

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

OCTOBER 18

"THE GOOD NEWS IS..."
WEEK 3

Scripture References

- **Ephesians 4:17–32**

Quick Re-Cap

Have you ever worn something so muddy or worn out that you just had to change? Paul says following Jesus is a lot like that. The Bible says that before following Jesus people are cut off from the life of God. God is never far away, but sin and hard hearts keep people from Him. That is a big problem, and we can never fix it on our own, but **Jesus is the way back!** Through His death on the cross, He offers forgiveness and grace, and He brings us back to God as His own family. Once we belong to Jesus, we don't just learn facts about Him. We learn how to live in Him, by **following Him with other believers and joining in His mission to bring people to Him.** That is what it means to be a disciple.

Paul gives us a picture about clothes! He says to put off the old self, be renewed in your mind, and put on the new self, which was made to be like God in goodness and holiness. **This is not about trying harder to be good.** We can't change ourselves by our own power.

Jesus is the one who makes us new, and we respond by choosing to trust Him and obey Him every day. Paul even tells us what the new clothes look like. Tell the truth. Be angry without letting anger lead you into sin. Work honestly and share with people in need. Use words that build others up and give grace. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit. Get rid of bitterness, rage, slander and meanness. And forgive each other, because God in Christ has forgiven you.

Illustration

Imagine you've been playing outside all afternoon after a big rainstorm. You're covered in mud from head to toe. You walk in the door and your mom doesn't make you clean your own clothes first. She runs a warm bath, scrubs you clean, and lays out a fresh set of clothes on your bed. Now picture what would happen if you finished your bath, saw those clean clothes, and then walked over to the muddy pile and put the dirty ones back on. That would be silly, right? You've already been washed. The clean clothes are waiting. That's what Paul is saying. Jesus did the washing, and we didn't earn it. But every day we get to decide which clothes we put on. Old habits can feel as comfortable as your favorite worn out jeans. Snapping at people, telling little lies, holding a grudge, saying mean things. They feel normal, but they don't fit who you are anymore. **In Jesus, you are brand new.** So let's put on the clean clothes He gave us, which are honesty, kindness, forgiveness and words that help other people.

Application

→ This week, let's each pick one "old clothes" habit we want to leave behind, like lying, snapping when we're angry, saying unkind things or holding a grudge. Then pick one "new clothes" habit to put on in its place, like telling the truth, speaking kindly or forgiving someone. Remember that we can't do this by trying harder on our own, so ask Jesus for help every morning. As a family, find one person to forgive or encourage with your words, and one way to share with someone who is in need.

Convo Starters

- What is an "old clothes" habit that has felt normal to you but that you'd like to leave behind?
- Why do you think Paul says to be renewed in your mind instead of just trying harder to be good?
- Who is someone we could forgive or build up with our words this week?