

*What Is the Created New Man?
Flying through Ephesians*

Ephesians 4:17–24
INTRODUCTION

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Review of the Exposition:

- 1:3–14 Gentile believers should praise the Father for what the Trinity did for Jews first
- 1:15–23 Paul [a Jewish believer] thankfully prays for the enlightened Ephesian Gentile believers that they would know their calling in hope, their rich inheritance, & how powerfully the Father works for believers w/ His power that raised & seated Christ
- 2:1–10 Despite Jews & Gentiles being dead, God made alive, raised, & seated them together w/ Christ (saving separated – from – God - people by grace through faith) so they cannot boast but that His created Church would do the good works He prepared for it.
- 2:11–13 These now alive & near-to-God Gentiles are to remember their former alienation
- 2:14–22 Christ made peace between alienated Jews & Gentiles when he made both one & broke down the dividing Law & reconciled both to God, so Gentiles are no longer aliens, but fellow citizens w/ Jews, (both) having been built into a (God indwelt) holy temple—the Church.
- 3:1–7, 13 Paul [requests that they not lose heart at his imprisonment] on behalf of the Gentiles, because he assumes that they know of the grace (spiritual gift) given to Paul, namely that God revealed the previously unrevealed mystery to the apostles and NT prophets [e.g., that some Gentiles would be fellow heirs, of the same body, and fellow partakers (with some Jews)]
- 3:8–13 Paul received a grace (gift) to announce the Church's inheritance & the mystery dispensation—the Church—hidden from creation by the creator— God's great eternal plan thru accomplished Christ. Thus, no one should lose heart over Paul's imprisonment, because (his message, that resulted in) imprisonment is their glory
- 3:14–19 In light of the union of Jews and Gentiles Paul prays to the Church's Father that He would strengthen the Ephesians that Christ might indwell their assembly in order that they (who were established in God's love) would know the extent and depth of Christ's love with the ultimate goal that they would manifest God's character in its fullness.
- 3: 20–21 Believers should praise the Father forever who works exceedingly [on behalf of the body of Christ] doing for it what we never could have imagined, let alone, asked for.
- 4:1–6 In light of God joining Jews and Gentiles in one body believers ought to live in a way appropriate to the fact that God has called them into His Church by humbly bearing with one another in love, that is, by preserving the unity that the Holy Spirit has effected through a jointly-bound peace [treaty, the peace-treaty that created the Church is because the one body corresponds to the fact that one triune God has called the church in one way
- 4:7–16 [In mild contrast w/ the body's unity] the Spirit gave spiritual gifts in proportion to number of the gifted people given to the Church by the ascended Christ, based upon Christ (as the divine Victor who descended to earth before ascending to heaven) having the right to give them to the church; and (specifically) Christ gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, & teachers to equip the saints, so the saints will minister to edify the body until its maturity in faith matches Christ's mature stature; and the purpose for the body becoming mature is that (rather than being childishly unstable & subject to trickery) its maturity (resulting from the body speaking doctrinal truth lovingly) would match its head (Christ) The whole body, because of being joined to Christ by every part effectively doing its role, causes the body to grow (into the head) in order that it edify itself in love

Review of 4:7–16

- 4:7a The Holy Spirit gives a spiritual gift to each (the distribution is proportioned to Christ's gift)
- 4:7b, 11 Christ gives these gifted people (APEPTs) as gifts to the Church
- 4:8–10 Christ can do this because (as God) His ascension was a return to heaven
- 4:12 The purpose for giving APEPTs is that they might equip saints to minister for edifying the body

New Exposition

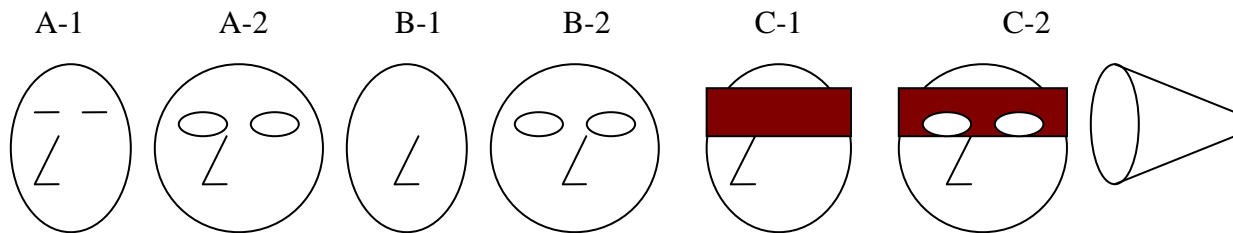
4:17 [In light of Christ designing each part of the positionally unified body to work together to cause the whole body to grow to a maturity matching that of its head, Christ] GBels ought not live within the futile mindset of GUnbels

Although Paul introduces an exhortation (not to live like other Gentiles) it is not until 4:25 that he clarifies the exhortation. (I will argue that 4:22–24 are not exhortational)

4:18 [GUnbels live within a futile mindset] because their understanding lacks light; their understanding lacks light because they are alienated from the life of God; they are alienated from God's life because of ignorance; they are ignorant, because they are spiritually blind

This is a vicious circle. How is it broken?

