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## Epistle to the Ephesians: Seeing the World as God sees It (4.17-19)

- Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church
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1. *The vanity or futility of their mind*

  - a. The mind of man is characterised by emptiness, futility, aimless, pointless and lacking direction
    - i. Suicide, living for pleasure
    - ii. Doing something that risked their lives
    - iii. Given to drink, drugs and materialism
  - b. The mind of man refers to this entire outlook upon life: his thought, will, understanding, conscience, affections
2. *Darkened in their understanding*

  - a. Man's understanding or intellect is characterised by darkness due to their ignorance
    - i. They do not have the knowledge of God nor an understanding of the works of God though they may be very brilliant and smart
    - ii. There is a veil over their heart, mind and understanding so that they cannot understand.
    - iii. The gospel is hidden to them because Satan has blinded their minds (II Cor. 4.3, 4)
    - iv. Hence, this is the duty of preaching to lift this blindness so that they can understand the light of the gospel or for God to command the light of the gospel to shine through their hearts
  - b. "They are ignorant because their understanding are darkened" and not "that their understanding are darkened because of their ignorance"
3. *Separated from the life of God*

  - a. Why? Ignorance and hardness
  - b. What is he ignorant about?
    - i. He is ignorant in God himself.
    - ii. They do not know him and the truth about Him
  - c. Hardness
    - i. It has become callous
    - ii. Hardness - it has become callous or hard-skinned
      - (1) Or the skin has become thick on the sole of your foot.
      - (2) The heart does not feel anything; but the heart is the seat of the affections, emotion.
    - iii. Illustration
      - (1) Like the wayside trodden path where the soil has become so hard that the roots of the seed is not able to penetrate
      - (2) This is the reason people could sit and listen to the gospel and not be affected by it, and people can read the bible and see nothing in it.

- iv. The apostle's exhortation not to harden your heart (Heb. 3.7, 8, 15; 4.7)
  - d. Being pass feeling
    - i. They are beyond shame, regret and blush.
    - ii. Or their conscience being seared with a hot iron (I Tim. 4.2)
      - (1) Their conscience being cauterised with a hot iron.
      - (2) You put the iron in the fire, it gets red hot, then you put it on the wound and it cauterises it. It hardens it. The nerves are destroyed, sensitivity has gone, they can no longer feel, no longer react.
  - e. Give themselves unto lust, uncleanness and greed
4. Lessons for Today
- a. This is the reason why God's wrath is upon this sinful world
  - b. In the preaching of the gospel, only when man truly sees their true spiritual state will they flee to Christ
  - c. This will help us to have compassion for the lost so that we understand their situation