

Being Out of Step with the World Ephesians 4:17-24

Introduction:

it is never easy to be out of step. To be out of step necessarily means that we do not fit in. We do not act or perform like everyone else. We stand out in a crowd.

However, in this instance to be out of step is a good thing. The reason we are out of step is because we march to the beat of a different drum.

In bands and some military parades drums are used to provide a beat or cadence for marching. The drums establish a rhythmic beat that determines the steps of those marching.

As Christians we march to a different drummer. We follow the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ. He orders our steps.

Theme: The importance that the Christian marches to the beat of a different drum.

Key Verse: Ephesians 4:17 (ESV) Now this I say and testify in the Lord, **that you must no longer walk** as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.

As Christians we are to march in lock step with the Lord Jesus Christ for we are to be following Him.

Ephesians 4:1 (ESV) I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,**

In order to march in that way we have depart from the manner in which we marched before we were saved, when we were not followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:17 (ESV) Now this I say and testify in the Lord, **that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do,** in the futility of their minds.

- I. Characteristics of the way people who are not followers of the Lord Jesus Christ march.
 - A. Those who are not followers of the Lord Jesus Christ march without aim or purpose.

Ephesians 4:17 (ESV) Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, **in the futility of their minds.**

Ecclesiastes 1:2 (ESV) Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

1. The need that people sense for purpose in life can be seen in the response to Rick Warren's book *The Purpose Driven Life*.

Rick Warren wrote *The Purpose Driven Life* that was published in 2002.

2. The book topped the Wall Street Journal best seller charts as well as Publishers Weekly charts. *The Purpose Driven Life* was also on the New York Times Bestseller List for over 90 weeks.[8] It had sold over 18 million copies by 2008,[9] and 32 million copies within its first decade, by 2012.[10] According to both the author and publisher Simon & Schuster, 50 million copies had been sold in more than 85 languages by 2020. Wikipedia

3. Rick Warren summarized the purpose of life in the following ways:

What on Earth Am I Here For?

Purpose #1: You Were Planned for God's Pleasure (Christian Worship)

Purpose #2: You Were Formed for God's Family (Christian Church)

Purpose #3: You Were Created to Become Like Christ (Discipleship)

Purpose #4: You Were Shaped for Serving God (Christian Ministry)

Purpose #5: You Were Made for a Mission (Christian Mission)

- B. The characteristics of those who walk without aim or purpose.

1. They are not able to see clearly.

Ephesians 4:18 (ESV) **They are darkened in their understanding,** alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

2. They are strangers to life which is to be had in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:18 (ESV) They are darkened in their understanding, **alienated from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

- a. These are people who are not born-again.
 - b. They still dead in their trespasses and sins.
3. They have closed their minds to God as result of their resistance to His truth.

Ephesians 4:18 (ESV) They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God **because of the ignorance that is in them**, due to their hardness of heart.

4. They have persistently resisted God's truth that is revealed in nature, the conscience and the Word of God.

Ephesians 4:18 (ESV) They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, **due to their hardness of heart**.

Ephesians 4:19 (ESV **They have become callous** and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

5. They have replaced following God's truth with following their own sinful desires.

Ephesians 4:19 (ESV They have become callous **and have given themselves up to sensuality**, greedy to practice every kind of impurity

- a. To "give oneself up to" is to live without moral restraint.
- b. They are not governed by the truth but their own sinful desires which is depicted as "sensuality."

Ephesians 2:1 (ESV) And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

Ephesians 2:2 (ESV) in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

Ephesians 2:3 (ESV) **among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

- II. The contrast: Those who are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ march to a different drum.

Ephesians 4:20 (ESV) But that is not the way you learned Christ!—

- A. Those who are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ are governed not by their sinful desires but by the truth of God.

Ephesians 4:21 (ESV) assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,

1. These are people who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:21 (ESV) **assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him**, as the truth is in Jesus,

2. These are people who have been instructed in the word of God.

Ephesians 4:21 (ESV) assuming that you have heard about him **and were taught in him**, as the truth is in Jesus,

3. These are people who have committed themselves to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:21 (ESV) assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, **as the truth is in Jesus**,

- B. Followers of Christ are those who have committed themselves to a new way of living.

1. They committed themselves to a true and lasting repentance in departing from their old way of living.

Ephesians 4:22 (ESV) **to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life** and is corrupt through deceitful desires,

- a. They have committed themselves not to follow (march in step with drumbeat of their sinful desires.

Ephesians 4:22 (ESV) to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life **and is corrupt through deceitful desires,**

- b. Instead they have committed themselves to live in keeping with the teaching of God’s Word.

Ephesians 4:23 (ESV) and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,

Romans 12:1 (ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Romans 12:2 (ESV) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- 2. They have committed themselves to a whole new way of living. Ephesians 4:24 (ESV) **and to put on the new self**, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

- a. There is a recognition that we have been created (anew) in the image of God.

- (1) Originally mankind was created in the image of God.

Genesis 1:26 (ESV) Then God said, “**Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.** And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

- (2) Mankind rejected the image of God.

Romans 1:21 (ESV) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became **futile in their thinking**, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Romans 1:22 (ESV) Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

Romans 1:23 (ESV) **and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.**

(3) Therefore mankind became corrupted

Romans 1:24 (ESV) Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,

Romans 1:25 (ESV) because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

b. In Christ we have been created “anew” in the image of God.

Ephesians 4:24 (ESV) and to put on the new self, **created after the likeness of God** in true righteousness and holiness.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.** The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:18 (ESV) All this is from God, **who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;**

2 Corinthians 5:19 (ESV) **that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself**, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

c. We are to display the image of God which is one of right actions.

Ephesians 4:24 (ESV) and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in **true righteousness** and holiness.

- d. We are to display the image of God which is true moral purity unlike no other.

Ephesians 4:24 (ESV) and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in **true righteousness** and **holiness**.

III. Conclusion:

- A. The Christian is to live a life that different from those of the non-believing world.
- B. Our lives are to be lived purposefully to reveal God to the world.
- C. We are to be living lives that are truly righteous and holy.
- D. We are to do so to show the world the true image of God. A God who is righteous and holy.
- E. Our lives are to reflect the beauty and gloriousness of that image.
- F. For that to happen our understand about God and ourselves must change.
- G. God must open our eyes to the truth of God.
- H. For our eyes to be truly opened we must be given life from God. A life that is so transforming that it is a total new start. We are a new creation.
- I. When our eyes are opened we need to consistently make decisions that are in keeping with what the scriptures teach as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.