

“Walking Worthy – Part 2”

Ephesians 4:1-6

Invite Children to Children’s Worship

THE CHRISTIAN’S WALK. Ephesians 4:1

1. Paul moves from doctrine to application. “...therefore...walk...”

2. We are to walk as Jesus walked. 1 John 2:6: *Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.*

3. Followers of Jesus are called to a particular way of life.

- Walk defines a course of life; a usual and customary sense; implies a commonality, a ‘day by day’ sense
 - Step by step movement in a direction.
 - Reminds us of a common life, a daily task

→ Sometimes I think: don’t attempt to do great things for God; but do little things for a great God.

→ We have been called to a particular way of life.

NOT: I live my life and add Christianity to it.

NOT: I continue on and merge new Christian beliefs into my established beliefs and lifestyle.

-as if Jesus is another set of clothes to add to your wardrobe

Rather: I become a follower of Jesus Christ.

BE CAREFUL – a follower of Christ is called to a difficult life.

- Jesus: *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.* Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23

→ There are no “survivors” with Christ!

- Walking in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called by land you in prison!
- Or fired from a job... an administrator at a nursing facility...

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO ‘WALK WORTHY’ OF THE CALLING?

- The rest of the letter to the Ephesians provides an outline of what it looks like to “walk worthy” of the calling.
- Here are four characteristics or qualities of how followers of Jesus are called to walk:

1. _____.	Ephesians 4:1-16	UNITY
2. _____.	Ephesians 4:17-5:21	PURITY
3. _____.	Ephesians 5:22-6:9	LOVE
4. _____.	Ephesians 6:10-20	WARFARE

THE POSTURE OF WALKING IN UNITY. Ephesians 4:2-3

1. The humble walk. v.2

- Humility was considered a negative quality by the Greeks; it is a virtue to Paul (and to Jesus – Phil. 2:1-11).
- Biblical humility comes from an accurate understanding of self & situation. ‘I am not God.’
- Knowing ourselves as small while at the same time knowing the power and ability of God.
- Humility is linked with gentleness. (Some translations say ‘meekness.’)

→ The Christian walk is a life of humility.

2. The patient walk. v.2

- The word means longsuffering. I.e., putting up with a lot of offense, opposition, trouble, difficulty
- Patience is linked with ‘bearing with one another in love.’ A better translation: ‘putting up with each other’

- Romans 5:3: Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance.
- The Christian walk is a life of suffering.
- The Christian walk is a life of putting up with other people.
- Love is both the motivation and the power to do this.

3. The eager walk. v.3

- NASB: Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit; NIV: Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit
 - Active (not passive) working to keep the unity
 - Note the unity is *of the Spirit*. I.e., the Spirit is Who gives unity (not the people of the church).
 - Note the unity is *already present*. I.e., Paul's exhortation is to keep the unity (not make the unity).
 - 5th Membership vow: Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the church, and promise to keep its purity and peace?
 - Matthew 7:15: Beware of false prophets – sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves!
- 1Corinthians 3:17: *If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.*
- Psalm 119:141: I am small and despised, yet I do not forget your precepts.
 - Psalm 119:143: Trouble and anguish have found me out, but your commandments are my delight.

→ We have been called to a particular way of life. Humility, patience, eagerness.
 Imagine walking into a church building with big words over the front door...
 Humility... Patience... Eagerness for Unity

THE FOUNDATION OF WALKING IN UNITY. Ephesians 4:4-6

1. Paul bases the posture of our walk with the TRUTH which we believe.

- Our Christian unity is based upon TRUTH. (I.e., doctrine, belief system, etc.)
- v.4-6 are not just a summary of religious talk—but a creedal confession of truth.

2. Note the Trinitarian theme: one Spirit (v.4), one Lord (v.5), one Father (v.6).

3. The call to walk in HUMILITY, PATIENCE, and EAGERNESS is because of the TRUTH which we believe.

- Consider humility... in our relationships with one another
- An ant comparing itself to a skyscraper (like God) rightly sees itself as small. HUMBLE.
 -An ant comparing itself to a flea: I'm something!
- Consider humility and how it is based upon truth. → Not 'milk toast' vanilla, non-committal.
 - FALSE notion today that lack of certainty about truth is humility. It's not!
 - Tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine... Ephesians 4:14 → This is neither maturity nor humility!

