



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Genesis Sermon Series

Supports Session 8: Renewed

Sermon Title: “Putting on the New Self” (Ephesians 4:25-32)

Connection to Session 8

In Genesis 32, Jacob had an encounter with God that changed his life, and God gave him a new identity. In the same way, Jesus has changed our lives, so our lives should reflect that new identity.

Introduction/Opening

We need to be balanced in our approach to the Christian life. On the one hand, we are saved by God’s grace, not by our works. On the other hand, when you receive the grace of God through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live in you, and He changes you from the inside out. He’s working in your life to make you more like Jesus. That means followers of Jesus should be different than the rest of the world. That doesn’t mean we’re perfect. Being conformed to the image of Jesus is a lifelong process, and it won’t be complete until we get to heaven. It does mean people outside the church should notice a difference between your life and theirs. What are some of the identifying marks of a person who follows Jesus Christ?

Outline

1. Healthy character (vv. 25-28).

- a) We should speak the truth.
 - i. Lying is a serious sin in the eyes of God (Prov. 6:16-19).
 - ii. Lying destroys trust in one another.
- b) We should control our anger.
 - i. Anger is not necessarily a sin, but it can easily lead to sin.
 - ii. Anger becomes sinful when you allow it to fester.
 - iii. Anger gives the devil an opportunity.
- c) We should earn an honest living.
 - i. Stealing has no place among followers of Jesus.
 - ii. God designed us to earn a living by working (2 Thess. 3:10-12).

2. Wholesome conversation (vv. 29-30).

- a) We should avoid unwholesome language.
 - i. This includes not only profanity, but also gossip, slander, and petty criticism.
 - ii. Your words show what is in your heart (Matt. 12:34-37). “What’s down in the well will come up in the bucket.” – Vance Havner

- b) We should speak words that build up one another.
 - i. Words can do terrible damage (Jas. 3:3-12).
 - ii. Unwholesome words grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:30).

3. Heartfelt compassion (vv. 31-32).

- a) We should be kind and “tenderhearted.”
 - i. This includes cutting other people some slack and remembering that you’re as imperfect as they are.
 - ii. It also means getting rid of anger and bitterness. Someone wisely said bitterness is like drinking a cup of poison and hoping it will kill someone else.
- b) We should forgive as Christ forgave us.
 - i. No matter how much someone has wronged you, it pales in comparison to how much you have wronged God.
 - ii. When you realize how much God has forgiven you, then you’ll find it easier to forgive others.

Conclusion

For several years, my wife Celia and I noticed buttercups growing in our yard. They were pretty to look at, so we didn’t think much about them, but they grew more numerous as the years passed. My father-in-law noticed them, too, and he suggested I get rid of them before they took over the yard. Last spring, I mixed up some weed killer, and I walked all over the yard spraying buttercups. By the end of the week, I was pretty satisfied with myself. The buttercups weren’t completely gone, but I had thinned them out quite a bit. The following Sunday morning, I looked out the window, and I saw little yellow flowers all over the place. I went out into the yard and looked at them. They weren’t buttercups; they were dandelions! I’d gotten rid of most of the buttercups, but now I had to get rid of the dandelions!

Sin is a lot like those weeds in the yard. You get control of one sin, and another one pops up. Then you get control of that sin, and still another one pops up, and on and on it goes. Just remember, putting on “the new self” (v. 24) is a lifelong process, and it’s something you have to do over and over again. When you fail, ask God to forgive you, and then go right back to putting on the new self. Over time, God will work in your heart to make you into what He wants you to be.

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