

Text: Ephesians 4:1-16

Meaning: Paul exhorts the church to walk in a worthy manner

Big Idea: Walk in a worthy manner

Objective: I want the hearers to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord

Theme: 3 steps in a worthy walk

First 3 chapters of Ephesians – DOCTRINES OF GRACE

Last 3 chapters – DEEDS OF GRACE

The first three chapters have much to say about our SALVATION. The last 3 chapters will focus on our SANCTIFICATION, or our growth in Christ and our walk with Him.

Chapter 4 Verse 1 is the marked transition into that WALK, and this first verse sets the direction, tone, and theme for the remainder of this letter.

Urge – So this is an urgent and encouraging word from Paul

Walk – your daily way of life. The words you say. The thoughts you think. The actions you take. The way you do your job. The way you treat your family and other people. Your overall attitude.

Worthy – That which is fitting and appropriate. It's only right that a Child of God, who claims to be born again of the Spirit of God, will want to obey God

Calling – GREEK, speaks of an invite to responsibility. So, when we get saved we don't simply cast off our sins – we also take on an entirely new set of responsibilities. SALVATION IS A STEWARDSHIP!

IN SALVATION GOD MAKES A GENEROUS DEPOSIT INTO OUR HEART, THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND HE EXPECTS US TO MAKE THE MOST

OF THAT DEPOSIT. HE WILL RETURN ONE DAY TO SETTLE THE ACCOUNTS.

Step 1, if you and I want to walk in a manner worthy of Christ we must...

1. PROTECT UNITY

Paul says here that walking in a manner worthy of our salvation includes maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And in verses 4-6 he reminds them of the foundation of that unity.

EAGER TO MAINTAIN – MAKE EVERY EFFORT in Greek

ONE – uses that word 7 times in 3 verses

They were not TWO they were now ONE. Not Jews and Gentiles together in the church. THEY WERE SIMPLY THE CHURCH!

Not Old and New Testament – ONE WORD

Jew and Gentile – ONE KINGDOM

Republican or democrat Christians – ONE PARTY – HEAVENLY ONE

Black, White, Hispanic, or Asian – ONE FAMILY

Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, or Catholic – ONE CHURCH

THE GOSPEL DESTROYS RACISM, CLASSISM, SEXISM, AND HUMANISM – There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, but all are ONE in Christ!

UNITY ILLUSTRATION HERE

How do you maintain unity?

Humility – of a selfless attitude of understanding. So seeking to understand before being understood. Listening more than speaking. Serving more than demanding service. Simply putting others before yourself. Counter-cultural living.

Gentleness – the idea in the GREEK is of a DOMESTICATED ANIMAL, or an ANIMAL THAT HAS BEEN TAMED AND TRAINED. What needs to be TAMED in your life. Honoring Christ is a matter of TAMING THE TONGUE AND TRAINING your thoughts.

Patience/Bearing with one another – a willingness to endure and work through difficulty without irritation or complaint. In the same way that GOD DEALS WITH OUR FAULTS AND WEAKNESSES, we should bear with OTHERS.

Unity OF THE SPIRIT – ultimately it is the filling of the Holy Spirit that leads us to unity in Christ.

Secondly, in order to walk in a manner worthy of Christ you must...

2. FULFILL YOUR MINISTRY

Part of maturing in Christ is coming to the realization that I have both a CALLING and a GIFTING for ministry as a Child of God. WE ARE SAVED TO SERVE. SALVATION IN CHRIST IS MORE ABOUT HEAVEN COMING TO EARTH THROUGH ME THAN ME SIMPLY GOING TO HEAVEN.

SPIRITUAL GIFT/SERVING ILLUSTRATION HERE

WHO is called? – EACH ONE OF US, all THE SAINTS

WHAT gifts are we given? – **Romans 12 and 1 Cor 12** are two key passages that have lists of spiritual gifts. Listed are gifts like teaching, faith, giving, serving, leadership, prophecy, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, healings, miracles, tongues. It is important to remember these lists are not the same, which means they are representative and not exhaustive. The NT never gives a definitive list of the gifts or a guideline for believers' knowing which gifts they are given. The focus is not on identifying gifts, but on the diverse aspect of ministry. The

point is not so much defining the gifts but using them to strengthen the faith of others.

WHAT is this ministry? – **DELIVERANCE**

Paul quotes PSALM 68 here, which is a psalm declaring God will deliver His Children from their enemies.

The purpose of ministry is FOR PEOPLE TO BE SET FREE IN JESUS!

WHO leads the ministry?

THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE SPECIALLY CALLED BY GOD TO LEAD THE CHURCH.

Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers – THE DEFINITE ARTICLE IS WITH EACH OF THOSE EXCEPT THE TEACHER DESIGNATION. So, Paul is saying there is a God ordained authority structure to the church, which ALL STARTED WITH THE ORIGINAL APOSTLES.

These also represent **FUNCTION** within the body of Christ. There are those who have an apostolic calling on their lives. Missionaries and church planters who start new work especially in unreached areas. There are those who have a prophetic gifting in the church to give a direct word from the Spirit of God for someone else's life. We are all called to do evangelism, however there are those who have a SPECIAL GIFT OF LEADING OTHERS TO FAITH IN CHRIST. Pastors or shepherds are specifically called of God to FEED AND TEND THE FLOCK. Teachers, are those with a gift of helping others APPLY THE WORD OF GOD TO THEIR LIVES.

WHY do we have spiritual gifts? – For the building up of the church

The GOAL OF IT ALL IS TO BUILD UP THE CHURCH BY EQUIPPING THE SAINTS TO DO THE WORK.

EQUIP – Carries multiple ideas in the Greek, BUT ONE OF THOSE IS OF A SHIP THAT IS OUTFITTED WITH ROPES, SAILS, AND SUPPLIES FOR A VOYAGE.

It is the special calling of the Pastors of the Church to not just do the work, but to outfit the saints with everything they need to

3. GROW IN MATURITY

Paul says here that the goal of the entire ministry of the church is for all the saints to grow up in Christ to the measure of the stature of His fullness.

Evidently there were some immature things happening at the church at Ephesus. Childish squabbles, or immature selfish actions that were leading to some problems in the church.

Paul tells them here that it's time to stop acting like KIDS. CHILDREN – GREEK, speaks of an infant. Not a teenager or even an elementary age child, a TODDLER.

PAUL TELLS THEM TO QUIT ACTING LIKE TODDLERS.

Hebrews 5:12

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food

TODDLER 10 COMMANDMENTS:

- 1. Thou shalt not wake me up when I'm sleeping.**
- 2. Thou shalt not look at me**
- 3. Thou shalt not stop me from taking other people's toys.**
- 4. Thou shalt feed my what I want**
- 5. Thou shalt turn on my tv show**
- 6. Thou shalt not ask me to go potty**

- 7. Thou shalt allow me to make a mess**
- 8. Thou shalt allow me to vandalize the house**
- 9. Thou shalt not expect me to say "thank you"**
- 10. Thou shalt expect me to throw a fit**

That sounds like some adults you know doesn't it?
Paul says, stop acting like toddlers.

SPIRITUAL TODDLERS:

Greatly affected by circumstances
Easily deceived by false doctrine

MATURE CHRISTIANS:

Pursue the knowledge of Christ
Speak the truth in love – loving honesty, gracious integrity
Work to build the body