

**The Corporate New Man** (Ephesians 4:17-24)

Water of Life

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**Summary of Ephesians 1:3–3:21:**

*(Earlier notes detailed the outline)*

Despite Gentile and Jewish unbelievers universally being dead, God jointly-enlivened, jointly-raised, and jointly-seated Jewish and Gentile believers with Christ (by-grace through-faith), making peace between Jews and Gentiles in one body and reconciling both to the Father.

**4:17 [In light of Christ designing each part of the unified body to work together to bring the whole body to a maturity matching that of its head, Christ] GBels need to abandon futile GUnbel thinking.**

**4:18 [GUnbels have futile thinking]**

**because their mind lacks light;**

**their mind lacks light**

**because they are alienated from the life of God;**

**they are alienated from God's life because of ignorance;**

**they are ignorant, because they are spiritually blind**

Cf. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4:

But even if our gospel is **veiled**, it is **veiled** to those who are perishing, whose minds the **god** of this age has **blinded**, who do not believe, **lest** the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. . . . For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has **shone** in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

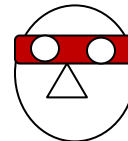
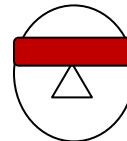
Arminian says "Open Eyes"



Calvinist says "God gives eyes"



God lets light penetrate veil



**4:19 GUnbels dedicate themselves to lewdness and greedy uncleanness, because they are spiritually calloused (thinking with a futile mindset)**

**4:20 [In contrast with the GUnbels' futile mindset] the EphGBels s did not learn Christ through a futile mindset**

**4:21 [Rather than learning Christ through a futile mindset] the EphBels have learned Christ by Christ teaching them [through the gifted APEPTs Christ gave to the church] [and this teaching is not futile, because the truth is in Jesus]**

**Preparation for 4:22-24:**

We will present an Ephesians-based case, before saying anything about Colossians or Romans. In other words, the case stands or falls in Ephesians.

**1. Expositors have argued this passage from three perspectives.**

- Most non-Calvinists have taught view A: Exhorting individuals to put off/put on
- Most Calvinists have taught view B: that each individual bel already has put on/put off
- The Calvinist uses this as a basis for “fruit inspection” (as they do for Eph 2:10)
- I understand Paul to present view C: that the church corporately has put on/put off
- Thus, I say Calvinists have understood the grammar, but missed the passage.

	Individual	Corporate
<b>Exhortational</b>	A. Exhortation to Individuals	
<b>Existing Reality</b>	B. Existing Reality for Individuals	<b>C. Existing Corporate Reality</b>

**2. Meaning of “Put on the new man; put off the old man:”**

- Calvinists often see this as speaking of God having given believers success over sin;
- Non-Calvinists see this as commanding believers to have success over sin;
- Both Calvinists and non-Calvinists misunderstand “new man... old man.”

**3. A difference between English and Greek that makes view A seem necessary.**

- All English infinitives (to go, to be, etc.) are present tense, but Greek does have past-tense infinitives (to went, to was, etc.). Put on and put off are (in Greek) past tense.
- Let us render them (temporarily) as:  
to have [already] put on...      to have [already] put off...

That is awkward English, so I will do as Darby did: render them as participles. There are certain circumstances in which translators must render Greek infinitives as English participles:  
In Greek: A man who is fasting stopped to eat (= he stopped eating).


**4. Darby’s rendering of the passage (the only English translation that makes it clear).**

your **having put off** according to the former conversation the old man which corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts; and being renewed in the spirit of your mind; and your **having put on** the new man, which according to God is created in truthful righteousness and holiness. [two infinitives are past tense, the middle one is present]

**How has Paul used the concept of the *created new man* in Ephesians?**

**Eph 2:14-15**

For He Himself is our peace, who has made **both one**, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as **to create** in Himself **one new man from the two**, thus making peace.



**Eph 2:10**

For we are **His artifact, created** in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**Eph 4:25 (directly following 4:22-24, where the old man was put off and the new man was put on).**

Literal translation: Therefore, **having put off the lie**, let each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

NKJ: Therefore, **putting away lying**, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

**Observation 1:** *Having put off the lie* is past. It is not an exhortation to stop lying. English translators have ignored the well-known rule that an aorist participle (*having put off*) must occur in time prior to the action of the controlling verb—if the controlling verb is present tense. The controlling verb (*let... speak*) is present tense, so *having put off* must be past.

**Observation 2:** the truth to be spoken is defined in 4:15. This is not merely not lying, but it is a denial of the truth that we are (corporately in the new man—the body of Christ, the universal church).

**Observation 3:** *Having put away* is *apotithēmi* (this term in 4:22 = *having put off*). In both places 4:22 and 4:25 it is a past-tense form.

**4:22 The EphBels learned Christ by Christ teaching them that (1) in regard to their old conduct, they [when they were joined to Christ] had (corporately) already put-off their being-corrupted old-man position [in Adam]**

**4:23 The EphBels learned Christ by Christ teaching them that (2) [when they were joined to Christ] (corporately) their mind is being renewed [as they learn God's word]**

**4:24 The EphBels learned Christ by Christ teaching them that (3) [when they were joined to Christ], they had corporately put on their new-man position (created according to God in righteousness and holiness)**

**Excursus: Colossians 3:9-11**

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,



where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Note that the created new man is where there is neither Greek nor Jew

Is Paul saying that a believer's new nature is non-ethnic? \_\_\_\_\_

Is Paul saying that the body of Christ makes ethnic issues secondary? \_\_\_\_\_

**Excursus: Romans 6:5-6**

Once again, note the created new man.

**Conclusion**