

Devotional Guide
The Darkened Mind
Ephesians 4:17- 19

Monday

Ephesians 4:17 – 19; 1 Peter 1:18; Romans 1:21 – 23; Acts 17:21; 1 Corinthians 3:20; 2 Timothy 2:23; Ecclesiastes 1:2; Luke 11:34 - 36

In Ephesians 4, Paul contrasted the old life of darkened minds, ignorance, and depravity, with the new life of a renewed mind, truth, and holiness. Because we are to no longer walk in this way (4:17) it is helpful to see what we are to leave behind. The old life was characterized by futile thinking and a darkened understanding.

Think About It: What are some examples of futile thinking and darkened understanding, based on the Scripture references for today? What are some examples of futile thinking and darkened understanding in the world today? How am I tempted to engage in futile thinking?

Prayer: Lord, grant me a sound, and enlightened, mind.

Tuesday

Ephesians 4:18; Matthew 22:29; Hebrews 5:11 – 14; Ephesians 1:19 – 20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; Mark 10:27

The old life, before Christ, was characterized by ignorance. Scripture exposes many kinds of ignorance. Jesus rebuked the Sadducees for the ignorance of the Scriptures, and of the power of God.

Think About It: What does Hebrews 5:11 -14 tell me about what I should know from the Scriptures? Have I mastered the basics? Am I feeding on spiritual “solid food”? Based on the Scripture references for today, what are some key ways the power of God is made known?

Prayer: Lord, help me to know both the Scriptures, and Your power.

Wednesday

Leviticus 5:14 - 15; 1 Peter 1:16; Romans 10:3 – 4; 2 Peter 3:5 – 10; 1 Corinthians 10:1 – 5.

Leviticus 5:15 lists one of the numerous “unintentional sins” or “sins of ignorance” as sinning against the holy things of the Lord. Ignorance of God’s holiness also includes ignorance of what that Holiness requires of us – namely that we should be holy (1 Peter 1:16).

Think About It: What other kinds of ignorance are exposed in the Scripture references for today? What makes the difference between ignorance that leads to God’s judgment (1 Corinthians 10:1 – 5) and ignorance that leads to a display of God’s mercy (1 Timothy 1:12 – 16)?

Prayer: Lord, be merciful to me, an ignorant sinner.

Thursday

Ephesians 4:18; Daniel 2:20; Job 28:28; 2 Timothy 2:25; Jeremiah 17:9

According to Ephesians 4:18, a hardened heart is the source of ignorance.

According to Daniel 2:20 – 21 God gives knowledge to those who have understanding. Job 28:28 defines understanding as “departing from evil” which is an abomination to fools (Proverbs 13:19). When God grants repentance (which involves departing from evil), that repentance leads to knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 2:25). The hardened heart is the heart that refuses to repent and depart from evil, and which therefore does not receive knowledge of the truth.

Think About It: What other spiritual heart problems do we have to deal with, according to Jeremiah 17:9 and Genesis 6:5? What is the remedy for spiritual heart disease?

Prayer: May the mediations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Friday

Ephesians 4:18; Luke 13:27; Matthew 25:41; Proverbs 9:13 – 18; 14:12; Romans 6:21

Futile thinking, a darkened understanding, and the ignorance that results from a hardened heart, have disastrous spiritual consequences, beginning with alienation from the life of God. The Greek word for alienation includes the concept of being excluded. The hard-hearted, ignorant person may be self-alienated from God, but he is also destined to be excluded by God.

Think About It: Does the godless person necessarily perceive alienation from the life of God as a problem? What does being alienated from the life of God look like in the world today? What is it going to look like in the world to come? Can we help unbelievers understand the seriousness of their plight? If so, how?

Prayer: Thank God for the privilege of experiencing life in Christ.

Saturday

Ephesians 2:19; Proverbs 23:35; 1 Timothy 4:2; Ezekiel 16:49

Another result of futile thinking, a darkened understanding, and the ignorance that results from a hardened heart is callousness, meaning not feeling pain.

Think About It: What are some ways that callousness is experienced by the hard-hearted person, based on the Scripture references for today? Why is it a bad thing to become calloused, if callousness means not feeling pain?

Prayer: Lord, let my heart be broken by the things that break Your heart.

Sunday

Ephesians 2:19; Romans 1:24 – 32

The person whose thinking is futile, whose understanding is darkened, who is ignorant because of a hardened heart, will ultimately give themselves up to sensuality and become greedy to practice impurity. Wickedness, unchecked, never remains static; it always increases.

Think About It: What is the way of escape for those who are godless, ignorant, and hard-hearted (e.g. 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:1 – 2)? How can I maintain a sensitive conscience (1 Timothy 1:19)?

Prayer: Lord, please help me to be tender-hearted, and sensitive the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.