**Exhort One Another (3/3/24)**

**Discussion Questions**

**Summary:** Christian community is a balance of comfort and challenge, of encouragement and exhortation. Paul provides a healthy dose of both in the second half of Ephesians 4. In a memorable couplet Paul commands believers to “put off the old self and… put on the new self.” You have been given a new heart and a new life in Christ, but you still have to put it on every day. And we need each other to help us grow up into our new "Jesus wardrobe." This passage will challenge us to change our thinking and our behavior, together.

**Exhort One Another**

Eph. 4:17-24, 31-32

*“You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked…”* Eph. 2:1

Recognize the **Old You**, in sin (Eph. 2:1-3)

* Understand and reject your sinful **Thinking** (v. 17-19,22)
  + Beliefs > Values > Desires > Thoughts > Actions > Lifestyle
* Repent and **Replace** your sinful behavior (v. 19-22)

*“You were taught in him… to* ***put off your old self*** *which belongs to your former manner of life.” Eph. 4:22*

Grow into the **New You**, in Christ (v. 20-21; Eph. 2:4-6)

* Renew your mind with the **Truth** together (v. 21-24)
  + You are a new **Creation** in Christ (v. 24; 32)
  + You were **Sealed** w/ the Spirit (v. 30)
  + You are part of the **Body** of Christ (v. 25)
* Beliefs > Values > Desires > Thoughts > Actions > Lifestyle

*“Be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to* ***put on the new self****, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness..”* Eph. 4:23-24

* Cultivate new **Practices** together
  + Speak the Truth (v. 25)
  + Make Peace (v. 26-27)
  + Work Hard (v. 28a)
  + Give Generously (v. 28b)
  + Speak in Love (v. 29)
  + Be quick to Forgive (v. 31-32)

**Get Started:**

1. What was your favorite article of clothing when you were young? Why were you so attached to it? What happened to it?
2. How is Christian growth like “putting off” old clothes and “putting on” new ones?

**Dig In:** Read Ephesians 4:17-24

1. What stands out to you in this passage?
2. Why is it important to “know yourself” in terms of your past, your triggers, your temptations and sin struggles?
3. How did you “learn Christ” and first “get dressed” in Him?
4. Why is accountability and encouragement from other believers so important for this “putting off” and “putting on” process?
5. Watch ***“Hope and Power to Change”*** on Oakwood’s Youtube Channel (around 7 mins)
6. Discuss this progression in our hearts: Beliefs > Values > Desires > Thoughts > Actions > Lifestyle

**Move Forward:**

1. Read Eph. 4:25-32. What specific sins did Paul identify to be “put off”? What replacement behaviors did he encourage?
2. Why is it important to not just stop a behavior but to replace it?
3. Which of these struggles hits closest to home for you this week?
4. Take some time to pray for one another.