One passage, 2 Corinthians 4:3–4, 6, offers what seems to be an answer. But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. . . . For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.



Many people view A-1/A-2 as the solution. The unbeliever, whose eyes were closed, opens them. Calvinists see B-1/B-2 as the issue. The unbeliever lacks eyes, until God gives him/her eyes. I view the solution as C-1 and C-2. In C-1, Satan [and the flesh and the world] veil the unbeliever's eyes. Then, in C-2, God turns the light on so brightly that light penetrates the veil. Now, the question is whether the person finds what he/she sees to be persuasive.

4:19 GUnbels dedicate themselves to lewdness and greedy uncleanness, because they are spiritually calloused (thinking with a futile mindset)

4:20 [In contrast with the GUnbels' futile mindset] the EphBels did not learn Christ through a futile mindset

4:21 [Rather than learning Christ through a futile mindset] the EphBels have learned Christ by Christ teaching them [through the gifted APEPTs Christ gave to the church] [and this teaching is not futile, because the truth is in Jesus]

Preparation for 4:22–24: We will present an Ephesians-based case, before saying anything about Colossians or Romans. In other words, the case stands or falls in Ephesians.

1. Expositors have argued this passage from three perspectives.

	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Corporate</i>
<i>Exhortational</i>	A. Exhortation to Individuals	
<i>Existing Reality</i>	B. Existing Reality for Individuals	C. Existing Corporate Reality

2. The passage has three infinitives. Translators have generally preferred (here) to render these with English infinitives. Unfortunately, we do not use English infinitives for past events, whereas Greek can. The following chart clarifies what each language allows.

English Usage	Greek Usage (translated into English)
to speak	to speak or <u>to spoke</u>
to write	to write or <u>to wrote</u>
to say	to say or <u>to said</u>
to come	to come or <u>to came</u>

When we see *to put off*, we do not think *to have put off*;

When we see *to be renewed*, we do not think *to have been renewed*;

When we see *to put on*, we do not think *to have put on*.

When we see: *to put off*, *to be renewed*, and *to put on*; we think exhortation, not existing reality

3. Darby avoided this problem in Ephesians 4:22–24, by using participles.

your having put off according to the former conversation the old man which corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts; and being renewed in the spirit of your mind; and *your having put on* the new man, which according to God is created in truthful righteousness and holiness.

4. How has Paul used the concept of *the created new man* in Ephesians?

Eph 2:14–15 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to **create** in Himself **one new man** *from* the two, *thus* making peace.

Eph 2:10 For we are His artifact, **created** in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Eph 4:25 (literal translation) Therefore, having put away the lie, let each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

Eph 4:25 (NKJ) Therefore, putting away lying, "*Let each one of you* speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

Observation 1: *Having put away the lie* is past. It is not an exhortation to stop lying.

Observation 2: the truth to be spoken is defined in 4:15. This is not merely not lying.

Observation 3: the term having put away is *apotithēmi* (this term in 4:22 = *to have put off*)

Question 1: If speak truth = speaking truth (that edifies) and if 4:25 presupposes that they have already put off the lie, what is the lie that they have already put off?

Question 2: Might the lie that they have already put off their old-position in Adam, since the one created new man in 2:15 was the body of Christ (the Church) where Jews and Gentiles are joined.

Question 3: Does not the created artifact of 2:10 not also point in the same direction?

4:22 The EphBels learned Christ by Christ teaching them that (1) in regard to their old conduct, they [when they were joined to Christ] had (corporately) put off their being-corrupted old-man position [in Adam]

4:23 The EphBels learned Christ by Christ teaching them that (2) [when they were joined to Christ] (corporately) their mind was renewed

4:24 The EphBels learned Christ by Christ teaching them that (3) [when they were joined to Christ], they had corporately put on their new-man position (created according to God in righteousness and holiness)

Excursus: Colossians 3:9–11

Do not lie to one another, since you have **put off the old man** with his deeds, and **have put on the new man** who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who **created**



him, **where** there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all.

Note that the created new man is where there is neither Greek nor Jew

Is Paul saying that a believer's new nature is non-ethnic? _____

Is Paul saying that the body of Christ makes ethnic issues secondary? _____

Excursus: Romans 6:5–6

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be [neutralized] ~~done away with~~, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

If old man = old sin nature and body of sin = the body that holds the old sin nature, Paul has created an odd argument. He would say, the purpose for crucifying the old sin nature was in order that the body and the old sin nature (contained by it) might be neutralized.

On the other hand, if the mass of unbelieving humanity (the old man) were crucified, would it not neutralize the absolute power of the sin nature to order a person's body to sin? Romans 6 argues that believers have the right to say *No* to sin, because of what Christ did.

Conclusion and Application