In the world and even in the church!

Our UNITY comes primarily through our CREED – the TRUTH which we believe.

ONE Body – not many.

ONE Lord – not many.

ONE faith – not many.

ONE baptism – not many.

ONE God – not many.

“What we suffer from today is humility in the wrong place. Modesty has moved from the organ of ambition and settled upon the organ of conviction, where it was never meant to be. A man was meant to be doubtful about himself, but undoubting about the truth; this has been exactly reversed. We are on the road to producing a race of men too mentally modest to believe in the multiplication table.”

– G.K. Chesterton, Orthodoxy (written about 100 years ago)

Walking in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called by land you in prison!

- A prisoner of Christ Jesus. No! Paul, you're a prisoner of Rome! → Paul says, 'No. I am a prisoner of Jesus first. The Romans can't imprison me—I am already a prisoner of Jesus.' (Ref. Eph. 3:1; Philemon 1:1, 9)

THE RESOURCE FOR PAUL'S PRAYER

1. Paul prays "according to the riches of his glory."

Lloyd-Jones: "Remember that he is praying thus for converted pagans, many of whom had been slaves, and were perhaps slaves still, people who were unknown." (p. 120)

Ultimately there is no better index of one's spiritual state and condition than one's prayers. If a man's prayers are formal it means that his whole position is formal. If he is more concerned about beauty of language and of diction you can be sure that his main concern again is with the externals. Is there freedom, is there spirituality in the prayer? Is there displayed an understanding of the essential character and nature of the Christian life? Let us face this individually for ourselves. When you pray to God what is your greatest concern about yourself? Are you concerned chiefly about circumstances and ambitions – your body, your affairs – or are you primarily concerned about your spiritual state and condition? Which is it that receives chief attention and most time in your personal prayers and devotions? Are you primarily concerned about the whole question of your spiritual growth and development, your knowledge of God, your relationship to Him, and your enjoyment of Him? Is that the big thing? Or do you give priority to the things that belong to the externals of life? -D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

KNEELING BEFORE GOD IN PRAYER. v.14

1. Paul is not *prescribing* the way to pray—he is *describing* a posture of how to pray.

- Paul is acknowledging his own lack of power—and the power of God.
- We pray because God is the One who has the power to change hearts.

2. **Kneeling in prayer is a picture of a coming reality. Philippians 2:8-11**

- Philippians 2:8-11: And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- One commentator: "...what will be true of all in the eschaton is already taking place with Christians."

→ When we pray (bow the knee) we are proclaiming the reality of Jesus' coming kingdom and getting a foretaste of what is to come.

- Remember 3 weeks ago: "The Plan" = God is working to bring all things together under Christ.

NAMED FROM THE FATHER. v.15

"To have a family name indicated the possessing of all the rights and responsibilities belonging to that family."
Rogers and Rogers, 439.

→ Paul begins this prayer with 2 pictures, images.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD. v.14

- Paul prays to God the Father.

1. **Is God the "Father" of everyone?**

- The Bible uses the idea of God as Father in different ways.
- In one sense, God is the Father of everyone.
-He created everyone. Psalm 104:30; 148:5; Isaiah 43:1, 7; 44:2; 45:12; 54:16

- Isaiah 43:7: *...everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made*
-Every human being bears His image. Genesis 2:26; 5:1; 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7
- Gen 9:6: *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed... God made man in His own image*
-He provides for everyone. Matthew 5:45
- Mt 5:45: *For he makes the sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*
-Paul preached to non-believing pagans in Athens: *Being then the children of God...* Acts 17:29.
 - In another sense, God is the Father only of those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ.
-God is Father only to those who have been born again. John 1:12: *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*
-God is Father in a special saving way to those who are adopted into His family. Romans 9:8; 1 John 3:1-3
- Romans 9:8: *This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.*
- Read 1 John 3:1-3
-Jesus actually said that people who reject him have the devil as their father (!). John 8:42-45

