

Stop living like the lost world around you (17-19).

1. The Basis of the Command (17a)

- a. "Therefore" – Because the you have a new identity in Christ and a new function in the body of Christ, you must separate yourself from the sinful lifestyle of the world around you.
- b. "Testify in the Lord" – Paul is exhorting us on the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thes. 4:1).

2. The Content of the Command (17b-19)

- a. "Walk not as other Gentiles walk" – If we are to "walk worthy" (4:1) of all that we are and have in Christ, we must not "walk" (live) as the lost world around us.
- b. "In the vanity of their mind" – A vain mindset is described throughout Ecclesiastes as a mindset that is not based on the fear of God. The lost world lives a life devoid of God.
 - i. Romans 1:21 "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; **but became vain in their imaginations**, and their foolish heart was darkened."
 - ii. Romans 1:28 "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;"
- c. "Having the understanding darkened" (18a) – The lost world have turned away from the truth resulting in a willful darkening of their understanding.
 - i. Romans 1:21 "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, **and their foolish heart was darkened.**"
 - ii. In contrast, believers' eyes have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit (1:18).
- d. "Being alienated from the life of God" (18b) – By turning away from the truth, they are separated are alienated from the life-giving power of God.
 - i. "Through the ignorance that is in them" – This ignorance is willful as seen in Romans 1:21-31.
 - ii. When people exchange truth for lies, God hands them over to reap the consequences of their depraved, ignorant lifestyles.
- e. "Who being past feeling" (19) – The world have become callous to truth, and have become dead to it. This is a tragic result of turning away from truth!
 - i. "Have given themselves over unto lasciviousness" – This refers to all kinds of immorality and self-indulgence.
 1. Romans 1:26-31
 2. Galatians 5:9 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,"
 - ii. "To work all uncleanness with greediness" – Their desire for sin is insatiable.
 1. Sin cannot satisfy; the more we indulge in it the greater our hunger for more.
 2. Greed is the expression of an empty heart that has not learned to satisfy its hunger with Christ.

Conclusion:

1. Are you walking worthy of who you are in Christ? Are you readily identifiable as a Christian?
2. What occupies your mind all day? Is your mind filled with the Word of God, or are you living in willful ignorance of the truth?
3. Is your understanding being more and more enlightened by truth, or are you turning away from the truth you know?
4. Is your life a testimony of the life-giving power of God, or are you living a life that denies that power?
5. Have you become callous to the truth? Have you become callous to the sins of this world?