

**“Put Off the Old Man”**  
**Ephesians 4:17-32**

Introduction: “The simplest illustration of this great truth [our new position in Christ] is given in John 11, the resurrection of Lazarus. Our Lord’s friend, Lazarus, had been in the grave four days when Jesus and His disciples arrived at Bethany, and even Martha admitted that, by now, the decaying body would smell (John 11:39). But Jesus spoke the word and Lazarus came forth alive, an illustration of John 5:24. Notice our Lord’s next words, ‘Loose him, and let him go’ (John 11:44). Take off the graveclothes! Lazarus no longer belonged to the old dominion of death, for he was now alive. Why go about wearing graveclothes? Take off the old and put on the new!” (Wiersbe)

1. The Casting of the Old Man v. 22- *“That ye put off...”*
2. The Conversation of the Old Man v. 22- *“...former conversation the old man...”*
3. The Corruption of the Old Man v. 22- *“...which is corrupt...”*
4. The Craving of the Old Man v. 22- *“...according to the deceitful lusts...”*

➤ The way we take off the old man is by the renewing of our mind. Ephesians 4:23

Body: “Paul was not content to explain a principle and then leave it. He always applied it to the different areas of life that need to feel its power. Paul even dared to name sins.” (Wiersbe)

- I. The Old Man’s Stories v. 25- *“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”*
  - A. The Falsehoods We Should Cease- *“Wherefore putting away lying...”*
    1. “lying” (Strong’s)- “conscious and intentional falsehood”
    2. “lie” (Webster’s)- “a falsehood uttered for the purpose of deception; an intentional violation of truth; It is willful deceit that makes a lie. To exhibit a false representation; to say or do that which deceives another, when he has a right to know the truth, or when morality requires a just representation.”
    3. Illustration: “If I tell you it is noon, and then discover that my watch is wrong, I did not tell a lie. But if I gave you the wrong time so you would be late to a meeting and I would benefit from it, that would be a lie.” (Wiersbe)
    4. “A half truth is a whole lie.” (Yiddish Proverb)
    5. “A half-truth is a dangerous thing, especially if you have got hold of the wrong half.” (Myron F. Boyd)
    6. “A lie is the refuge of weakness. The man of courage is not afraid of the truth.” (J.C. Macaulay)
    7. “He who tells a lie is forced to invent twenty more to maintain it.” (Alexander Pope)

8. “No man has a good enough memory to make a successful liar.”  
(Abraham Lincoln)
9. John 8:44- “*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*”
10. “Whenever we speak truth, the Spirit of God works, but whenever we tell a lie, Satan goes to work.” (Wiersbe)
11. “The first sin that was judged in the early church was the sin of lying (Acts 5:1-11).” (Wiersbe)
12. I John 2:21- “*I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.*”
13. Revelation 21:8- “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*”
14. Revelation 22:15- “*For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*”

B. The Facts We Should Communicate- “*...speak every man truth with his neighbour...*”

1. Zechariah 8:16- “*These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates*”
2. I Timothy 2:7- “*Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.*”

C. The Friends We Should Consider- “*...for we are members one of another.*”

II. The Old Man’s Stealing v. 28- “*Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*”

A. His Pilfering- “*Let him that stole steal no more...*”

1. “steal” (Strong’s)- “to commit a theft; take away by theft, i.e. take away by stealth”
2. “steal” (Webster’s)- “To take and carry away feloniously, as the personal goods of another. To constitute stealing or theft, the taking must be felonious, that is, with an intent to take what belongs to another, and without his consent. To Withdraw or convey without notice or secretly.”
3. “When he [Satan] tempted Eve, he led her to become a thief, for she took the fruit that was forbidden. And she, in turn, made Adam a thief.” (Wiersbe)
4. Exodus 20:15- “*Thou shalt not steal.*”

5. John 12:6- *“This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.”*
- B. His Performance- *“...but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good...”*
1. II Thessalonians 3:10- *“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”*
  2. I Timothy 5:8- *“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”*
  3. *“The men that God called in the Scriptures were busy working when their call came. Moses was caring for sheep; Gideon was threshing wheat; David was minding his father’s flock; and the first four disciples were either casting nets or mending them. Jesus Himself was a carpenter.”* (Wiersbe)
- C. His Provision- *“...that he may have to give to him that needeth.”*
1. *“If we steal, we hurt others; therefore, we should work that we might be able to help others.”* (Wiersbe)
  2. *“Every Jewish rabbi was taught a trade, for, said the rabbis, ‘If you do not teach your son a trade, you teach him to be a thief’ .”* (Wiersbe)
  3. Luke 19:8- *“And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.”*
- III. The Old Man’s Speech v. 29- *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”*
- A. The Badness of His Speech- *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth...”*
1. *“Paul went back to the fountainhead: if the heart is right, character will be right, conduct will be right, and conversation will be right. No corrupt communication will flow out.”* (Phillips)
  2. *“corrupt”* (Strong’s)- *“rotten, putrefied; of poor quality, bad, unfit for use, worthless”* Matthew 7:17-18, Colossians 3:8
  3. *“corrupt”* (Webster’s)- *“to change from good to bad; to pervert, defile, or pollute; to render impure; to falsify; to infect with errors”*
  4. *“communication”* (Strong’s)- *“of speech; a word, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea; what someone has said”*
  5. *“communication”* (Webster’s)- *“Intercourse by words, letters or messages; interchange of thoughts or opinions, by conference or other means. The communication of knowledge, opinions or facts.”*
  6. *“Peter began to curse and to swear; his accusers held their peace. They had been skeptical of his denials, but now they were convinced he was telling the truth. No follower of the Lord Jesus would curse and swear.”* (Phillips)

7. "Lord, remind us often that a gossip's mouth is the devil's mailbag." (Welsh Proverb)
8. There is so much good in the worst of us,  
And so much bad in the best of us,  
That it hardly behooves any of us  
To talk about the rest of us. (Edward Wallis Hoch)
9. "Plastic surgeons can do almost anything with a nose, except keep it out of other people's business." (Unknown)
10. "Only a baby is admired for opening his mouth and putting his foot into it." (Unknown)
11. Matthew 12:34- "*O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*"
12. Notice what a sinner's mouth is full of: Romans 3:14- "*Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness*"
13. "The tongue is but three inches long, yet it can kill a man six feet high." (Japanese Proverb)
14. Paul went from preying (Acts 9:1) to praying (Acts 9:11) in just one-step of faith. (Wiersbe)

B. The Building of His Speech- "*...but that which is good to the use of edifying...*"

1. "edifying" (Strong's)- "(the act of) building, building up; the act of one who promotes another's growth in Christian wisdom, piety, happiness, holiness"
2. "edifying" (Webster's)- "Building up in Christian knowledge; instructing; improving the mind."

C. The Blessing of His Speech- "*...that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*"

1. "The remedy is to make sure the heart is full of blessing." (Wiersbe)
2. "So fill the heart with the love of Christ so that only truth and purity can come out of the mouth." (Wiersbe)

IV. The Old Man's Scornfulness v. 31- "*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice*"

A. Bitterness

1. "bitterness" (Strong's)- "extreme wickedness; a bitter root, and so producing a bitter fruit"
2. "bitterness" (Webster's)- "extreme enmity, grudge, hatred; or rather an excessive degree of passions and emotions; sharpness; deep distress of mind"
3. "Bitterness refers to a settled hostility that poisons the whole inner man." (Wiersbe)
4. Bitterness leads to unforgiveness. "An unforgiving spirit is the devil's playground, and before long it becomes the Christian's battleground." (Wiersbe)

B. Wrath

1. “wrath” (Strong’s)- “passion, angry, heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again”
2. “wrath” (Webster’s)- “The effects of anger. Violent anger”

### C. Anger

1. “anger” (Strong’s)- “movement or agitation of the soul, impulse, desire, any violent emotion”
2. “anger” (Webster’s)- “A violent passion of the mind excited by a real or supposed injury; usually accompanied with a propensity to take vengeance, or to obtain satisfaction from the offending party.”

#### 3. Holy Anger

- a. Deuteronomy 6:15- “*(For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.*”
- b. Jeremiah 4:8- “*For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us.*”
- c. Mark 3:5- “*And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.*”
- d. Ephesians 4:26- “*Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath*”

#### 4. Hurtful Anger

- a. “It is difficult for us to practice a truly holy anger or righteous indignation because our emotions are tainted by sin, and we do not have the same knowledge that God has in all matters.” (Wiersbe)
- b. “Horace was right when he said, ‘Anger is momentary insanity’ .” (Wiersbe)
- c. “Control yourself! Anger is only one letter short of danger.” (Unknown)
- d. “Don’t fly into a rage unless you are prepared for a rough landing.” (Unknown)

##### (1) The Evidence of Anger

(a) Facial expressions and body language: eyes narrowed with contempt and sharpening, lips curling with disgust, stony expression, face turning red, veins in the neck standing out in livid ridges, unyielding jaw, teeth gritted, nostrils flaring, and fists tightened.

(b) Speech, voice tone: grind out the words between clenched teeth, spitting out words, speak with bitter resentment, scream in ragged bursts, and the voice dripping with spite.