2. What if God as Father is offensive or hurtful to some?

- For many, the idea of God as their Father is not a great picture.
- For some, the idea of God as their Father is abhorrent.
- Some say: discard the idea of God as Father!
- Every earthly father fails when compared to the Heavenly Father. ANALOGY of an object and a shadow.
 - Do not discard the idea of God as Father. Why? The idea is given to us by God Himself
(Were there not 'bad examples of earthly fathers in Jesus' day?)
- Recover the idea of God as Father. "Recover" = to cover over with something else.
- Movie: Heart of Man: "It took all of 50 years to wipe the face of my dad off the face of my Heavenly Father."
- Our idea of God as Father must be rooted in the Bible.

THE FAMILY OF GOD. v.15

1. The family of God is directly linked to the Fatherhood of God.

- Family (*patria*) comes forth from the Father (*pater*). There is a wordplay in the Greek.
- Since we have God as our Father... then we have the people of God as our family.
- Translation issue in v.15: "...from whom every family..." or "...from whom the whole family..."
-My opinion (and KJV, original NIV): "...from whom the whole family..." Why? The context.

2. When a person becomes a Christian, they are born again into a new family.

- Ephesians 1:4-5; Galatians 4:5: that we might receive the adoption as sons
- Family lines are redrawn when someone becomes a Christian. People of God become your 'first family.'
- No longer blood line by your physical family—new blood line is established (the blood line of Christ).
- Jesus declared these new family boundaries in Matthew 12:46-50.
- What other organization or community takes people from literally all walks of life, at every age (birth to death) and lumps them together into one big heap, one mass of humanity and says, "Now, be a family."
Love is the common denominator (along with holiness and service.) Christianity is the great equalizer because it is ultimately rooted in the cross of Jesus Christ. Christianity is the great equalizer because the cross is the great equalizer.

→What if I didn't come from a good family? Jesus re-orientes the idea of coming from a 'blessed' family. Lk 11:27-28

3. The Bible recognizes the realities of sin's impact upon family relationships:

- Isaiah 49:15: Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has born? Though she may forget, I will not forget you.
- Psalm 27:10: For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me up.
- Psalm 68:5: A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

- Psalm 68:6: God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing...

→ Our idea of the FAMILY of God must be rooted in the Bible.

PAUL'S PRAYER IN EPHESIANS 3:14-21

- In the Greek text vs. 14-19 is one long sentence. (NIV makes 2 sentences in English)
- Trinitarian prayer: Father (v.14), his Spirit (v.16), Christ (v.17, 19)
- v.14: "For this reason..." resumes Paul's thought from 3:1 (interrupted by digression in v.2-13)
- So... "For this reason..." points back to the salvation and privileges of chapter 2.

Briefly walk through Paul's prayer... praying for strength, faith, and love.

-outline the prayer

-is Paul praying for 3 things? Or 1 thing (the Spirit's empowering)

Snodgrass (179): "The main intent of Paul's prayer is clear: He wants his readers strengthened by God's Spirit so that they may know intimately Christ's presence and love."

Fatherhood & Family

Is God the Father of us all? Are we all "the children of God"?

Yes and No.

- "...Paul's emphasis on mutual love for fellow Christians was intended to create a new sense of identity and commitment among people who had no basis for a mutual relationship prior to their conversion to Christ" (Wanamaker, 160). In other words, Christianity is the great equalizer. What other organization or community takes people from literally all walks of life, at every age (birth to death) and lumps them together into one big heap, one mass of humanity and says, "Now, be a family." Love is the common denominator (along with holiness and service.) Christianity is the great equalizer because it is ultimately rooted in the cross of Jesus Christ. Christianity is the great equalizer because the cross is the great equalizer.
- Trinitarian prayer: Father (v.14), his Spirit (v.16), Christ (v.17, 19)