

# Living in Focus

*Ray Stedman*

## I. Introduction.

A. Text: Ephesians 4:28-29.

B. Most people have never seen the real thing—they have never seen real Christianity.

C. They have only seen a distorted image of Christianity.

## II. Men and women of the world expect to see some likeness to Christ in Christians.

A. The fault is with the church—the finger of blame must be pointed at the church.

B. In the church and in Christians, the image of Christ has been blurred.

## III. In Ephesians we see the secret of living in focus: continually putting off the old life and putting on the new.

A. This is possible for the Christian because he has received new life—one must begin with Jesus Christ.

B. The old life with all its alluring power must be put off. The new life characterized by Jesus must be put on.

C. You can never just put off part of the old man—it must be done in totally to put on the new. (Romans 13)

1. Sin in our life is so subtle that we find ourselves clinging on to areas of the old life.

2. This prevents us from putting on the new life.

## IV. Where the process must lie.

A. Putting things off is basic to actually living as a Christian.

B. Stealing.

1. This covers all stealing—theft, tax evasion, false advertising, etc.

2. The motive that drives someone to steal is gaining something now.

3. This has all been judged in Jesus—He was made sin for us through the cross.

4. There is nothing good in the old life—it is self-concerned flesh.

5. Many have fallen into the trap of a conscience of convenience in the area of stealing. They argue that it is sometimes okay to steal even though there is no difference in principle.

6. A conscience of conviction is awareness that it is wrong to deprive someone of their property in any other manner because it injures a person—it comes from an old life that only cares about oneself.

7. Stopping sinning is only half of the process—Christ must also be put on as a positive concern.

C. Rotten words.

1. These are words of decay.

2. Refusing to turn to a sexually charged book or engage in a rumor is putting off the old life.

3. The new life must be put on as well—grace should be imparted through speech.

4. Say something positive, fitting or helpful.

5. Ask what you are saying that is helpful to others.

6. Jesus said it is better to be drowned than to let your tongue be a cause of offense to a little child.

**Application questions:**

1. Why do you think the speaker emphasizes the importance of putting on the new life and not just removing bad habits from the old? Explain.

---

---

2. How have you ever struggled with stealing or using rotten words? Are the speaker's helps effective, in your opinion?

---

---

3. Is the fault with Christians that the image of Christ has been blurred with the world? How can you be responsible for how Christ is portrayed by the church?

---

---