##### (2) The Effects of Anger

- (a) The Social Costs of Anger: An angry person is not pleasant to be around. (LaHaye)
- (b) The Physical Costs of Anger
  1. Anger causes physical disorders that needlessly cost thousands of dollars in medical bills. Some doctors estimate that 60 to 80 percent of illnesses today are emotionally induced. (LaHaye)
  2. How can our emotions actually cause physical illness? Very simply, for our entire physical body is intricately tied up with our nervous system. Nerves go from our emotional center [the heart] to all the vital organs of our body. If you are emotionally upset, the tension first “hits” the emotional center and from there is transmitted to your organs. (LaHaye)
  3. The emotional center produces widespread changes by changing the amount of blood flowing to an organ; by affecting the secretions of certain glands; and by changing the tension of muscles. Anger or hatred can cause the blood vessels to dilate, permitting an abnormal supply of blood to the head. The cranium is a rigid structure without room for expansion; consequently, anger and wrath can very easily give a person severe headaches. (LaHaye)
  4. Example: Tighten your fists and notice how your knuckles turn white. The reason is because there has been a restricted blood flow. Our emotions can cause ulcers and many other stomach diseases by restricting the flow of blood to the stomach and other vital organs. There is a muscle over the human stomach that is emotionally controlled. When we are enraged, it will tighten down and restrict the flow of blood to the vital organs of heart, stomach, liver, intestines, lungs [anger makes a person breathe harder], gallbladder, and so forth. (LaHaye)

5. Prolonged anger, resentment, hatred, wrath, or bitterness can also cause severe damage to these organs and even physical breakdowns. More than fifty diseases are caused by emotional stress. (LaHaye)
  6. Very common infectious diseases are contracted when the resistance is low at the time of exposure. (LaHaye)
  7. Many a doctor has been forced to tell heart patients, victims of high blood pressure, sufferers of colitis, goiter, and many other common diseases that their problem is emotionally induced. ” (LaHaye)
  8. One psychologist said that he estimated that as many as 97 percent of his patients with ulcers had them because of anger. (LaHaye)
  9. The use of tranquilizers and other emotion-depressants has risen. These treatments are very limited in their lasting effect because they do not deal with the cause of the problem. Only the power of Jesus Christ can break the bonds of anger, bitterness, and malice. (LaHaye)
- (c) The moment I start hating a man, I become his slave. I can't enjoy my work any more because he even controls my thoughts. My resentments produce too many stress hormones in my body and I become fatigued after only a few hours' work. The work I formerly enjoyed is now drudgery. Even vacations cease to give me pleasure...The man I hate hounds me wherever I go. I can't escape his tyrannical grasp on my mind. When the waiter serves me porterhouse steak with French fries, asparagus, crisp salad, and strawberry shortcake smothered with ice cream, it might as well be stale bread and water. My teeth chew the food and I swallow it, but the man I hate will not permit me to enjoy it...The man I hate may be many miles from my bedroom; but more cruel than any slave driver, he whips my thoughts into such a

frenzy that my innerspring mattress becomes a rack of torture. (LaHaye)

- (d) The Basic Cause of Anger: Selfishness! When I am angry, it is because someone has violated my rights, and I am interested in myself. When I am bitter against someone, it is because that person has done something against me, and again I come back to selfishness. Vengeance is always inspired by selfishness. The more we indulge in selfishness and allow anger to predominate, the worse our case will become. (LaHaye)
- (e) Wrong attitudes lead to wicked anger.
- (f) Until you as a Christian recognize your own sin of selfishness and look to God for a proper attitude, you will continue to grieve the Spirit of God. Instead of waiting for a change in to person that makes you angry, why not change your attitude. (LaHaye)
- (g) Love begets love and we reap what we sow. Matthew 5:44-46- *“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?”*

#### D. Clamour

1. “clamour” (Strong’s)- “a crying, outcry; cry out aloud, speak with a loud voice”
2. “clamour” (Webster’s)- “A great outcry; noise; exclamation made by a loud human voice continued or repeated, or by a multitude of voices. It often expresses complaint and urgent demand.”
3. “Sharp words make more wounds than surgeons can heal.”  
(Unknown)

#### E. Evil Speaking

1. “evil speaking” (Strong’s)- “slander, detraction, speech injurious, to another's good name; impious and reproachful speech injurious”
2. Notice a sinner’s speech: Romans 3:13- *“Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips”*
3. “Bitterness leads to wrath, which is the explosion on the outside of the feelings on the inside. Wrath and anger often lead to brawling

(clamor) or blasphemy (evil speaking). The first is fighting with fists; the second is fighting with words. ” (Wiersbe)

4. “A gossip usually makes a mountain out of a molehill by adding some dirt.” (Unknown)
5. “Gossip is like mud thrown against a clean wall: it may not stick, but it leaves a mark.” (Unknown)
6. “Gossip is the lack of a worthy theme.” (Elbert Green Hubbard)
7. “Gossip: social sewage.” (George Meredith)

F. Malice

1. “malice” (Strong’s)- “ill-will, desire to injure; wickedness that is not ashamed to break laws”
2. “malice” (Webster’s)- “Extreme enmity of heart, or personal hatred; a disposition to injure others without cause, from mere personal gratification or from a spirit of revenge; unprovoked malignity or spite.”

Conclusion: When we do not put off the old man and his conversation, we give place to the devil. Ephesians 4:27- “*Neither give place to the devil.*”