόω *skotoō*

perf pass part masc

plur nom

to darken (~NIDNTT

only); blind,

***σκοτίζω *skotizo* to**

become darkened

Eph. 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Acts 26:17, “ ‘I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,

Acts 26:18, “ ‘to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’ ”

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διάνοια *dianoia* fem sing

dat

mind, thought, intention

σκοτόω *skotoō*

perf pass part

masc plur nom

to darken (~NIDNTT only); blind,

***σκοτίζω *skotizo* to become darkened**

Col. 1:21, “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind [*dianoia*] by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled

Col. 1:22, “in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—”

The Fundamental Problem

Gentiles walk in the futility of their thinking, vs. 17

Why is their thinking futile? Because their understanding is darkened, vs. 18a

Why is it darkened? Because they are alienated from the life of God, vs. 18

Why alienated from God? Because of the ignorance within them.

Why are they ignorant? Because of the blindness of their heart.

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Gentiles walk in the futility of their thinking, vs. 17

Why is their thinking futile? Because their understanding is darkened, vs. 18a

Why is it darkened? Because they are alienated from the life of God, vs. 18

Why alienated from God? Because of the ignorance within them.

Why are they ignorant? Because of the stubbornness of their heart.

πώρωσις pōrōsis
fem sing nom
stubbornness

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The Theological Problem with Spiritual Blindness?

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“And this want of power of spiritual discernment arises from the corruption of our whole nature, by which the reason or understanding is blinded, and the taste and feelings are perverted.”

~Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2.261