

**The Downward Path of Evil and the Rescuing Grace of Christ**

Ephesians 4:17-24

Pastor John Sloan

Introduction: In 1879, Anglican Bishop J.C. Ryle wrote, "I have had a deep conviction for many years that practical holiness and entire consecration to God are not sufficiently attended to by modern Christians." That was more than a hundred years ago. Since then, the topic of gospel-empowered holiness has been lost almost entirely; which brings up a couple of pressing questions: whatever happened to holiness? And, is it still important that we devote ourselves to shunning sin and growing in obedience to God?

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1. From the Greek word translated "testify" (v.17) we get the English word "martyr"; why does testifying to others the need to honor God sometimes lead to suffering?
2. When is the last time you were gently corrected by someone? How did you respond?
3. How does hardness of heart ultimately lead to a recklessness of life?
4. What reasons come to mind when you think about why God saved you?
5. How is biblical renewal (v.23) an issue of the head *and* heart?
6. Are you compromising in any area of your sensuality or sexuality? Do you see any evidence of a hardened heart or dulled conscience?