

# Putting Off The Old, Putting On The New

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[ 0 : 00 ] This is a sermon from King's Church West London. And this new section is what is sometimes called the application.

So what that means is that for the preceding three, four chapters, Paul the writer has been saying lots of things which are true about us in Christ.

We've been adopted, we've been changed, we've been brought into the family of Christ. And he's going through all this theology and he's saying that this is now true of you because you are in Christ. But this bit, we get to the bit of what it means, how do we apply it to our lives.

It is, for want of a better word, what you might describe as the rules bit. This now is the rules of how you live by. But if you do understand it in that way as the rules, then you would be making a very big mistake.

And probably the biggest mistake that people make when they think about or they contemplate Christianity. And that is that Christianity is primarily a matter of keeping the rules.

[ 1 : 34 ] Paul will talk today about lying, about stealing, about getting angry with people. And he will say to us in this section to refrain from those things.

But if you think that being a Christian is about not lying, not stealing, about keeping your temper, then I'm afraid you'll be making a big mistake. It is not about that. It does include that, but it's not about that.

A Christian is somebody who has understood the previous three chapters that we've been looking at over these weeks. It's about understanding that we have been taken out of our old life.

We've been born again. We've been brought into a new life in Christ. And only as a result of that should we live in this new way. Often people, when they think about Christianity, say things like this. They say, I could never be a Christian because there are just too many rules to live by. I can remember as a child asking my granny if she was a Christian. And here's what she said to me.

[ 2 : 40 ] She said, well, I try my hardest to be a nice person. Are you a Christian? I try my hardest to be a nice person. Interestingly, somebody who tries their hardest to be a nice person is almost the exact opposite of a Christian.

Because to truly follow Jesus, you don't have to try. All your efforts will be in vain. Because only by understanding and trusting what Jesus has done for us can you truly follow him.

And in terms of being a nice person, God doesn't call us to be a nice person. He doesn't make us nice. He makes us new.

Let's get into the scripture. Okay, so Ephesians chapter 4 verse 17 through to 5 verse 2. If you have a Bible, please follow along. 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. 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.

[ 3 : 48 ] Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality. So as to indulge in every kind of impurity. And they are full of greed. That however is not the way of life you learnt.

When you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth as in Jesus. You were taught with regard to your former way of life. To put off your old self. Which is being corrupted by its sinful desires.

Deceitful desires. To be made new in the attitude of your minds. And to put on the new self. Created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor. For we are all members of one body. In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.

And do not give the devil a foothold. Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer. But must work doing something useful with their own hands. That they may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths.

[ 4 : 52 ] But only what is helpful for building others up. According to their needs. That it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. With whom you are sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger.

Brawling and slander. Along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another. Forgiving each other. Just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God's example therefore as dearly loved children.

And walk in the way of love. Just as Christ loved us. And gave himself up for us. As a fragrant offering. And sacrifice to God. So.

In this section. Paul presents a contrast. Of the old self that we are to put off. And the new self. That we are to put on. So the old self. Is what we are like.

Before God. And he describes. What that is. In verses. 18 and 19. He says. The old self. Is darkened. In their understanding. They are separated from the life of God.

[ 5 : 53 ] They have got hard hearts. They have lost all sensitivity. Given themselves over to sensuality. They indulge in all sorts of sin. And they are so greedy. Now.

You might be forgiving for yourself. Thinking. Well hang on a second. Was I. Before I became a Christian. Was I. Was I really that bad. Or. Or all of us will. Will know.

Lots of people who aren't Christians. Friends. Family. Workmates. Whatever. Neighbors. And you'll think to yourself. Well. That doesn't really describe them. I mean. They're perfectly nice people.

Okay. They're not Christians. But they're nice people. So. Why does. Why does he describe them. In this. In this horrible way. Well. What Paul is describing here. Isn't.

The starting point. He isn't describing where they necessarily are right now. But he is describing.

The end point. Of where they will be. Look at what it says.

[ 6 : 50 ] In. In verse 22. It says. The old self is being corrupted. By deceitful desires. In the old self. In our natural self. Before. We met.

