

(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. 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. 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! --- assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him --- as the truth is in Jesus --- to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires --- and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Think on these things:

- 1) There is a major difference to the opening phrase between the NIV and ESV for v.17. The NIV says, “So I tell you this --- and insist on it --- in the Lord...” Whether it is Paul’s testimony or his insistence, what are Christians no longer to do? (Notice that one is about actions and the other is about what goes on inside our heads.)

We are no longer to _____ (or live) as the Gentiles do.

We are no longer to _____ as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.

- 2) What term does Paul use to describe people who don’t understand God? _____
- 3) What reason is given for their state of being “alienated from the life of God,” and what is the cause for that reason? (This cause can happen to Christians; see Mark 6:47-52 for an example.)

Reason for alienation? _____

Cause for the reason? _____

- 4) Describing such people is a work and gardening term. Consult Romans 1:16-25. What term in Ephesians 4:19 is used to describe the darkened hearts of people who suppress God’s truth and exchange it for men’s lies? It means to “lose sensitivity” from repeated actions.

- 5) From v.19, what result is expressed for people who lose sensitivity to God? See Romans 1:26-32.

- 6) Similarly, Christians can have a like experience of “lost sensitivity” when attending church services and Bible studies on well-known passages (e.g., The Christmas Story). How can we prevent this from happening to us? Consider 1 Corinthians 2:10-13 and 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

7) Based on vs.20-21, what is your belief about Jesus and truth? There are many in this life who might disagree with you....

8) Now review these verses: Proverbs 23:23 states, "Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding." And from the book of John, read 1:14, 14:6 and 18:37. How do these verses support or change your understanding of "what is really true" in life?

9) Assuming you have heard about truth in Jesus (v.21), what 3 things are you told to do as a believer:

v.22 - _____

v.23 - _____

v.24 - _____

10) Do you think changing how you live is as easy as "changing" your clothes, taking off one garment (old self) and putting on another (new self)? How is our "old" (unsaved) life described? How is living our "new self" with renewed mind & thinking, described (Romans 12:1-2)?

Old self - _____

New self - _____

11) What makes personal change possible? See John 3:3 and 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; and 2 Peter 1:3. If you remain an "unchanged" believer, do you think you will be saved...? (See 1 Corinthians 3:11-17)

People and situations I want to pray for this week: