

EPHESIANS 4:17-24

GOING UPSTREAM IS A GOOD THING

I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

1. Too many of us fail to **BUILD** our lives on the truth of God.
2. The results of choosing our own truth while ignoring God's truth is that we live without restraints, without boundaries and reap **DISASTER**. Paul describes this disaster in three ways:
 - The heart becomes so hardened that all sense of **WRONG** is forgotten.
 - The loss of sensitivity creates a loss of **SHAME** for immoral behavior.
 - The continual lust for more removes the **CONCERN** over who gets hurt.

They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.
(NIV)

Hosea 8:7

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Galatians 6:7 (NIV)

3. The way to **SUCCESSFUL LIVING** is to re-orient ourselves to the truth of God that we discover through knowing Jesus.

4. We are called to a life that often goes **AGAINST** the currents of culture.
5. Ultimately, I have to ask myself, do I even **WANT** the new life God offers or am I willing to settle for something less? (For some reason we seem to have an aversion to words like righteousness and holiness.)