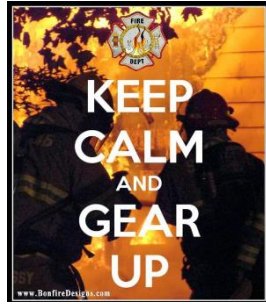


Let's Show America Great Again

STAY CALM AND GEAR UP

Ephesians 4:17-30



Before a firefighter can function authoritatively and effectively at a fire scene, he has to go through an identity change. He has to peel off his identity as a civilian and put on his identity as a firefighter, which involves going to the fire station, joining his team, gearing up and getting into the fire truck.

Just like he was a force to be reckoned with in the world, Jesus intended that his body, the church, have a bigger difference on the world than the world has on it. Before you and I can function authoritatively and effectively as members of Christ's body in the world, however, we too have to go through an identity change. Ephesians 4:17-30 describes that change.

Peel Off the Old Identity – Eph. 4:17-19

- Because it is separated from God, our old identity is oblivious to eternal realities and, therefore, becomes obsessed with things that can be seen. For that reason, it naturally judges people by their appearance rather than who they are in Christ. This is the root cause of every division in the body of Christ.

Put On the New Identity – Eph. 4:20-24

- Through the teachings of Jesus and the Spirit of Christ, our new identity is informed about eternal realities and knows that the things that can be seen don't tell the whole story. For that reason, it moves past what it sees in other people and seeks out what God is doing in their lives (2 Cor. 5:16-17). This is the root cause of unity in the body of Christ.

Here's What It Looks Like: Five Scenarios – Eph. 4:25-30

Ask any senior saint and they will tell you that you never get to a point in this life where you no longer have to worry about peeling off the old identity and putting on the new. As long as we're in these old bodies, separated from the unfiltered presence of God, our old identity hangs on and takes over whenever it can. (I've been on the road for 42 years; and I'm still doing it.)

The more we peel it off, though, and the more we reveal who we are in Christ, the more we will taste and see the presence and power of God in our lives. The more our lives are filled with his Spirit, the more we will function as members of Christ's body. The more we come together as members of Christ' body, the more we will become a force to be reckoned with in this world.