

Ephesians 4:17-32

Extra Questions and Commentaries

"Hardness of their heart/callous" (4:18-19)

- How far can this callousness of unbelief take people?
 - Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. NIV
 - Hosea 7:3-4 "They delight the king with their wickedness, the princes with their lies. 4 They are all adulterers, burning like an oven whose fire the baker need not stir from the kneading of the dough till it rises. NIV
 - 1 Peter 4: 4 They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. NIV

"Darkened in their understanding" (4:19)

- What did Jesus say in John 12:35 about the person who walks in darkness?

- Why do people resist the "light" of God's truth? John 3:19-20

"learn Christ/heard Him/taught in Him" (4:20-21)

- Underline the outcome of hearing Christ's words.
 - John 5:24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. NIV
 - John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; NASU
 - Revelation 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. NIV
 - Matt 7:24-29 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell -- and great was its fall." 28 When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; 29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. NASU

- Underline what is important for us to learn/hold firmly to.
 - Colossians 1:23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. NIV
 - Colossians 2:6-7 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. NASU
 - 1 Timothy 4:6 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine (*literally good teaching*) which you have been following. NASU
 - Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. NIV

"Truth" (4:21)

- In the following, underline the things that lead to truth/wisdom.
 - Job 28:28 And he said to man, 'The fear of the Lord-that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.'" NIV
 - Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. NIV
 - John 8:31-32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." NIV
 - 2 Timothy 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. NKJV
 - James 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. NASU
- List the words that describe the thinking of unbelievers. How does that thinking compare to the "truth in Jesus?"
 - 4:14 "*every wind of doctrine, trickery, craftiness, deceitful scheming*"
 - 4:17
 - 4:18
 - 4:22 ("*in accordance with*")

"lay aside old, put on new" (4:22,24)

- Underline the change that occurs in going from the old to the new.
 - Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. NIV
 - Colossians 3:2-3 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. NIV
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! NIV
 - John 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." NIV
 - 1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. NIV
- In the following, underline what empowers us to live this new life.
 - Galatians 5:16-17 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. NIV
 - Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. NIV
 - Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, NIV
 - 2 Peter 1:3,4 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. NASU

"laying aside falsehood" (4:25)

- What do Proverbs 6:16-19 and 19:28 say about lying?
- What is grouped with lying in Leviticus 19:11?
- What colorful adjectives are associated with lying in Romans 3:13?

- Underline the destructive consequences of lying, bearing false witness or taking bribes.
 - Exodus 23:8 "Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the righteous. NIV
 - Proverbs 15:27 He who profits illicitly troubles his own house, But he who hates bribes will live. NAS
 - Proverbs 19:28 A rascally witness makes a mockery of justice, And the mouth of the wicked spreads iniquity. NASU
 - Ecclesiastes 7:7 Extortion turns a wise man into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart. NIV
 - Jeremiah 23:14 "Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; And they strengthen the hands of evildoers, So that no one has turned back from his wickedness. NASU
 - Ezekiel 13:22 Because you disheartened the righteous with your lies, when I had brought them no grief, and because you encouraged the wicked not to turn from their evil ways and so save their lives, NIV
- How did the Lord feel about dishonesty in business?
 - Leviticus 19:36 Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt. NIV
 - Deuteronomy 25:13-16 Do not have two differing weights in your bag--one heavy, one light. 14 Do not have two differing measures in your house--one large, one small. 15 You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. 16 For the LORD your God detests anyone who does these things, anyone who deals dishonestly. NIV
- Read **1 Kings 21** for the account of King Ahab's dishonest dealings with Naboth. How did Ahab use his power against Naboth. How did God feel about it. What does taking a whole chapter to relate this event say about the importance it had in God's mind? About the importance of honest leadership?

"be angry, and yet do not sin" (4:26)

- Underline how handling anger wisely is characterized.
 - Proverbs 14:29 "He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly." NAS
 - Proverbs 19:11 "A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression." NIV
 - Proverbs 20:3 "It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel." NIV

- Read through the following verses.
 - Psalm 37:8 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret--it leads only to evil. NIV
 - Proverbs 29:22 An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins. NIV
 - Proverbs 26:21 As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife. NIV
 - Proverbs 21:19 Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman. NKJV
 - Ecclesiastes 7:9 "Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.
 - Hebrews 12:15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; NAS
- What does this say about why anger is so counterproductive?

Forgiving each other (4:32)

- What do you learn from Jesus about forgiveness in the following accounts?
 - Matthew 18:21-22
 - Luke 7:39-49
 - Luke 6:35
 - Luke 23:34
 - John 1:29

Digging Deeper

How should we respond even when someone who has wronged us? Romans 12:18-21

Words

➤ What do the following Proverbs teach about words?

- Proverbs 10:19

- Proverbs 21:23

- Proverbs 17:27

FYI:

Comments on 4:31 from preceptaustin.org

Pikría or **bitterness** is the spirit of irritability that keeps a person in perpetual animosity, making him sour and venomous. Bitterness applies to the bitterness of spirit to which men give vent by bitter words.

Barclay adds that "the Greeks defined (*pikría*) as long-standing resentment, as the spirit which refuses to be reconciled. So many of us have a way of nursing our wrath to keep it warm, of brooding over the insults and the injuries which we have received.

Wiersbe has this practical comment on "**bitterness**" to which even believers can fall prey...An unforgiving spirit is the **devil's playground** and before long it becomes the **Christian's battleground**. If somebody hurts us, either deliberately or unintentionally, and we do not forgive him, then we begin to develop bitterness within, which hardens the heart (cp [Mt 6:12](#), [14](#), [15](#)-see notes). We should be tenderhearted and kind, but instead we are hardhearted and bitter. Actually, we are not hurting the person who hurt us; we are only hurting ourselves. **Bitterness in the heart makes us treat others the way Satan treats them, when we should treat others the way God has treated us.** In His gracious kindness, God has forgiven us, and we should forgive others. We do not forgive for our sake (though we do get a blessing from it) or even for their sake, but for Jesus' sake. Learning how to forgive and forget is one of the secrets of a happy Christian life. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

John Eadie...

Wrath (Thumos) is that mental excitement to which such bitterness gives rise—the commotion or tempest that heaves and infuriates within

Anger (Orge) ([Deut. 9:19](#)) is resentment, settled and dark hostility, and is therefore condemned.

Clamour (krauge) is the expression of this anger—hoarse reproach, the high language of scorn and scolding, the yelling tones, the loud and boisterous recrimination, and the fierce and impetuous invective that mark a man in a towering rage.

Slander (blasphemia) signifies what is hurtful to the reputation of others, and sometimes is applied to the sin of impious speech toward God...In the intensity of passion, hot and hasty rebuke easily and frequently passes into foulest slander.

Evil (kakia) is a generic term, and seems to signify what we sometimes call in common speech bad-heartedness, the root of all those vices.

All these vicious emotions are to be put away.