

Sermon
Kxf. Dr. Numlaajtsheb Yaaj

“New Attitude and New Life”

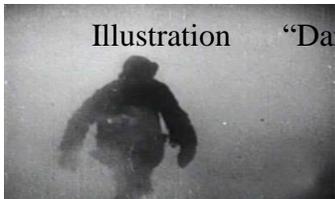
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
St. Paul Lutheran Church – Caro, MI
8-12-18

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ephesians 4:23-24 *“To be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”* (NIV) This is the word of God. (Cross reference – Romans 6:4; 7:6; 12:2; 13:14, Colossians 3:10, 12, Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1, Luke 1:75, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, Ephesians 2:10, 2 Peter 1:4)

Illustration “Darkness”

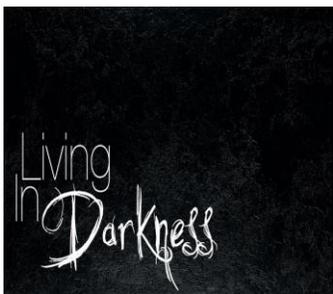
(Show snow blizzard)



One winter afternoon as the sun was going down, a blizzard struck the Minnesota country side. An elderly farmer was out doing his chores when the wind driven snow began to fall. It was just a short walk from the barn to the house, but he quickly became disoriented. Within minutes, he was lost, stumbling around in the howling wind and blinding snow. As the sun went down, he became even more confused. (Show dead men in snow)

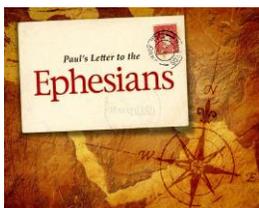


He walked near the house several times, but he couldn't see it. He crossed the driveway that led to the garage, but by then the snow was so deep he couldn't follow it. His wife waited anxiously by the door all night, hoping to hear his footsteps, hoping he would get close enough to the house to see the lights she put in the window. But when morning came, his frozen body was buried beneath the snow. He died in the blinding darkness. (Show living in Darkness)



This was a terrible way to die. But it's even worse way to live, and a lot of people live that way. Many people go through life in blinding darkness, stumbling from one sin, one vice, one addiction to another, all the while lost and disoriented. In our Epistle Lesson, the Apostle Paul speaks of those who live that way. He then describes the Christian way of life, a life marked by renewal, truth, and holiness. He teaches us that to know Christ is to know how to live. *“to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”* (Ephesians 4:23-24) (Show letter to Ephesians)

I. The Apostle Paul begins by describing one way to live with a new attitude. He speaks of the gentiles



which he encountered practically everywhere he traveled. He described them as “darkness in their understanding” and separated from God.” He said that they were ignorant and that their hearts were hardened. They lost all sensitivity that is, they can no longer tell right from wrong. The Apostle observed that they indulge

in impurity and lust for even more immorality. (Show Aphrodite)

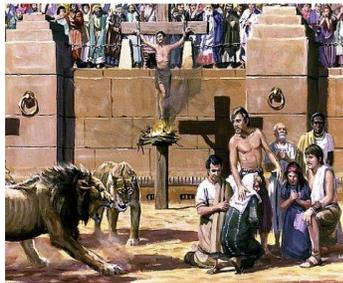
Aphrodite

Aphrodite (Roman name Venus) was the goddess of love, beauty and fertility. When the Trojan prince Paris was asked to judge which of three Olympian goddesses was the most beautiful, he chose Aphrodite over Hera and Athena. She is the wife of the ugliest of the gods, Hephaestus.



