

Contra Mundum
The Witness of Grace
Ephesians 4:25-32
May 3, 2015

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. **-Ephesians 4:32**

I. SIX PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW LIFE

1. **Truthfulness** (John 8:32; 43-45; Rev. 21:8)
 - We are not only neighbors—we are family (Eph. 4:4-6).
2. **Calmness/Reasonableness** (Gen. 4:5-7)
 - The devil will seize the opportunity to turn anger, whether righteous or unrighteous, into a grievance, a grudge, or bitterness (Eph. 6:10; James 4:7).
3. **Trustworthiness/Hard Work** (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:10)
 - We work not just so that we can eat, but so that others can eat/live as well. We gain to give (Acts 20:34-35).
4. **Edifying Speech** (1 Thess. 5:11; Eph. 5:3-5)
 - Christ followers bestow grace, not discord and discouragement. Christ is our example (John 1:16).
 - The Holy Spirit is grieved by our flippancy and trash talking.
5. **Peaceful** (Rom. 12:17-19)
 - The vices listed in vs. 31 are the opposite of the Fruit of the Spirit. They create brooding, grudge-filled people (Gal. 5:22-24; Heb. 12:15).
6. **Bent Toward Forgiveness** (2 Cor. 2:10-11)
 - We are not called to love and forgive, we are commanded to do so (Matt. 6:14-15; 18:35; Mark 11:25).

KNOW: The result of our transformation in Christ is a peaceful spirit. Love and compassion for the body of Christ, hard work, generosity, and a graciousness toward one another.

DO: Live out the qualities of your new life.

Suggested Reading:

The Mark of the Christian, by Francis Shaeffer

The Practice of Godliness, by Jerry Bridges

**Questions/Discovery Points for
Life Groups/Families**

Please read Ephesians 4:25-32

1. Take all the virtues Paul mentions and put them together. Is it possible to live this way?
2. What steps are necessary for the new Christian (or old Christian who has not taken these passages seriously) in order to move in the direction of living out the qualities of our new life?
3. Talk more about “be angry and do not sin.” How do we distinguish righteous indignation from plain old anger?
4. In what ways do we give the devil a foothold when we live contrary to these virtues? What happens when he gets a foothold in our lives?
5. How do we encourage ourselves and others to live as Paul has called us to live without being “legalistic?” What does it mean to be “legalistic?”
6. What practical steps will you take to begin/continue to live out the new life?