

Ephesians 4:20-24  
“Sanctified: For True Renewal”

- Introduction: When my wife and I were first married, one of our first endeavors together was to buy and fix up a home of our own. We wanted something that needed some work—something with good potential for “sweat equity.” After viewing homes all over Rochester and just missing out on a few good opportunities in a very competitive market, we finally closed on a little mid-century 1 & 1/2-story.
- The previous owner had apparently cared only to keep the place in good enough shape to rent out legally, and his tenants had been pretty hard on things. This was on top of the fact that by then the house had become pretty dated. So over the next few years we (with lots of help from friends and family) got to work and, excluding the basement, left no surface unchanged.
- Perhaps the highlight of the whole project was restoring the original hardwood floors. Neglected for who knows how long, they were worn to the point of being unprotected, and dark with water and dirt stains. Step one was to sand them down, first with a large rental machine and then with a hand-held orbital model. This was significantly complicated by how uneven the surface had become in places due to water damage, and in the end took weeks rather than being the one-day task we’d expected. With everything thoroughly vacuumed and wiped down, step two was to fill any significant cracks and then apply the stain we had chosen. It was amazing to see those tired old floors spring back to life as color soaked in and made the natural grain pop once more. The final step was then to painstakingly apply the polyurethane topcoat to seal and protect the wood. People who saw the place thereafter would almost invariably be most excited about those beautiful “new” floors.
- Since then, that floor project has always reminded me of this passage. Just as my wife and I bought that house with the specific purpose of fixing it up, so also God grants forgiveness through faith in Jesus with the specific purpose of changing believers. He gets to work (and calls us to join Him) patiently removing previous sinful attitudes, words, and actions. He renews us from the inside out as His Spirit causes the truths of scripture to sink in deeply, replacing the desires that once controlled us with a knowledge of Himself. And He then leads us into a whole assortment of wonderfully good (if sometimes tedious) works that serve Him and bless others. No part of the process can be left out, and over time the results are beautiful.

- Central Theme: God does not save His people in order to leave them unchanged.

1. Put Off the Old Self (v. 22)

2. Be Renewed In Christ (v. 23)

3. Put On the New Self (v. 24)

- Application Points:

- a.
- b.
- c.