

A. Communion service:

1. Lead Me to Calvary (verses 1–2)

Praise! 221

2. Scriptures

- a. John 6:30-33 (NAS): 30 They {the Jewish rulers} said therefore to Him, “What then do You do for a sign, that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.’” 32 Jesus therefore said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.”
- b. 6:41–42 (NAS): 41 The Jews therefore were grumbling about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.” 42 And they were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’”
- c. 6:47–51 (NAS): {Then Jesus said,}47 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

3. Giving thanksgiving for and partaking of the bread

- 4. 1 Corinthians 11:24b (NAS): {Jesus said,} “... This My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

5. Scriptures

- a. Isaiah 55:1 (NAS): Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.
- b. John 4:13–14 (NAS): 13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”
- c. John 7:37–39 (NAS): 7 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.’” 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

6. Giving thanksgiving for and partaking of the cup

7. 1 Corinthians 11:25 (NAS): {Jesus said,} “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

8. Lead Me to Calvary (verses 3–4)

Praise! 221

B. Introduction

1. Cubbies

- a. Our Cubbies group in AWANA comprises boys and girls with ages from three to five – actually, in September some may not even yet be three!
- b. it is interesting to watch the youngest when they arrive for the first time and they are given a pre-printed sheet to colour – their goal seems to be how fast they can get it done or how many colours of crayons they can use on the page – any thought of colouring within the lines is totally absent – by the time they are ready to graduate to Sparks they are quite a bit better
- c. or when they are gluing, it seems to be how much glue they can get on the page or how far out they can unwind the glue-sticks before Mrs. Hutchinson notices – and this never seems to get any better!
- d. I have been known to get impatient with this maturing process: when will they ever learn!?
- e. Just think how patient and longsuffering God is when He looks at us! ... when will be ever learn!?

2. time marches on so very quickly to us, yet how slowly we progress in our spiritual growth

- a. we have just finished the year 2005
 - (A) the things that we have done, that we have said
 - (B) they have been written in indelible ink into the pages of history and there they will remain – with all their errors and blots and smudges – for all time to come
- b. but now we come to 2006
 - (A) and before us is a clean page
 - (B) what will we write upon it?
 - (C) will it be more of the same?
 - (D) or will there be a new Spirit in the book of our lives?

C. Rather than having a separate Scripture reading this morning, I am going to read the passage of our text, Ephesians 4:17–32 (NAS): as we think through it with our message, “The Old, The New”. First, let us look at ...

- D. The Old Ephesians 4:17–19
1. life of futility 17 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.
 2. first note those words, “affirm together with the Lord”
 - a. this is not an instance of Paul giving apostolic advice such as in 1 Corinthians 7:26 where he says that for the then “present distress” – the tribulation the church then faced – it was better for Christians to remain unmarried
 - b. no, Paul affirms that in this he is speaking by “visions and revelations of the Lord” as spoken of in 2 Corinthians 12:1
 3. then some of you may have translations that say “the rest of the Gentiles” or “other Gentiles” – without my arguing why, let me simply say it is best to read it as “just as the Gentiles also walk”
 - a. for although Paul is writing to Greek Christians, whom he addresses in 3:1 as “you Gentiles”
 - b. he has already pointed out that they – and we – “are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints and of the household of God” (2:19)
 - c. and all of us are part of “one body” (4:4), the church
 - d. so, then Gentiles is what we were, and Christians are what we are ... then let us live like Christians, not Gentiles!
 4. before we leave the description of the Old Life – the life before one comes to know Jesus Christ as his or her own personal Saviour, let us note what a depressing state it is
 - a. there is a downward progression here: a progression which is to be discovered by unwrapping these verses
 - b. the word “because” introduces the underlying cause: “hardness of heart” – man’s settled rebellion against God

- c. a second “because” tells us that from this hardness comes “ignorance” – agnosticism – a willing unbelief in God
 - d. so it is little wonder the result is “being darkened in their understanding” – unable to know spiritual truths
 - e. so having become “callous” in all these ways, what kind of life results? ... one that is “given ... over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness”
 - f. how aptly this is described as a life of “futility”
5. and like last year, and the year prior, and so on back
- a. where all their mistakes and poor decisions
 - b. follow us, reminding us, beckoning us
 - c. so this old life, that every one of us has experienced, seeks to pursue us drawing us back into its snatches and control
 - d. for this reason the Lord through Paul encourages us ...

