

# **“UNBRIDLED” DESIRES**

**(Getting To The Root Problem Of The Old Nature)  
Ephesians 4:17-32**



## **“THE LORD CHANGES OUR DESIRES”**

- ◆ Look Backwards (And be Grateful)
- ◆ Look Inward (And be Hopeful)
- ◆ Look Outward (And be Fruitful)

**“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**” (Ephesians 4:22)**

Bill Kirk

# “THE BLESSING OF BRIDLED DESIRES”

**Text:** Ephesians 4:17-32

**Subject:** “Getting to the Root Of Every Problem”

## (Our Text Is Verse 22)

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts”.

## (Verse 22 In The New International Version Reads:)

“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”.

**Question:** What is it that corrupts us?

**Answer:** “Deceitful Desires”

**Question:** What is the root of every problem?

**Answer:** “Deceitful Desires”

**Question:** What is it that God wants to bridle?

**Answer:** “Deceitful Desires”

**Question:** Why does Paul (In Ephesians 4:22) call our desires deceitful?

**Answer:** Because they can lead us astray, plunge us into ruin, defile our spirit, and promise what they cannot provide. (Bad desires – Bad fruit)

**Fact:** It is no secret to anyone in the world who counsels people and knows the makeup of man and believes the Word. (That there are 5 basic needs of a human being)

#1. Acceptance      #2. Peace      #3. Security      #4. Happiness      #5. Fulfillment

◆ The Bible teaches us, if we desire to find these in a person, place or thing (apart from God) it is idolatry. (Only God can fulfill our 5 basic desires).

**Question:** Pastor, when does a desire become evil?

**Answer:** When that desire is pursued at the expense of the glory and purpose of God.

## (Discover With Me)

### #1. James 1:13,14

“When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me. For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when, by his own evil **desire**, he is dragged away and enticed”.

### #2. James 4:1,2

“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your **desires** that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want”.

### #3. James 3:16

“For where you have envy and selfish ambition (**desires**), there you find disorder and every evil practice”.

### #4. Galatians 5:16

“Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the **desires** of the sinful nature”.

### #5. I John 2:15,16 & 17

“If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world, the cravings of sinful man...comes not from the Father...The world and its **desires** pass away”.

#6. **Mark 4:19**

“But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the **desires** for other things come in and choke the Word”.

#7. **Romans 6:12** (Written to believers)

“Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil **desires**.”

#8. **Romans 13:14**

“Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the **desires** of the sinful nature”.

#9. **I Peter 2:11**

“Abstain from sinful **desires** which war against the soul”.

#10. **I Peter 4:2**

“The saved person does not live his earthly life for evil human **desires**, but to do the will of God”.

#11. **Jude 16**

“Grumblers and faultfinders follow their own evil **desires**; boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage”.

#12. **Galatians 5:24**

“Those who belong to Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its **desires**”.

**(In Plain Vanilla)**

- ◆ Desire (out of order) is the root problem in God’s eyes.
- ◆ Trouble comes to the degree that we turn from God to serve what we want.
- ◆ Fleshly desires produce bad fruit (in words, deeds, emotions, thoughts, attitudes, etc.)

**(See It For Yourself)**

- ◆ Every argument, poisonous word, outburst of anger, is the result of a desire that’s being frustrated.
- ◆ Two kids fighting and screaming “I want it” “You can’t have it” “It’s mine” “I had it first”.

**Question:** Pastor, is there hope for me to be a healthy believer, live un-frustrated and walk with peace and a purpose?

**Answer:** Yes! (Because God comes along and promises to change our desires)

- ◆ He subordinates our desires to His desires.
- ◆ He changes what we want to what He wants.

**(3 Absolutes That Affect My Desires)**

I. **I Must Look Backwards (And Be Grateful)** (Vs. 17-19)

- ◆ The mass of converts in Ephesus were from among the heathen.
- ◆ Paul refers to them as Gentile converts (v. 17)
- ◆ In (v. 17), we are instructed to “walk not as other Gentiles walk” (but as a new creation).
- ◆ And Paul describes us before we were saved (what we were like before conversion).

**(The Reasons To Look Back And Be Grateful)**

#1. **We were vain** (v. 17)

- ◆ “Vanity of mind” (means) empty, futile, senseless, aimless and worthless.
- ◆ “It means (before Jesus) and (without Jesus) we were void of God and empty of the truth, we followed the vanity of our minds.

#2. **We were darkened** (v. 18)

- ◆ “Having our understanding darkened” (means)

- ◆ We were blinded and unable to see.
- ◆ We had no knowledge of God and His eternal plan for us.

#3. We were alienated (v. 18)

- ◆ “Alienated from the life of God” (means)
- ◆ We were spiritually dead and doomed to eternal death.
- ◆ The word “alienated” (APALLOTRIO) (means 3 things):  
(Separated, cut off and detached)
- ◆ It means apart from Jesus we were totally separated from eternal life.

#4. We were past feeling (v. 19)

- ◆ This Greek word for “past feeling” (APALEGO) means: callous and hardened
- ◆ It means the longer we walked without God, the more hardened and callous our conscience became.

#5. We were carnal (v. 19)

- ◆ Lasciviousness, uncleanness and greediness describe us before salvation.
- ◆ The 3 words refer to sensuality, polluted, immoral and unclean.
- ◆ The word “greediness” means “to covet, crave, hoard and desire more and more.

