

## The Believer's Walk

Ephesians 4: 1-6

As we come to the fourth chapter of Ephesians, it is evident that Paul has shifted his focus and is now ready to offer beneficial application for the reader. The opening chapters dealt heavily with theological truth and biblical doctrine. The reader has been reminded of the believer's position in Christ, and now, Paul seeks to reveal the impact such a position should have in the believer's life. Like any good pastor or teacher, Paul makes application to the truth he has already conveyed.

The remaining discourse within Ephesians will provide insight to relevant questions believers have in regard to Christian living. *How are we to live our daily lives? What is the impact of a relationship with Christ in the life of a believer? How does the Lord, working through the Holy Spirit, provide wisdom and guidance for the daily struggles believers face? How do believers overcome the adversities of life and attacks of the enemy?* In essence, Paul will focus on the day-to-day walk of the believer in the remaining chapters.

As we discuss the [elements](#) of daily life among believers revealed in the text, I want to consider: [The Believer's Walk](#).

**I. The Instruction for our Walk (1-3)** – Here, Paul provides basic instruction for the believer's daily walk with the Lord among the world. Consider:

**A. The Challenge (1)** – [I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called](#). Paul challenged the believer to walk worthy of the Lord. He reminds them of his bonds, being a prisoner for the cause of Christ. He was committed to serving the Lord at any cost, even if that meant being imprisoned for the gospel. As a believer in Christ, the reader is expected to remain committed as well, walking in a way that honored the Lord and testified of the gospel.

- While there is certainly a physical application for Paul being a prisoner of the Lord, I am convinced he speaking a greater, spiritual application. In fact, he had been a prisoner of the Lord for years. He surrendered his life to the Lord on the Damascus Road, becoming a bond-slave of Christ from that moment forward.
- Such is the application for the believer. We are to realize our position in Christ, fully submitted to His sovereign leadership, while walking worthy of the vocation wherein we have been called. This has a universal application. The challenge to walk worthy of one's calling is not reserved for those who have surrendered to ministry. This is an applicable calling for every believer – the

vocation wherein we have been called speaks of one's salvation. We are to walk worthy of the grace of God we have experienced in salvation.

**B. The Characteristics** (2) – *With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.* If one is to walk worthy of their calling, these characteristics will be prevalent in their life and evident for others to see. These characteristics are fruits of the Spirit as discussed in [Galatians 5:22-23](#). Paul reveals these characteristics are built upon *lowliness – humility and lowliness of mind*. It refers to *the quality of esteeming ourselves as small but at the same time recognizing the power and ability of God.* <sup>i</sup>

▪ The next characteristic is *meekness or gentleness*. This refers to *the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself in a patient submissiveness to offense, free from malice and desire for revenge.*<sup>ii</sup> This is accompanied with *longsuffering – patience, being long-tempered, longsuffering*. Like meekness, longsuffering endures patiently, even when wronged, not seeking retribution.

▪ Finally, Paul urged the believer to forbear one another in love. Forbearing has the idea of *bearing up under a load*. This speaks of continuing to love others even when wronged or falsely accused. It does not abandon faith or condone sin, but continues to love in spite of the actions or motives of others.

**C. The Conformity** (3) – *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* In reality, one could consider this as the final characteristic, but it also reveals the conformity achieved through ensuring these characteristics are present in one's life. Endeavoring has the idea of *being diligent to achieve, making every to obtain*. Paul urged believers to strive for unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "Paul is not speaking of organizational unity, such as that promoted in many denominations and in the ecumenical movement. He is speaking of the inner and universal **unity of the Spirit** by which every true believer is bound to every other true believer." <sup>iii</sup>

▪ We are all aware of the need for unity of the Spirit, serving and worshiping together in a bond of peace. The absence of peace is conflict and chaos. Such an environment is never fruitful. In fact, where conflict abounds, the cause of Christ suffers. May we all strive to maintain a spirit of unity and peace among the congregation.