And started following Jesus. There's something in us. Which just continues to corrupt. And corrode. And get worse. And worse. And worse. Let me just explain what I mean. Imagine you've just bought.

A really nice. New car. And you're really pleased with it. And you think it looks wonderful. And you love driving it. And it's so much fun. And you think. You see admirers pass by.

That you look amazing. As you go on your car. But then after you've had it. For a few weeks. You notice. That just under one of the wheel arches. Just a little bit of rust. Has developed on the thing. It's just. Just maybe.

A few millimetres. Crossing. You're looking at it. You're going well. It's just. It's just a little bit. It doesn't. It doesn't matter. Nobody can tell. It still is. I'll just ignore it. And you just ignore it.

[ 7 : 46 ] And then. A few weeks later. You're out washing your car again. And you see that it's. It's kind of. It's kind of grown. That little bit of rust. That little bit of corrosion. Has grown. And got a bit bigger. But you're kind of busy.

You haven't really got time. To do anything about it. You leave it a bit longer. Within a few weeks. That rust. Has taken over the whole wheel arch. And you know. It's going to grow. And eventually. If you don't do something about it. Take over the whole car.

Well. It's this process. That Paul. Is kind of describing. Of course it is true. That. The vast majority of people. Aren't as bad.

As they could be. Obviously. That's true. But nevertheless. In our old self. There is. Something in us. Which will take us down. The. A bad path.

Which will eventually lead. To us to be as bad. As we possibly could be. Now. And why is that? Well.

[ 8 : 42 ] The answer. Is in verse 18. It said. They are separated. From the life of God. God. If you're separated. From the life of God.

You have no ultimate hope. In life. If you really believe. That. Your. The life that you lead now. Will end in death. There is no hope.

For your life. If you happen to be. Sorry. For the vast majority of us. We will get to the end of our life. Almost everything that we ever do. Will be forgotten.

There might be a few people. Our children. Our grandchildren. Who remember us. But almost certainly. All memory of us. Will be extinguished. Within a couple of generations. And we will be. Whether you're a good person.

A bad person. You'll be forgotten about. That's just the reality of life. And even if you happen to be. One of the very few. Outstanding people. Who might be remembered. In a few generations time.

[ 9 : 41 ] The fact is that. All of us. When the. When the sun. Reaches its supernova point. And eventually consumes the earth. As the scientists tell us. That one day. Millions of years from now.

Perhaps. Who knows. Will do. Eventually. All memory of us. All memory of anybody. We've ever even known. Or will know. Or could know. Will be completely extinguished.

It wouldn't just be. That we. Cease to exist. It would be as if. We never. Did. Exist. So you can see that. If you truly. Do not believe.

In God. And you live your life. In a. In a consistent way. With that. There's no point. In being. A good. Or a kind. Or a lovely person.

Because. Why would you bother? The only life. That actually makes sense. If you really. Truly believe that. Is to be totally selfish. And self-indulgent. And only live in such a way.

[ 10 : 38 ] That benefits me. Why should I care. If. If. If anybody else. Has a. Has a. Has a nice life. Doesn't. Doesn't affect me. Even the ones that are close to me.

And in. In so much as I could be kind. Or helpful to anybody. Why would I bother doing that. Unless it benefits me. In the long run. Now. I should say. That very few people. Actually live their lives like that.

It's very unusual. To meet somebody. Who is truly. Completely selfish. In that way. But if you are consistent. With. With. With believing. That there is no God. In the universe. That we really are just here.

By chance. That is the logical. Outworking. Of. Of your life. That's how. You should live. If you were consistent. Quite a bleak thought.

Isn't it? Well what does Paul say? He says. That however. Is not the way of life. You learnt. When you heard about Christ. If you've.

[ 11 : 34 ] Seen Jesus. You've caught a glimpse. Of something. Somebody. Which is truly wonderful. Now. As I said before.

Very few of us. Will ever. Be sort of standing to remember. Even a generation or two. Beyond our own lives. But if anybody. Is in that bracket. It is Jesus.

His miraculous powers. His. His ability. To command a crowd. Several times. During his life. The. The crowd. Tried to. Take. Power over him.

To anoint him. To make him king. Can you imagine. Being forced. To be. To be made a king. And he just walked away. Now. Jesus. He is one of the few people. That could. Have used his gifts.

And his abilities. To live. An amazing life. In you know. In that sense. In terms of. Worldly power. And authority. He could have done that. But he didn't.

[ 12 : 30 ] Instead. He chose the life. Of. A wandering preacher. Wandering from. One village. To the next. In a little. Patch of the earth. Not much bigger.

Than the central belt. Of Scotland. He went around. Preaching about a new kingdom. That was coming. And this same Jesus. Instead of. Trying to overthrow.

The Romans. That the. Who were the. The people. That were oppressing. The Jewish people. To which he belonged. Instead of trying to overthrow them.

He deliberately goaded them. Into crucifying him. Why did he do that? He did that. Because he saw. He saw something bigger.

And better. He knew. That if he was crucified. It would be for the people's sins. And that all of God's. Anger. And all of God's wrath. Would be put on him.

[ 13 : 24 ] And he would take the punishment. For all the imperfect people. All those little people. Like you and me. So that he would receive an inheritance. In eternal life. He would walk through death.

Into eternal life. And those. Little people. You and me. If we put our trust in him. If we recognize. That he. Is different. To what the world has to offer. And we. Follow him.

That we get to follow him. Through death. Into eternal life. We've seen something different. We've caught a glimpse of Christ.

And it changes. Everything. And because of that. Everything changes. Remember granny. I tried to be a nice person.

You know. The funny thing. About Christians. Real Christians. Who've really understood. What Jesus was about. Is that often. And this is a bit of a mic drop moment folks.

[14:22] Often. Christians. Who are really. Really following Jesus. They're not actually that nice. At least. At least in one understanding of niceness. I mean even Jesus himself.

You could make the argument. He wasn't that nice. I mean. Some of the things he said to the Pharisees. You whitewashed tombs. You brood of vipers. You sons of the devil.

I mean. Is that the kind of thing. A nice person would say. Or. Let's take the writer. Of this. This letter that we're reading now. The apostle Paul. How nice was Paul.

Well. Paul was a miracle worker. In Christ. He performed miracles. Do you know what the first miracle. That is recorded in the scripture. That Paul did. I'll tell you.

He actually. Blinded somebody. No no. You heard that right. He didn't heal somebody from blindness. He actually blinded somebody. Because they were. They were basically. Calling him a liar. And saying this.

[15:15] The word to speak. Was true. Who's a liar? Paul says. I'm going to show you who's a liar. I don't know how you. Blind somebody. By doing that. Hang on. Let's try it with Dan. How do you feel like. I'm just joking.

That's what he did. Another time. He cast out a demon. From a slave girl. In Philippi. Well that sounds a bit more like it. You might say. Do you know why he did it? Because she was really annoying him.

That's what he says. He was so annoyed. That he just cast out the demon. Is that a nice person? Well. Maybe. Or. Or Peter. Another one of. Jesus' famous.

Apostles. What did Peter do? Well. He also. Blinded somebody. But. Get this. Get this.

This is one of the first miracles. That he did in Acts. If you can call it a miracle. He. A couple. Ananias and Sapphira. They. Failed to bring.

[16:12] The off. The full amount of an offering. That they said they were going to bring. To Peter. And to the apostles. So it wasn't that they. They had to bring this. They said. I'm going to bring this offering. And then they said. Oh no. No. We're not going to bring.

Sorry. That's not quite right. What do they do? They. They said they brought the full offering. And they hadn't brought. They told a lie. Basically. And Peter. Basically. Called down judgment of them. And they died.

Just like that. They keeled over. And they died. Now that's a story in the Bible. I believe it to be true. I'm going to tell you another story. A friend of mine. He's not a Christian.

But his. His mum is. His mum and dad are. In the little town. In which he grew up. Near Belfast. Northern Ireland. There was a nightclub opened. And it was known.

That the drugs. Were being dealt in that nightclub. To young kids. And that the manager. Was basically. Operating a drugs empire. From this nightclub. So. My friend's mum.

[17:09] Ruth. Her name. She went. For a week. Sat in her car. Outside the nightclub. She took a little flask of tea. Down with her. And she prayed. That God. Would stop this.

This practice going on. Shall I tell you what happened? At the end of that week. The nightclub owner. Had a heart attack. And died. Now.

Was that a nice thing to do? I don't know. It's not for me to judge. And yet. God seemingly. Used the prayers of this woman. To bring about.

The death. Of somebody. Judgment. Christians aren't always. That nice. As we understand. Niceness. Being a Christian.

Doesn't make us nice. But what does it make us? It makes us. New. It doesn't make us nice. It makes us new. Here's what he says. Put off your old self.

[18:08] Which is being corrupted. By its deceitful desires. To be made new. In the attitude of your minds. And to put on. The new self. If you're in Christ.

A small. But very significant change. Has happened. In you. The old self.

With its. Corruption. That will take you down a path. To death. And corruption. And despair. Has been wiped out. That little bit of rust. On the wheel arch.

Has gone. And instead. The Holy Spirit. In you. Has. Has. Has planted. A seed of life. Which will. Which will.

Which will. Which will. Which on a daily basis. Will become newer. And newer. If you've understood this.

[ 19 : 07 ] You've understood that your. That your life. Is no longer your own. But you have been purchased. By God. And that you are. As Paul writes elsewhere.

You are a slave. To righteousness. Now this might sound. Kind of stifling. But it's not. It's actually liberating. Because you've discovered. That the life. Which you lead.

Isn't. Going to death. And destruction. Despair. It isn't about taking. All that you can. Out of life. But instead. It allows you. To. To. To. To give. From all the gifts.

That God has given you. You are being renewed. From the inside. Daily. Newness of life. Is coming out of you. And because of that. You've been given.

A new way. To live. How does Paul then say. That we should live. It's really three things.

[ 20 : 03 ] You must put off falsehood. Speak truthfully. To your neighbor. Be somebody. Who is truthful. You know. Last year. I read a book. Surrounded.

By liars. And basically. The premise of this book. Is that. Everybody. Really. If we're being honest. Is. A liar.

Or tells lies. Let's say. And really. The. The. The. The point of it. Is that you.

That you don't want to. Let your life be dominated. By lies. You don't want to deceive people. But. In reality. We do have to lie. Some of the time. Now. Whether that's true or not. I'm not absolutely sure.

But. Here's the thing. Let's suppose that. I'm. I'm just coming home. And I've had a terrible day. And one of my neighbors. Says to me. How you doing? And I say.

[ 21 : 00 ] And then I pour out. My. My soul. All the terrible things. That happened to me today. My dog died. I. One of my kids. Run over my foot. With their bike. I don't know.

I stubbed my toe. All sorts of bad things. Have happened. To me today. You can imagine. The poor person. Who's listening to me. He's kind of going. Okay. Fine. Right. Yep. See you later. Weirdo. Now.

That's fine. I probably wouldn't say. I'd probably say. Oh I'm fine. Yeah. Nice. See you later. Now if I had the same conversation. With my wife. And she said. How was your day? And I just said. Oh fine. Then.

Then that would be a lie. Wouldn't it? That would be dishonest. And what's the difference? Well the difference is proximity. I don't have to. Bare my soul. To every single person.

That I happen to know. Whether they're neighbours. Or anybody else. But. If it's somebody who's. Really close to me. Really important to me. Then. Then I should. Bare my soul. On a. You know.

[ 21 : 55 ] Regular basis. Let's say. If I've had a terrible day. My wife. She wants to know about it. She wants to talk about it. She wants to hear about it. What is. What does Paul say? Here.

He says that. He says. Why should we be. Truthful to one another? We're all members of one body. If you're in the church. We actually belong.

To one another. Now again. Of course. Common sense tells us. That we'll be degrees. Of closeness. To particular individuals. But nevertheless. Like a body.

Each individual part. Relies on the other part. The heart. The heart. Can't live without. The hand. And the hand. Can't live without. The head. The head. Can't live without. The toes. All the different bits.

Work together. To make one body. We should be truthful. With one another. Because. We should be close to one another. We should be one body. And.

[ 22 : 51 ] And here really. Is the lie. That. You can be. An effective Christian. Without being. Part of a church. You can't. Because. You need.

The other members of the body. To be close to you. To be amongst you. So that you can be truthful. With one another. The other thing.

About being truthful. Is that. You know. You really rob. Your friends. In Christ. Of the opportunity. To care for you. If you're not truthful. With them. If you try and present. A face. Which is.

Which is cheery. And happy. When actually. You've got some things. That you really. Need prayer for. You're kind of robbing them. Of the opportunity. To pray for you. I remember having a chat. With somebody.

Who. He was. He'd been feeling poorly. For a long time. And. And he was at a prayer meeting. And they said. And they kind of said. As they sometimes do. At prayer meetings. Is there anything else.

That anybody wants prayer for?

[ 23 : 47 ] And he thought to himself. Shall I go forward? Shall I be truthful about it? He hadn't told anyone in the church. He'd been going through this. This illness. And he went. Do you know what? I'm not going to bother. I'm just going to leave it. And he realised later. That he'd.

He'd missed an opportunity. For the church. To care for him. By praying for him. By ministering to him. It's important. To be truthful. Because we want to care. For one another. A couple of years ago.

I. I had a. The business. That I. That I ran. Sadly. Was no longer. Able to keep running. We had to. End the business. And at the time. I was really angry.

About the situation. And I. But one of the things. That really helped me. Was that I. I. Voiced. And vented my anger. To a few. Close Christian friends.

In the church here. And. It helped me to. To work through some of that anger. To get through it. And they prayed for me. They helped me. They gave good advice. I would really encourage you.

[ 24 : 45 ] That if you're going through tough stuff. Let the church. As it is. Be your friend. Let the church. Pray for you. And the thing that always really breaks my heart. Is that. Is that so often.

People make this mistake. They. When things get tough. They kind of disappear. And they. They. They draw back from church life. And that's the worst time. To do that. So. If you're here.

And you're sort of thinking about. Maybe. Maybe I'll just come up less regularly. Things are really tough at the moment. I'll just really encourage you. Don't do that. Engage in church life. Maybe. Maybe if you're listening.

In on the. On the. The podcast. Listen to talk. Don't disappear. Come back. Into the body of the church. Second thing. What does he say? He says.

That now that we're in Christ. We've got to be generous. He's. And he. And he compares this to. To a thief. Somebody who steals. Now somebody who steals. Is more than just a guy.

[ 25 : 38 ] That breaks into houses. With a. A great big swag bag. Isn't it? Stealing is a lot broader. Than that. And. As I was thinking about this. I was thinking. Really. Stealing.

Particularly. As a Christian. Stealing is. Denying the world. The most Christ-like version. Of yourself. On a daily basis. Because we're in Christ.

I think there's a. There's. There's a necessity. On us. As believers. To give the world. The most Christ-like version. Of ourselves. Daily. We have been given gifts.

By God. To bless the world. And in one sense. If we don't do that. We're kind of robbing the world. Of that. In the 1970s. There was. An architectural revolution.

In the city of Newcastle. Because. Something called. The Biker Wall. Was built. Now. The Biker Wall. Was this sort of big. Set of flats.

[ 26 : 38 ] But it was very long. And broad. And all these flats. Were kind of built. Into it. Right. So it was. It was. It was. Sort of very advanced architecture. At that point. Now it's just a. You know. Big housing state. Basically.

But. But. One of the things about the Biker Wall. Was that all the flats. They were all connected up. By a ventilation system. Which again. Was very advanced at the time. It's standard practice now. I think. But.

Very very advanced at the time. And. We've got a couple of friends. Who come in to see us. Now. Now. One. Enterprising individual. Realized.

That. Because this ventilation system. Gave access to all of the flats. That he could crawl down the ventilation system. And. Go. And rob. All of the flats.

Now. Now he was notorious. Because. Now he had a nickname. Sue. Can you. Do you know his nickname? It was. The rat. He. And because he did exactly what a rat would do. He crawled down the ventilation system. Ventilation system. And he would go into the houses.

[ 27 : 32 ] And he would. Nick their stuff. And get out of there quick. And I'll tell you even actually a funny story. That. Matthew. Clifton Brown. Who some of you know. Who lived in the area. He told me about.

Somebody who was in the church. At the time. And this lady. She. She lived in the biker wall. And one night. She heard the rat. Not only in her flat. But in her bedroom.

And what she did. She was lying in bed with her husband. She said. Gerald. Passed the gun. Now the rat. He got out of there. Nice and quick.

As you can imagine. He did exactly what a rat would do. He went like a rat. Up a drain pipe. Back in the ventilation system. And away. Now. When I think about the rat. Whoever he was. As far as I know. He was never caught. I think.

That kid was a genius. That kid. He had so much enterprise. He was. His. He. He. His. His crime activity. It clearly. Worked out very well for him in one sense.

[ 28 : 27 ] Can you imagine. If he had. Conducted his brain in a constructive manner. For the good of society. He might. He probably would have made millions. He probably. He could have. Had done charities.

Businesses. He could have been great. But instead. He sponged off society. In this way. And that's what. Paul says here. He says. If you've been stealing. Don't steal any longer. But work.

Do something useful. You may have something. Something to share. With those in need. You know. It is a wonderful thing. To be able to bless others. I'll tell.

A story about my friend. Ben. At the back. Now. Ben started work. He'd been out of work. For a little while. And he got a job. And Ben and I. Met for a coffee. Or a drink.

Or something. And I said. And as we were going. To get our drink. I said. Ben. I want you to pay for this. And Ben sort of looked at me. Fine. And said. What's wrong of you? Forgotten your wallet.

[ 29 : 24 ] Or something. Fine. But he paid for it. And I said. And he kindly paid for the thing. And I said. Ben. The reason why I want you to pay for that. Is because I want you to understand. The pleasure that is. To buy a drink.

For your friend. And he went. Oh yeah. That did feel quite nice. Thanks for that. And I got free coffee. There you go. It is a wonderful thing. To be generous.

Isn't it? Well there you go. There you go. Isn't it one of the things. To bless other people. The tragedy of misers. The scrooges of this world.

Is that they're busy. Trying to protect. Everything that they have. When the reality is that. The enjoyment. That we get out of life. Isn't through blessing myself.

By hoarding everything. Is by blessing others. By being generous. Isn't that true. I'm sure all of you. Can think of many occasions. When you've had the opportunity. To be generous. And you feel great.

[ 30 : 20 ] Don't you? Yeah. Wasn't that lovely. To be able to bless that person. That's the kind of life. That Paul wants us to lead. Okay. Last one. I'm going to check.

We're doing on time. The kids are kind of. Oh we've still got a few minutes left. Okay. Last one.

Don't get angry. Don't get angry. Now. The more observant of you.

Might have noticed that. Paul is working his way. Through the Ten Commandments. Don't lie. Don't steal. Don't get angry. Is that one of the Ten Commandments? Well actually.

It kind of is. Here's what Jesus said. In the Sermon on the Mount. He says. You've heard. He said to people long ago. You shall not murder.

And anyone who murders. Will be subject to judgment. But I tell you. That anyone who is angry. With his brother. Will be subject to judgment. Again. Anyone who says to a brother or sister.

[ 31 : 14 ] Raka. Which is a term of contempt. Is answerable to the court. But anyone who says. You fool. Will be in danger. Of the fires. Of hell. Anger. Is the first step.

Towards. Murder. Now again. Most people don't. Usually get that far. But anger gives birth to hatred. Which. If given full vent. Gives birth.

To murder. So we've got. Do not lie. Do not steal. Do not murder. I said before. But you know. The thing is. That actually. Sometimes anger.

Is appropriate. For a Christian. I mean. I just give a few examples of it. Earlier on. Jesus. Got angry at times. Famously. He turned over. The. The tables of the money lenders.

In the temple. He was furious with them. Paul got angry. Peter got angry. And you know. I often think. That the world. Would benefit.

[ 32 : 13 ] Significantly. From. Some appropriate. Christian. Anger. So Paul isn't teaching us here. Not to get angry. He's saying. That our angry.

Our anger. Should be. Appropriate. And it. It shouldn't lead. To sin. In your anger. Do not sin. So. The. The trick here. Is to get rid of. Unrighteous anger. But to cultivate. Righteous anger. I'm going to tell you a story. From when I was. A fairly new Christian. There was a guy.

In the church. That I got saved into. An older gentleman. And he was. He was blind. He was probably. I say he was old. He was probably in his. Maybe his 60s. Maybe his 70s. But he was

blind. And he'd been blinded.

As a young man. In an industrial accident. And. When he. When that accident happened. He did. He received some compensation. For that. And so with that compensation. What he did.

[ 33 : 08 ] Was he bought two flats. In quite a rough area of town. And. And the idea was. That he would live in one of the flats. And he would rent out the other flat. And the flats were in a high rise block.

Not the bike of war. Different one. And. And. You know. While he was certainly not a wealthy man. You know. He held body and soul together. And he. You know. He loved Jesus. And he. And he did okay. Now this particular area. Was down by. The. The quay side. In Newcastle. And. At that time. In the. Late 90s.

They were developing the quay side. And. To. To build. What I would have described at the time. As. Geek swanky flats. Right. Posh. Posh flats. People to look out over the river. You know what I'm talking about.

You see them all the time. And. So they wanted to pull down. These big high rise flats. And. And build up these new swanky flats. And. The council. Had done a compulsory purchase.

[ 34 : 03 ] On all the people who. Who lived there. Who owned the flats. Two of which belonged to this. Blind gentleman. And. And they offered a pittance. You know. They weren't. They weren't going to give him anything like. What the flats were worth.

Certainly. And not enough for him to live on. Going into the future. Because obviously. You know. He couldn't work. He couldn't do. Things that he needed to do. To make money. And so. Another friend in the church. A guy called Louie.

That I was good friends with. He. Heard about this. And he got angry. Not uncontrolled anger. He wasn't. Brawling in the streets.

Or shouting and screaming at anybody. But he thought. That's not right. And so. He. He did a little bit of campaigning. He took the case on.

He. Got together with various people. Who owned some of these flats. And basically. Through force of. And campaigning. Through moral force. He. He. He made the council pay.

[ 34 : 58 ] Essentially. What the flats were worth. So that our friend. He could. You know. Buy himself. A new. Decent place to live. That's righteous anger. He was angry.

Not uncontrolled anger. In his anger. He did not sin. But. He brought about. Constructive. Change. So how do we know. If our anger is righteous. Or unrighteous.

Well. That's a difficult question. Here's a rule of thumb for you. That I think you'll find helpful. If your anger. Is on behalf of yourself. As in.

I can't believe that person. Did that to me. I'm so angry about it. It's probably unrighteous anger. If your anger is on behalf. Of somebody else. Like.

Louise was. All those years ago. It's probably righteous anger. Okay. Half of yourself. Unrighteous. On behalf of somebody else. Righteous. It's not an absolute rule.

[ 35 : 53 ] But. Maybe just a rule of thumb. To work by. I'm going to. Draw to a close here. But really. This is.

What I want us to take away. Is that. Being a Christian. Doesn't mean that we have to do these things. It means. That we get.

To do these things. It means that. Because. Jesus has. Put new life into us. Life which is being renewed. Constantly. That we can put on a new self.

Which lives in. In worship. To him. We get to do something. That before we were in Christ. Would be completely. Incomprehensible. We get to follow.

God's example. We get to live our lives. As a daily sacrifice. It sounds like a slog. But actually in here. Is true life.

[ 36 : 51 ] Because in giving. Sacrificially. Day by day. Whether it's. In being truthful. Being generous. Being. Proactive. And peaceful. We get to become more like God.

God. And that is the purpose. Of the Christian life. We don't. Become nice. We become new. Now I'll just. Finish in prayer. Lord Jesus.

I want to thank you. That you have given us. New life. That we. Get the chance. To put off our old selves. And we get to. Follow you.

I pray that you'd bless us. This week. I pray you'd help us. To live in you. In you. And. And that you just help you. Help us follow you. Day by day. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.