

**Learn It, Live It, and Lead in It!**  
***The Assignment is Great - The Assignment is At Hand***  
**Ezekiel 12:23–28; Ephesians 4:17-32 (ESV)**

Today's offers a word of warning and a word of instruction.

**WARNING:** Our assignment is great, and our assignment is at hand (Ezekiel 12:23–28).

These verses warn that Israel had gotten so accustomed to thinking that a prophetic word was down the road that they didn't expect the word to come to pass. The warning was not a good thing because Ezekiel was about to tell Israel that they were going into exile. They had heard it so much that they became dull and began ignoring the Word of the Lord. Like Israel, we've become so accustomed to hearing something and it not coming to pass that we've already predetermined that it's not from God, or that it's not going to happen (or happen anytime soon). But God is getting ready to do things He's longed to do (wired us on the inside for) because our assignment is NOW. The danger is if we don't actively live out what God instructs us to do, we can fall into a trap of becoming spiritually comfortable, and then we become callous, and then we can be conquered.

*"Everything that God has been doing in your life is for the NOW in your life."* – Pastor Billy R. Johnson

**INSTRUCTION:** We have to learn it, live it, and lead in it (Ephesians 4:17-32)!

***Learn It – Learn How to Walk***

We must no longer walk as the Gentiles but learn Christ in a way that changes how we live. Paul said that unbelievers can't perceive or understand Jesus and are estranged from God because their ignorance is caused by a hardness of heart (a stubborn unwillingness to learn/a closed mind). We must not go along with the "empty-headed, mindless crowd" because we did not learn Christ that way.

*"Learning Christ is not just about theology, it's about transformation."* – Pastor Billy R. Johnson

When we put our faith in Christ, we become a new being. We must then put our time, energy, and effort into learning how to live like that new being. It's not just about being informed, but about getting to a place where our old way of living doesn't fit our new life in God. There is an urgency NOW to not be on the wrong side of what God is about to do. We don't want to get caught in the consequences of our actions because we refused to heed God's warning to change. Although God

gives us space and time to repent, our assignment is too great to live like hell. God has invested too much in us, done too much for us, extended us grace and mercy, and given us time to get it right when others were exposed. It's bigger than us, and God has kept us because of His assignment for us.

### ***Live It – Put Off and Put On***

In Ephesians 4:22-24, we learn to live out what God has put on the inside of us by putting off the old self (quit glorying in that old man) and being renewed in our minds, but it takes time. We don't just put off and put on, but we put on the new self which is created after the likeness of God to live right and be Christ-like. But when we refuse to stop living in the futility of our minds, it's difficult to put on the new man. We continue to feed the old man and wonder why the new man doesn't flourish. Putting off doesn't mean to suppress; it means to surrender and strip away the old man. Putting on doesn't mean to pretend; it means to practice what God has placed in us. Then, when we see the Word, we put it into practice. We don't argue with God on the inside but just answer "Yes." When we walk around like the old man, it's like being let out of prison and keeping on the orange jumpsuit. But NOW is the time to wear the new clothes God has given us (righteousness, holiness, purity, wisdom, life, godliness).

*What to put off (vv. 25-31):* lying (speak the truth); anger (righteous anger with self-control); stealing (do honest work); corrupt communication through talking and typing (use edifying words); grieving the Holy Spirit (we have been sealed); and bitterness, rage, and slander (be kind and forgiving). These things belong to the old man, and that's not the way believers walk.

*What to put on (v. 32):* kindness, love, and forgiveness as God in Christ forgave us.

### ***Lead In It – Set the Example***

Ephesians 4:1; 5:2, 8, & 15 (ESV) tell us to walk worthy of the calling, to walk in love, to walk in light, and to walk in wisdom because we've been called to be distinctly different from those who don't know the Lord. Why, because God wants us to be an example of the character of Christ to lead others and to encourage them that there is a different way. We must be ready for what He's getting ready to do.

### ***Call to Action:***

What old garment (orange jumpsuit) do we need to take off (personal confession)? God is giving us space and time.

What areas of our lives need to align/adjust with Christ (intentional living)? Do those around us build us or bury us?

Who around us needs a model of what it means to walk in truth (spiritual leadership)? The world has seen enough people who **KNOW** about Christ. The world needs to see people who **LIVE** for and **LEAD** like Him.