

INTRO - He drank, and smoked. Sometimes words came from his mouth that were not what a child should hear. He was Christian, but knew His failings. And he, my grandfather, had perhaps as much of a positive influence on my faith as anyone else, because his faith was real.

I. My family used to go to a restaurant called 'Chics' It was a small building with glass blocks on Main Street in my small home town, Easthampton, Massachusetts. One side of Chics was a restaurant area with tables and booths where you could order hamburgers, macaroni and cheese, and even lobster. The other side of Chics was a bar. Once I got to go to the other side, to the bar side, to ask for another soda, and guess who was playing pool? My grandfather. Later I was at his house and made a smart remark like a kid makes about seeing him there and he surprised me by apologizing. He said he was not always the Christian he ought to be.

A. Yet, this man is one who encouraged me to 'be good,' perhaps more than anyone other than my parents. Maybe because my parents said it so much, I listened to him.

1. I'd get in trouble at home, maybe fighting in the neighborhood, and he'd gently tell me to do a better job.

2. I'd get in trouble at school, which happened a lot - fighting again, or talking back to a teacher, and he would try to teach me and encourage me to do right.

3. I might act in a way that didn't reflect what a Christian should do, or say, and he would gently, or not so gently correct me and share with ME how a Christian should live.

4. Imagine a man who was so sure of his failings, being so fervant in encouraging someone else to righteousness, and holiness, to faith and love.

B. I tell you this for a reason.

1. This summer we've been looking at the Epistles for practical guidance and direction in Christian living.

2. I want you to know how hard, maybe how impossible today's directions are.

3. God calls us through St. Paul to - **put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.**

C. But, I also want you to know that God's call **righteousness and holiness** is real. We hear the call many times in the Bible in different words, but it has the same meaning.

1. Matthew 5;16 says, **let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.** That's God's call to **righteousness and holiness**

2. The beginning of this chapter says, ¹ **As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.** ² **Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.** That's God's call to **righteousness and holiness**

3. Jesus says in the sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:48 **Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.** You need to know, That's God's call to **righteousness and holiness**

4. Seeking to live a life of faith and love, or righteousness and holiness is not a part time job for God's people. It is something God expects us to take seriously. Really.

II. I told you about my grandfather. But, if I told him the words of this verse, - **put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.** He would say he did not and could not do it.

A. Please look at what Paul says.

1. His people cannot just live lives that are witnesses.
2. Verse 17 says, **So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do,**
3. Verse 22 is perhaps the most practical in aiming toward this goal. **put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;**
4. To live righteous and holy lives, we have to put off sin.

B. Children of God, do not think God doesn't know our sin, and our struggles.

1. He knows that we have failed to live as He calls, in holiness and righteousness.
2. Before we can live in faith and love, we first have to put off sin, we have to put off our desires to selfishness, indulgence, immorality.
3. Paul's description of the old life, lists many of these sins. **17 So 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. 18 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. 19 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.**
4. Think about it. How many times does the world around us to give ourselves **over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.** It is a struggle, and you know it.

C. Before we can PUT on righteousness and Holiness, we have to put off our sinful life.

1. That's where my grandfather comes in.
2. He knew His sin, and was sorry for it. That is putting off the old way of life.
3. He knew His sin, and he believed that Jesus died for Him, and rose again, and trusted Jesus to forgive him. That is putting off the old way of life.
4. We can't get rid of our sin by ourselves, but God can take it away with the blood of Jesus Christ.

III. The description here in Ephesians is actually one of changing clothes. Take off sin. Put on Jesus!

A. My friends, you will never live a totally honest, selfless, anger free, greed free life on your own. But, God's practical advice is to put on the new life.

1. When you think about Jesus' love for you, that He left heaven for you who are a sinner, your faith and love will grow.
2. When you realize that God knows your sin, and that God still sent His son for you, your desire to serve God will grow.
3. When you know you are a sinner, as my grandfather did, and know you have to rely on the help of God in His Holy Spirit, in His Word, In His Sacraments, you can turn to God for help rather than trusting in yourself.

B. There is only one place for us to find righteousness. It comes from Jesus who not only died for us, but lived a perfect and righteous life for us.

1. When we are truly sorry for our sin and accept the forgiveness that comes from Jesus, we are putting off our sin.
2. When we believe in Jesus as our Savior, and respond in faith and love as He has loved us, we put Jesus on, and we will daily be working to live the righteous life which God has made us to be.

CONCLUSION - My grandfather took His Lord, and took his faith seriously. He was not perfect. But he knew the process God describes today. I watched Him in the practical process of daily putting off sin, of being truly sorry for his faults, and seeking Jesus' forgiveness. I watched him seek to live in faith and love, to put on Jesus righteousness. That is the practical call we have in our lesson today for every day of our life. Maybe you'll be surprised that God uses you to touch someone's heart.