

Ephesians: Christian Ethics

Christian Atheism – Ephesians 4:17-24

Message Discussion Guide

Scripture & Message Review

Read Ephesians 4:1, Ephesians 4:17, Ephesians 5:5, 1 John 2:7-10.

- According to Ephesians 4:1, what is the connection between our salvation (our calling) and our conduct (walk)?
- According to Ephesians 4:17, how then should the conduct of the saved person and the unsaved person (Gentile) differ?
- How are Ephesians 5:5 and 1 John 2:7-10 connected in what they say?
- How would you counsel a person who says they are Christian but whose conduct shows no change?

Read Ephesians 4:17-19.

- Why do lost people do the things they do? What reasons do these verses provide?

Read Acts 19:18-19.

- When these people of Ephesus heard and responded to the gospel, something happened. What was that?
- How is what we see happening in the lives of these new Christians different from what we often see when people “get saved” today? Why?

Read Ephesians 4:20-24, Hebrews 12:1-2, Romans 12:1-2.

- According to Ephesians 4:22 and Hebrews 12:1, what should we do with the persistent sin in our lives?
- According to Ephesians 4:24, Hebrews 12:2, Romans 12:2, what are the positive steps we should take to overcome sins?

Big Question

- List ten common sins that Christians struggle with, and then name the scissor action for each of these sins that will help the Christian partner with the Holy Spirit to experience real change in conduct and life. (Example scissor actions found in Ephesians 4:25, 28, 29, 31-32.)

Bonus Question

- How do we balance the Bible’s strong words against continued sin (1 John 2:7-10, Ephesians 5:5, Galatians 5:19-21) with the end of Romans 7 and Paul’s statement in Romans 8:1 that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus?

Scripture for Discussion Questions

Ephesians 4:1 -- Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received,

Ephesians 4:17 -- Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thoughts.

Ephesians 5:5 -- For know and recognize this: Every sexually immoral or impure or greedy person, who is an idolater, does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

1 John 2:7–10 -- 7 Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old command that you have had from the beginning. The old command is the word you have heard. 8 Yet I am writing you a new command, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9 The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother or sister is in the darkness until now. 10 The one who loves his brother or sister remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

Ephesians 4:17–19 -- 17 Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thoughts. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because of the hardness of their hearts. 19 They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more.

Acts 19:18–19 -- 18 And many who had become believers came confessing and disclosing their practices, 19 while many of those who had practiced magic collected their books and burned them in front of everyone. So they calculated their value and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Ephesians 4:20–24 -- 20 But that is not how you came to know Christ, 21 assuming you heard about him and were taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, 23 to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

Hebrews 12:1–2 -- 1 Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, 2 keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Romans 12:1–2 -- 1 Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Hebrews 12:2 -- keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Ephesians 4:25 -- Therefore, putting away lying, **speak the truth, each one to his neighbor**, because we are members of one another.

Ephesians 4:28 -- Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands, so that he has something to share with anyone in need.

Ephesians 4:29 -- No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:31–32 -- 31 Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. 32 And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.

Galatians 5:19–21 -- 19 Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, 21 envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar. I am warning you about these things—as I warned you before—that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Romans 8:1 -- Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus,