Ephesians 4:17-19 - 17 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. NASB

A. affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk – Here Paul begins to draw a contrast between the former life of an unsaved Gentile and the new life of a “born again” Christian who has been created by God in true righteousness and holiness v-24. Here he is calling the church to walk(that is TO LIVE) in a manner separate from their former manner of living. Here he begins yet another description of the former state of the Christian, describing their depravity as in chapter 2:1-3 and 2:11-13. In seeing this contrast he “affirms together with the Lord” that we Christians no longer live in the manner we did when we came to Christ. We have been changed, and we are to put on the outward evidences of it. This is central to the Christian faith and essential to mature Christian living. Now that we are to grow up “in all aspects into Him,” this means we must put off the former life and put on the new man in Christ, that is to stop living the way we did and start living in the manner worthy of Christ.

1 Peter 4:2-3 - 2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. NASB

B. in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding. - Here Paul points out the THINKING of a Gentile. It is “futile and darkened.” The mind before regeneration is in “darkness” because it has not received the “light” of the revelation of regeneration. It cannot “SEE” the Kingdom of God because it has not been “born again”, John 3:3. This describes the thinking of all who are not in Christ and is a further description of the former state of the Christian or “natural state” of man.

Romans 1:20-23 - 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. NASB

2 Corinthians 4:3-5 - 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. NASB

C. excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous. - Because mankind has forsaken God and walked headlong into sin, he has forfeited the life of God and has died, seen most clearly in Adam and Eve, “In the day you eat of it, you SHALL SURELY DIE.” Mankind is excluded from the life of God because in his ignorance of God his heart has become calloused toward truth and he has gone off pursuing everything but God, Rom 3:11-12. Having a “hardened heart” toward the righteousness of God, mankind is laden with every kind of sin and impurity, and his conscience hardly knows it. Mankind has “hardness of heart and is callous” which is to say he has become morally insensitive. The verb translated callous means to be past feeling or unashamed.
Romans 3:11-12 - 11 There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; 12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one." NASB

Romans 8:5-8 - 5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. NASB

D. have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness – This is to say that their conscience no longer bears witness against them in any way to restrain them. They are callous toward sin, and God’s righteous judgment against it, they have thrown off all sense of shame. This has plunged mankind
into the PRACTICE of every kind of IMPURITY and that with a continual lust for more. The flesh is never fulfilled and neither are the flames of hell. The acts of men have become so deplorable that Paul later says it is shameful to even mention what they do. It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming Col 3:6.

**Ephesians 5:11-12** - 11 And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. NASB

**Romans 1:28-32** - 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. NASB

**Ephesians 4:20-24** - 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. NASB

A. But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus – We were formerly given to impurity and sensuality having hard hearts toward God until we “learned of Christ.” When we came to know Christ we were given the light of truth and our eyes were opened and we are no longer in darkness, that is to say our understanding has been enlightened to the moral purity of Christ and His Kingdom. This learning of Christ was in stark contrast to the Gentile way of life. If you have been taught the “truth that is in Jesus,” you see that great contrast of holiness and moral purity which separates God from an unholy world of sinners. The command of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is first and foremost one of REPENTANCE from our former life of SIN and a calling to the PRACTICE of a HOLY LIFE which is consistent with the moral purity of God.

**Titus 2:11-12** - 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age. NASB

B. that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, - In Christ we are to “lay aside the old self,” that is to say to no longer live like we did before we were saved. There should be a stark contrast in our living now that we have come to Christ. As he has explained, it is the life of sin and of moral impurity which we are to “put off,” which is “corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit.” The life of sin is very deceptive. It promises freedom and happiness, but leads to death, despair and corruption. It is these formerly sinful habits of living which the Christian is to now “put to death by the Spirit.”

**Romans 8:12-15** - 12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. NASB

**Colossians 3:5-10** - 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked,
when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him NASB

C. and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind. - In the contrast which Paul is drawing between the former life of depravity and the new life of holiness, he has focused primarily on the thinking pattern of the “old man” of sin. The Gentile apart from God is “futile, darkened, ignorant and calloused” in his thinking. Now he shows the contrast of the thinking pattern of the “new man” of holiness. He is to think like a new man, to be renewed in his mind with new righteousness of God which has become his in Christ. This is the key to spiritual transformation! We are to be renewed in our thinking, having our minds transformed by the Word of God. This is accomplished by the basic disciplines of Christian life of;

- Meditation on the Word of God Daily
- Prayer
- Christian Fellowship

The Christian is to “be transformed by the renewing of the mind,” and to continually seek to “put on Christ” in his practice. We live out or practice our thinking patterns, as the proverbs say(Prov 23:7). It is these thinking patterns which desperately need to be renewed by the Word of God.

Romans 12:2 - 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. NASB

Colossians 3:9-10 - 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him NASB

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 - 16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. NASB

D. and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. – We are to consciously “put on the new self,” that is to live in repentance moment by moment. We are to continually think in a manner consistent with Christ so that we may live out His teaching, which is righteous and holy. In Christ we have become a new creation of God, having “been created” with the new nature of God within our soul. That new nature is “in the likeness of God” and is born of the “incorruptible seed of the Word of God(1 Pet 1:23),” and is the life of God’s righteousness and holiness of the truth living within the soul of man/woman. It is this new life which we were saved for and has become our chief purpose for living! We must understand that regeneration is no small thing but in fact the very life of God has been implanted into our souls. We now have a nature which is incorruptible and undefiled, righteous and holy, abiding in truth. Therefore we must continually put this new self on, to think, speak, and act like that righteous and holy man which we are!

Romans 6:4-7 - 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. NASB