At first glance, someone might say Paul was being too harsh and judgemental. He should have been more open-minded about the alternate and diverse lifestyles. But Paul, who had travelled all over the Mediterranean world, saw more evil and immorality than most people could stomach. Paul started a church in the city of Corinth. In Corinth there were as many as a dozen pagan temples. One temple was dedicated to the Greek goddess Aphrodite, the goddess of love and fertility. Her worshipper practiced religious prostitution right there in the temple. At

one time as many as 1000 prostitutes right there in her temple. In fact, the city of Corinth was so grossly immoral that the Greek word for Corinth came to mean immoral. (Show Christian persecution)



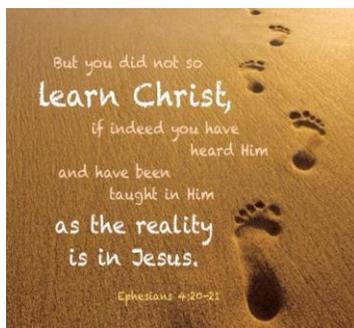
The Apostle Paul also had the misfortune, if you will, to live and die during the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero. Nero was a sick man! He persecuted Christians, even covering their bodies with oil and setting them on fire to light his gardens during the evening hours. He burned Christian at the stake and using wild animals to tear them apart at a stadium for spectator to watch as amusement. Paul had every right to say them “darkened and ignorant and filled with lust.” (Ephesians 4:18). They were, as Paul also wrote, people “whose conscience was seared with a hot

iron,” (1 Timothy 4:2) people “who called evil “good” and good “evil.” (Isaiah 5:20). Their thinking was futile. They were spiritually lost, with no comprehension of what was god-pleasing. Their hearts were hardened, much like the Egyptian Pharaoh so many years earlier, so that God’s word made no impact. (Show feel good)



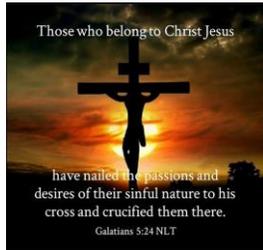
Are you glad people don’t live that way anymore? Or do they? The 20th century has been the most violent, blood filled, 100 years of man’s existence, and it isn’t over yet. In today society, people just said, “If it feels good, do it.” The unbelieving world wants more lust, more impurity, more immorality. Don’t take my word for it, just look at what’s on television compared to 20-30 years ago. The saddest part about those who live that way is that they don’t see it as wrong. Whatever their current vice is they just want more. (Show Ephesians 4:20-21)

II. Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. Paul write, “*That, however, is not the way of life you learned*

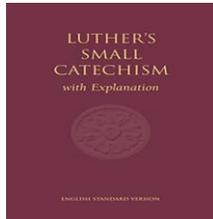


when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.” (Ephesians 4:20-21). With those words, Paul tell us there is a different way, a better way to live, a way of life patterned after Christ It means that the sinless and holy Son of God is the direct opposit of the evil of the world. It means that Christ teaches us to repent and turn away from the sensuality of impurity of this world. In means that Jesus had something much better to offer for your life. In place of the lies of this world, Jesus proclaim the truth – that we by nature are lost in sin –

and it shows. But God who could have condemned all of us, chose instead to reconcile the world to himself, not counting our sins against us. Jesus proclaims the truth while this sinful world brings death and destruction, he brings life and makes us into new creations. (Show Galatians 5:24).

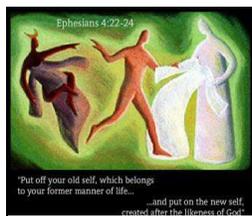


Paul writes, “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.” (Ephesians 4:22). In another epistle he put it bluntly, he wrote, “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (Galatians 5:24). With these words, God shows us a better way to live. Those who live according to sin kill others. Those who live according to Christ kill the sinful nature. The sinful world follows its evil desire to destroy those around it. (Show LSC)



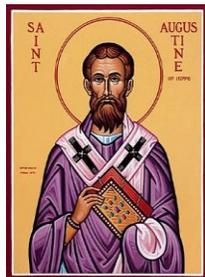
Christians follow the will of God and destroy the evil that is within them. That was what Luther meant when he wrote, “The old Adam in us should be daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.” (LSC, ESV 2006, p. 25). That is a better way for you to live.

III. To live a life according to Christ is to have a new attitude and a new life. Paul speaks of putting on the new attitude and new life, is created to be like God in righteousness and holiness. In place of darkness, Christ gives light. (Show Ephesians 4:22).

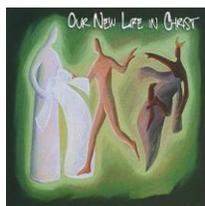


Instead of ignorance, he gives knowledge and understanding of what God desires. Instead of being separated from God, Jesus unites us with God. In place of immorality and death, he brings purity and life. And with new life comes a new attitude, a new way of looking at the world. That’s what Paul meant when he wrote, “To be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 4:23-24). Instead of

looking at other people as objects of lust, we look at them as people whom Christ died. That’s a new attitude and new life, a new way of looking at the world. Instead of seeing authority as something to rebel against, we see authority as something God ordained to protect us. Instead of seeing his commandments as restrictions that take the fun out of life, we see them as God directions for living as joy-filled, fulfilling life. That is being made in the attitude of your mind and life in Christ Jesus. (Show Saint Augustine)



Saint Augustine is one of the great historical figures of the church. He was a bishop who wrote extensively and his writings are still published today. But it wasn’t always that way. While living in the city of Carthage in Northern Africa, he fell into the excesses of sin and vice. However, through the witness of his mother and other Christians, he was brought to faith. One day he was stopped on the street by a former mistress. To her surprise, he turned and walked away. She called out, “Augustine, it is I?” He simply replied, “Yes, but it is not I.” Augustine understood what it meant to be made new in your mind, and to be put on the new self. (Show our new life in Christ)

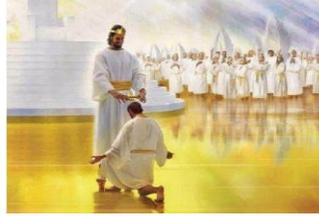


We continue to live in a sinful world. But we are no longer our old self but a new attitude and new life in Christ. Drop the old self and live a life in Christ. Even though at times we may not be able to have an attitude to change our life or live a new self but the Holy Spirit will guide us and lead us so that we may be able to live with a new attitude and new life according to God’s will. Amen. Now may the peace of God, which passes all understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Children Message



Or



Theme: What's Your Prize?

Object: A garbage bag and a crown

Scripture: John 6:27 "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." (NIV)

Good morning, boys and girls. Today I want to share with you a prize that I just know you are going to love. The prize I have is in this bag and it will go to the person who wins the big race. Some people may want to know what's in the bag, so I think I should tell you ahead of time. It's a bag of garbage. How many of you would like to win a prize like this? A great big bag of garbage. *(Let them answer)*

None of you want to win the prize? I don't understand. I thought everybody liked prizes. Why don't you want to win this big prize? *(Let them answer)* You don't like garbage, not even if it's in a beautiful bag like the one I have it in? You probably don't even want to be in a race if you are going to have a chance at this prize then.

Your life and my life are like a race. We are all in it and the only difference between the way that some people run their lives from the way that other people run their lives is the prize that they get. Some people run the race of life for a prize that is just like my bag of garbage. Their prize is worthless. It doesn't mean anything. These people have lived for only themselves and for what is bad. They live bad, they do bad things to other people. They either do not know God or they hate him. Their prize at the end of their life will be worse than a bag of garbage. What they will get will be just plain rotten. They have lived their whole life and when it is over like the end of a race, the prize is just plain rotten.

But God says that there is another way to live our lives, another way to run the race, for a different kind of prize. In this race of life, you fill it with love, share yourself and the things that you have with others, try to be helpful, and the prize you get at the end of life is something that never rots but goes on forever. This prize is called eternal life. That is the crown of life. It is living with God in a wonderful world that he makes for us. The prize for living with God and according to God's ways is something that never breaks or wears out or rots. It is something that will last forever.

You have a choice as to which way you live or which race you get in. I hope you do not end up with a bag of garbage, but instead I want for you to end up with a wonderful life that win the crown of life goes on forever with God.

Pray: Gracious God, thank you for allowing us to have eternal life for believing in You. In Jesus name. Amen.

Children message is taken from "The Giant Book of Children Sermons" By Wesley T. Runk