



Reversionism Review from Eph 4:17-19; Scar Tissue of the Soul: Facilitated Behavior Compared to Inherited Genetic Traits, Jer 13:23

30. We have studied these phenomena in Ephesians 4:17-19 and I'd like to do a quick review of that passage. Certain definitions of pertinent Greek words come from:

Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Translated by William F. Arndt and F. Wilber Gingrich. 2d rev. ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979).

Ephesians 4:17 - This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk [περιπατέω, *peripateō*: “conduct”; i.e., **behavior patterns, character traits, lifestyle choices**] no longer just as the Gentiles [**unbelievers**] walk, in the futility [ματαιότης, *mataiotēs*: “emptiness”; **rejection of truth creates a vacuum that sucks in the lie and leads to blackout of the soul**] of their mind [νοῦς, *nous*: **academic understanding**],

v. 18 - being darkened [σκοτώω, *skotoō*: **blackout of truth**] in their understanding [διάνοια, *dianoia*: **intellectual or academic understanding**], excluded from the life of God [**eternal life**], because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness [πάρωσις, *pōrōsis*: “**hardening**”; **refers to the impedance of establishment principles and the facilitation of human viewpoint, human good, and evil**] of their heart [καρδία, *kardia*: **the seven compartments of the stream of consciousness**];

v. 19 - and they, having become callous [ἀπαλγέω, *apalgeō*: “**to become callous**”; literally, “**to cease to feel pain**”; **refers to an amoral conscience**], have been persuaded to give themselves over to sensuality [ἀσέλγεια, *aselgeia*: “**to give oneself over to licentious behavior, especially sexual excesses; indecent desires and conduct**”] for the practice of every kind of impurity [ἀκαθαρσία, *akatharsia*: “**figurative for moral depravity especially in sexual sins and unnatural vices noted in Romans 1**”] with greediness [πλεονεξία, *pleonexia*: “**insatiableness**”].

31. In verse 19 is where we find the word for the term “scar tissue.” The word *apalgeō*□ means “to become callous” but its original meaning was “to cease to feel pain.” This makes figurative reference to a conscience whose guidance has for so long been rejected that it is rendered inoperative by facilitated wheel-tracks of wickedness.
32. This has caused the unbeliever to give himself over to “sensuality.” The Greek word is *aselgeia* whose definition is somewhat obscure but its etymology provides us enough clues to draw a solid conclusion about its use in Ephesians 4:19:

Thayer, Joseph Henry. *The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1981), 79:

ἀσέλγεια. A word which some suppose to be compounded of α (alpha) privative plus Σέλγη, Selgē, the name of a city in Pisidia \pi-si' di-a\ whose citizens excelled in strictness of morals; others, and now the majority, of α privative and θέλω, *thelō*.

Thelō is a classical Greek word that means “to enchant, bewitch, charm, beguile, or persuade” [Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 788]. This indicates that once the conscience is calloused the soul has no moral restraint. Consequently, the *agent provocateurs* easily persuade the reversionist to engage in the most deviant of sexual behaviors.

33. This is the circumstance for the unbelievers described by Paul in Ephesians 4:19. The ramifications are elaborated upon by:



Yeager, Randolph O. *The Renaissance New Testament*. (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Co., 1983), 14:298:

They had become insensitive to the voice of moral conscience. The more the unsaved man wounds his conscience by rationalizing a position contrary to it, the more calloused his conscience becomes until finally it gives up the fight for morality. Such a man will surrender himself because of the outside pressure of society to the exercise of all uncleanness. If society, with its existential total permissiveness says, "Anything goes" the result is that the sinner is free from societal pressure so that he can surrender to the intense internal pressure to commit whatever act his flesh demands, without fear of social disapproval.

34. Paul is appealing to the Ephesians to avoid such a spiritual train wreck. Colonel Thieme gives us a summary of the fate of the believer who deviates into the reversionistic spiral:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *Reversionism*. 2d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1978), 22:

Scar Tissue of the Soul. The ability to utilize the frame of reference as a source of doctrine evaporates, and there is no divine viewpoint on the launching pad for application in the believer's life. Without the influx of doctrine into the (*kardia*), all spiritual functions are paralyzed. Reversionism closes the door so that this information is no longer available for application or growth. This is the prelude to the sin unto death.

35. And this is the fate of the people of Judah to whom Jeremiah admonishes in:

Jeremiah 13:23 - "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? *then*, neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil."

36. The obvious answer to the question about the Ethiopian and the leopard is an unequivocal, "No." The supplied word "then" is required by Hebrew syntax to introduce the axiom's application to the reversionists of Judah.
37. The reversionist who has facilitated wheel-tracks of evil is no more capable of doing good than is the Ethiopian capable of changing his skin or the leopard his spots.