E. Change Out of Your Old into Your New

- 1. the picture here is of clothing, but we are not talking about
 - a. putting on your new tie, new scarf, new shirt, new socks or new sweater, or so on
 - b. that you received among your Christmas presents
- 2. but Paul is speaking of
 - a. discarding the old beggarly clothes of sin that were part of our life before coming to Jesus as our Saviour
 - b. and putting on the new, radiant garments that the Holy Spirit provides as part of salvation
- 3. Conversion is a change of clothing, Ephesians 4:20–24, NAS: [20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.](#)

4. the work of salvation is described in many different ways in the Bible – which is just as well, given the varied circumstances and ways whereby the Holy Spirit makes us children of God
 - a. these are people who “learn Christ”, among other things this is a brief way of saying “becoming one of Christ’s disciples”; of becoming a Christian
 - b. as well they are those who “heard Him”, not just the hearing of the ears, but those who have attended his invitational call, and have listened, hearkened, obeyed and come
 - c. they also are those who “have been taught in Him”, having been given the gospel message, the good news of Jesus who came and lived and died that we should be forgiven of our sins; who are included in those described in
 - d. John 1:12 (NAS) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.

5. we, too, are a little impatient: we want the changes in our lives to be overnight and overwhelming.
 - a. A woman driver was having difficulties getting her automobile started after it had stalled in traffic. The gentleman (?) in the car behind her insisted in expressing his impatience with her by blowing his horn every few seconds. Finally, the lady, worn out by his thoughtlessness, stepped out of her automobile, walked back to the honker’s car and said, “I’m having some difficulty in getting my car started. If you’ll go and see if you can start it, I’ll honk your horn for you!” –{2}.
 - b. sometimes we are like that man – honking our horn at God to tell Him to get busy changing our lives, when He wants us to get busy, in the power of the Spirit, on our own lives
 - c. so Paul, by that same Spirit, now explains to us some of the steps involved; of taking off the old garments and the putting on of the new; let’s look at ...

F. The Changes in the Christian’s Dress

1. no, I am not talking about what you should wear to church, whether you should wear a tie or not, should wear a suit or our everyday work clothes – the Epistle of James deals with that, telling us that those are mere, unimportant externals (Jas 2:2)

2. The first piece of apparel – truth replaces lying
 - a. Ephesians 4:25, NAS: [Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbour, for we are members of one another.](#)
 - b. the need for truth is based upon the body relationship that is to exist within the community of believers
 - c. one defect I have in seeing, either because of how my eyes are set, or the way I hold my head, or whatever; is that I do not see things that are at my feet a foot or two in front of me; as a result, I have spent most of my life tripping over things that are on the ground and my shins are covered with scars and bruises to prove it. So my legs suffer due to the false – untruthful – message that my eyes provide
 - d. so as believers our purpose in telling the truth is not to hurt but quite the opposite, to guard one another from harm
3. The second piece of apparel – reconciliation replaces anger
 - a. Ephesians 4:26–27, NAS: [26 be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.](#)
 - b. again, this is part of the body relationship
 - c. anger, frustration and upset will come – but it is what we do about it that is important
 - d. if we refuse to seek reconciliation then our testimony as a Christian is injured – how can we claim reconciliation to God and be angry with His children? – and the door is opened for the devil, for Satan, the Accuser to do his work
4. The third piece of apparel – honesty replaces dishonesty
 - a. Ephesians 4:28, NAS: [Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labour, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need.](#)
 - b. the old life was one of taking; the new, one of giving
 - c. an important part of becoming part of the church of Jesus Christ is the new responsibility we have for other believers
 - d. so honest work is our opportunity both to be an example and to be able to share with those less privileged than we

5. The fourth piece of apparel is sanctified speech
 - a. Ephesians 4:29, 31, NAS: [29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. ... 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.](#)
 - b. do you see all the ways in which bad speech can appear? James tells us that the person who can control his speech is able also to control his whole self – and it isn't easy
 - c. that's why I used the term "sanctified" ... something which the Holy Spirit does; we so depend on Him for this change

6. The fifth and final piece of apparel is acceptance
 - a. Ephesians 4:32, NAS: [And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.](#)
 - b. how foreign should the judgmental spirit be to Christians!
 - c. look at its replacements: kindness, tenderness, forgiveness
 - d. what beautiful adornments are these marks of acceptance one to another in the Christian's life!
 - e. but how? let's return to verse 30, which I omitted for a moment, to see

7. When we accept Christ as our own personal Saviour, we receive a piece of jewellery, the Holy Spirit's seal
 - a. Ephesians 4:30, NAS: [And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.](#)
 - b. the Holy Spirit desires to help us don new spiritual clothes
 - c. but the Bible tells us that it is possible to resist the Holy Spirit, to quench His purifying flame
 - d. so let us keep this seal polished by allowing Him to work

- G. Have you been actively employed in putting these new garments onto your life? ... truth, reconciliation, honesty, sanctified speech, acceptance of our fellow Christians? ... has the Holy Spirit had free course to clothe you in these new garments? ... yield to His power as we sing our closing hymn, "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. Fredericksburg Bible Illustrator Supplements, Kerux illustrations #7970