**II. The Inspiration in our Walk** (4-6) – In the closing verses of our text, Paul reveals the divine inspiration that ought to strengthen our Christian walk and witness for the gospel. These reasons alone should create a desire to remain committed to our calling. Notice, there is:

**A. One Body** (4) – *There is one body*. Paul is writing to the church in Ephesus, but he reminds them of the universal nature of the church. While the body of Christ is made up of many local congregations, each being a member of the body, each is part of the whole. There are not many bodies, just many members. Such a realization serves as a challenge to every believer. We are all part of the same body. When one member hurts or stumbles, it affects the entire body. Our actions, while they may be perceived individually, have an impact on the whole body. One cannot effectively serve the Lord, in a way that pleases Him, without a love and commitment to the body. [Col.3:11](#) – *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.* [Rev.5:9](#) – *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

**B. One Spirit** (4) – There is only one Spirit. Notice, this is referring to the Holy Spirit. Like the body, there are not multiple spirits; there is one – the Holy Spirit. Every believer is indwelt by the Spirit. The Spirit works and guides according to the divine, sovereign decree of God. He always points to Christ, seeking to lift up the name of Jesus. Since there is one Spirit, always guiding according to the will of God, there should be unity among the church. If we live and respond according to the direction of the Spirit, we can rest assured, we are following the plan and purpose of God for our lives. [Rom.8:14](#) – *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. “Each member is to do his part in carrying out the mission of the body—for Christ. Acting independent of the body is of another spirit, for there is only One Spirit creating the body of Christ.”*<sup>iv</sup>

**C. One Hope** (4) – *There is one hope of your calling*. Every believer holds the same hope of their calling – the glorious return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. [Titus 2:13](#) – *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* [1 Peter 1:3-5](#) – *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*<sup>4</sup>*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*<sup>5</sup>*Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* What a hope we share!

**D. One Lord** (5) – Paul declared a fundamental doctrinal truth – as believers, we serve one Lord. We do not serve a plurality of gods as many other religions. While our God exists in three persons, we serve one Lord – our Savior, Jesus Christ. He has a name above every name, a name at which every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. [John 14:6](#) – *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* [Acts 4:12](#) – *Neither is there*

salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

**E. One Faith** (5) – As believers we also share one faith. While this may be perceived to refer to faith in Christ, I am convinced Paul is speaking of **the** faith – the truth of the gospel as represented in the inspired Scriptures. We share one word of truth – the Bible. In the inspired Word, the Lord has revealed everything we need to know for faith and all of life's practice. This truth is centered in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Apart from the truth of the gospel, faith could not exist. Had Jesus not offered Himself upon the cross for our sin, providing atonement for the sin of mankind, and rising triumphantly from the grave, the Bible would be just another book of stories and historical accounts. In Christ, through the inspiration of the Spirit, we share one faith! *Jude 3 – Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

**F. One Baptism** (5) – Every believer also shares a common baptism – the baptism of the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. We practice water baptism in obedience to the command of Christ. Most view baptism as the means by which one is accepted into the local body of believers. While I advocate for water baptism, if you have been saved by grace, you have received the baptism of the Spirit into the body of Christ. *1 Cor.12:12-13 – For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup> For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

**G. One God and Father** (6) – *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Paul affirms that there is but one God and Father for believers. As we've discussed, there are not many gods; there is one true God, our Father. *Acts 17:22-24 – Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. <sup>23</sup> For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. <sup>24</sup> God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. John 1:12 – But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. He is the Sovereign of the Ages – above all, through all, and in every believer through the Spirit. Gal.4:6 – And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

**Conclusion:** We have covered much in these few verses. We have been exhorted to walk worthy of our calling and inspired to do so through our position in Christ. Clearly, the Lord desires unity among the church. There is one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, and one God and Father. Are we walking in unity, worthy of our calling? Are there needs in your life? Do you know the one true Lord and Father? Do you possess the one hope of believers, knowing you will be resurrected in Christ to spend eternity in heaven with Him? If not, I urge you to consider the one true faith and respond to the Lord's calling in salvation.

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<sup>i</sup> S. TDNT; Trench; *Synonyms*, 148; CBB; RAC III, 735ff.

<sup>ii</sup> S. Matt.5:5; TDNT; CBB

<sup>iii</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Ephesians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 128.

<sup>iv</sup> Leadership Ministries Worldwide, *Galatians–Colossians*, The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible (Chattanooga, TN: Leadership Ministries Worldwide, 1996), 171.