(In Other Words)

**God (in Christ) broke the power of these 5 things at salvation**

vain   darkened   alienated   past feeling   carnal

**Question:** What does it mean to us now?

**Answer:** It means we can look back and be grateful.

- ◆ Grateful that our old desires have changed.
- ◆ Grateful that our former desires have died.
- ◆ Grateful that our past desires have been replaced by now desires. (How?)

**#1 -- I must look backward (and be grateful)**

**II. I Must Look Inward (and be Hopeful) (vs. 20-24)**

**Question:** Pastor, what really happened when I got saved?

**Answer:** A process of dramatic change began to take place (a process that is inward and gives hope to everyone).

**(3 Secrets Of Inward Change)**

- #1. (V.22) “Put off the old man”
- #2. (V.23) “Be renewed in the Spirit of your mind”
- #3. (V.24) “Put on the new man”

**Question:** How many of you want to “put off the old man” (v.22) and not be deceived by your evil desires?

**Question:** How do you “put off the old man”?

**Answer:** By exercising faith in the truth.

**Question:** What is the truth?

**Answer:** The truth is your old man has been put to death.

- ◆ Yes, we still live in a tainted, carnal, flesh body.
- ◆ But the nature that ruled you before salvation, has been superceded by another nature. (The second Adam-Jesus).
- ◆ It means that the former desires that governed you before salvation, have been crucified so you can obey the new desires of the spirit man.

**Question:** Pastor, can God really change the desires of a person?

**Answer:** (V.23) "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind".

◆ The Greek word for "renewed" is (ANANEOUSTHAI)

- It Means 5 things:
- #1. "To be made new"
  - #2. "To readjust"
  - #3. "To be changed"
  - #4. "To regenerate"
  - #5. "To turn around"

(What Does It Mean?)

- ◆ It means at salvation, our minds were turned around to focus upon God and began to desire what God desires.
- ◆ It means our thoughts shifted to spiritual things.
- ◆ Our mind began to exercise itself in the Word.
- ◆ Our desires started to transform within us. (Why?) (v. 4) So that we could put on the "new man"
- ◆ Or say "No" to the old way of life.
- ◆ Say "Yes" to our new desires.
- ◆ Say "No" to the former behavior.
- ◆ Say "Yes" to a whole new system of values.

(Pastor, how does all of this translate into practical Christian living?)

### III. I Must Look Outward (and be Fruitful) (Vs. 25-32)

◆ Notice how inward change is reflected in outward behavior:

(In V. 25) I deal with my tongue

- ◆ Lying refers to intent to deceive.
- ◆ Speaking truth refers to honesty and transparency with each other. (No false pretense)
- ◆ "We are members one of another" means, we affect the body by our words we speak.
- ◆ And what we speak tells what is inside the heart.

(In V. 26) I deal with my anger

- ◆ Anger is that emotion we feel after we are hurt, disappointed or displeased with someone.
- ◆ If left unchecked (v. 27) says, It gives a foothold to the devil. (How?)
- ◆ It is selfish, it broods, it harbors ill will, it lingers, it poisons and then it hurts other people.
- ◆ It destroys to the degree it is allowed to remain.

(In V. 28) I deal with my deceit

- ◆ The word for "steal" (KLEPTO) means to "cheat".
- ◆ It refers to cheating someone out of something that isn't mine.

(In V. 290) I deal with my intentions

- ◆ "Corrupt communication" is unholy talk or worthless conversation.
- ◆ It is language that is offensive.

**Question:** What does God desire for my intentions? (V. 20) "Edify and build up people"

Mark Twain said, "I can go two whole months on one compliment".

- ◆ Your tongue is to build up and strengthen people (not criticize and condemn).
- ◆ Your tongue reflects your intent of the heart.
- ◆ Your tongue reflects your intent of the heart.

- ◆ God says let “no” (that’s none) no words proceed from our heart, through our mouth unless they build, edify and strengthen.
- (Vs. 32 & 32) I deal with my forgiveness(Sins of the attitude that growing healthy believers deal with)

- ◆ Bitterness which is a settled hostility that poisons the inner man.
- ◆ Wrath is an explosion on the outside because of bitter feelings on the inside.
- ◆ Clamor is fighting, brawling, contention and insulting behavior.
- ◆ Evil Speaking is talk that defiles and wounds other people.
- ◆ Malice is slanderous and hurtful speech that is spoken to injure.

**Question:** What is the root cause of these 5 unhealthy poisons and toxins in the spirit?

**Answer:** (V. 32) Un-forgiveness!

- ◆ Un-forgiveness is the poison we drink while we wait for the other person to die. (It deceives us and corrupts our desires).

(Whereas)

- ◆ Forgiveness is the cancellation of a debt (or pardon) of a wrong done as if it never existed.
- ◆ Forgiveness doesn’t mean that someone who hurt you was right, it just means that you refuse to allow another persons actions to dictate your actions. (How?)

**Forgive (why?) Because:**

#1. God has forgiven you.

#2. Because forgiveness releases God’s power for you to minister to more people.

- ◆ See how the desire to get revenge deceives us?
- ◆ Un-forgiveness is a deceitful desire (why?) Because the un-forgiver suffers and poisons themselves by listening to the lies of satan.

AMEN!  
Bill Kirk, Pastor

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