

Series: Ephesians  
Title: Walk Worthy  
Text: Ephesians 4: 1-6  
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**Ephesians 4: 1: I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation [the calling] wherewith ye are called, 2: With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3: Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

Paul begins, “I therefore.” It means, the exhortation he gives is based upon the foundation of what was declared before. Our calling is by God’s free and sovereign grace from eternity. (Eph 1: 1-6) Then when we came into this world, had God not called us, this is where we would have remained! But look at what we were and what God did for us. (Ephesians 2: 11-22) What a call wherewith we have been called! God the Father willed it, purposed it and predestinated it from eternity; God the Son came in human flesh and obtained it, making us his purchased possession by his own blood; God the Holy Spirit applied it and made us an habitation of God through the Spirit.

**Ephesians 4: 1: I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation [the calling] wherewith ye are called,**

**Title:** Walk Worthy

**Proposition:** Brethren, based solely upon the abundant blessings of God given us by his free and sovereign grace, in Christ, through the irresistible work of the Holy Spirit, let us live our lives in a manner becoming this calling wherewith we have been called.

## **I. FIRST, OUR MOTIVE IS THE GRACE AND LOVE OF GOD ALONE—**

Notice Paul says, in verse 1, I “beseech you.”

### **Beseech**

He does not command them, does not put them under the law, does not threaten or promise rewards, uses no power or might of his own. He says, “I beseech you.” It means “I entreat you. I exhort you.”

Application: This is important for each of us to remember: for you men who preach or comment on scripture from the pulpit, for us all toward fellow believers, for fathers and mothers. There is no better way to exhort a fellow believer to “all lowliness and meekness” than to do so in a spirit of “lowliness and meekness.”

2 Timothy 2:24: And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25: In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;

Application: There is instruction in the spirit with which we instruct, as much as in the instruction itself. What instruction is in a gentle, patient and meek spirit? It says this: we are powerless in ourselves. A lowly and meek spirit says that our only hope is:

2 Timothy 2: 25:...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

I know how you long for that loved one to believe Christ, for that son or daughter, how you long for that brother or sister to turn from the error that will cause them harm. And there is such a thing as righteous

anger when an unbeliever speaks against the God you love. But try to remember, they oppose themselves, not you.

Proverbs 25: 15: By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

Paul told the Thessalonians..

1 Thessalonians 2:7: But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

Illustration: “Love them to Christ”

## God’s Dealing With Us

That is how God deals with us.

Jeremiah 31: 3...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Gomer—Hosea 2: 14: Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.

Note: The word “beseech” carries the meaning “comfort.” Paul is saying, “I therefore—in all the gospel I have declared to you—comfort you, that ye walk worthy of the Lord.” God says to his preacher.

Isaiah 40: 1: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. 2: Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’S hand double for all her sins.

There is a place and time, as Paul told, “Rebuke them sharply.” (Ti 1: 13) But even then, “speak the truth in love.” Why? If they have been called of the Lord—Romans 8:15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Law demands; grace beseeches! The only thing motive a believer needs and the only constraint which makes us heed this exhortation is the grace and love of God working effectually in the heart.

**II. FIRST, THE GENERAL EXHORTATION—Ephesians 4: 1: I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation [the calling] wherewith ye are called,”**

## A Worthy Call

“Worthy” means live in a manner “becoming” the calling of the Lord.

Philippians 1:27: Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Now, understand the value of this effectual, unchangeable call:

1 Peter 2:9: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

We have been called out of bondage into liberty (Gal 5: 13)

1 Corinthians 1:9: God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Galatians 1:6:...called...into the grace of Christ...

Hebrews 3:1: Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,...

1 Peter 5:10:...the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,...

God has made us us holy children of our holy God and Father, members of the whole family in heaven and earth; we wear Christ's name.

Illustration: What if some great king called you into his kingdom, into his palace, to his table amongst the most distinguished guests in the world? You would put forth your best in every way. Believer, Christ has called you into his kingdom, into his palace, to his table, before God his Father, amongst the most distinguished, honored guests this world has ever known: his holy apostles and all his holy saints?

Application: So then, brethren walk—live your life at all times--“in a manner becoming unto” Christ who has called you into his kingdom, as holy children of God. “Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. (1 Thess 2: 12)

But how can we live in a manner becoming one so altogether lovely, so glorious, who has so richly blessed us? If God left us to our imagination we would probably think we ought to be proud. But it is just the opposite.

### **III. A WALK WORTHY OF THIS CALLING IS Ephesians 4: 2: With all lowliness and meekness,...**

With all Lowliness: means humbleness of mind—having a low opinion of self as opposed to being proud; with all Meekness: means gentleness of spirit, mildness of disposition

#### **Look to Christ Jesus**

Matthew 11:29: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

He who is LORD of all—God the Son himself—in order to highly exalt God his Father to fulfill his will to magnify and make honorable the law to fulfill the law for his people and justify us, did just the opposite to what natural man thought the Messiah would do! He became a servant.

Philippians 2: 5: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

This was the mind of Christ when he walked this earth because God the Father was in Christ and Christ in the Father. Being one with the Father, Christ's high esteem for God his Father made him humble himself to do the Father's will, to speak the word the Father gave him to speak, to finish the works the Father gave him to finish, redeeming his people from all iniquity by laying down his life on the cross.

John 6: 38: For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

That is the lowliness of mind and meekness the Holy Spirit puts in the inward man when Christ is formed in our hearts. He said,

John 14:10: Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

That is the lowliness of mind and meekness he puts in the inward man when the Holy Spirit creates us anew.

John 8: 28: Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. 29: And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

## **Our Calling**

We are proud, self-willed, obstinate sinners by our first birth. But when we are effectually called by his grace, when Christ is formed in our heart in the new birth, God the Father is in Christ and Christ is in us and we are in Christ.

John 17:23: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

He gives us the mind of Christ, in like manner as Christ had the mind of his Father.

Hebrews 13: 21: [So God makes his child] in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ;

Ephesians 2: 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

## **Good Works**

What are these good works, well-pleasing in God's sight which he foreordained and works in those called of his grace? It begins with lowliness of mind and meekness of heart. We are given a low opinion of self, as opposed to the pride of life—because we are given a high opinion of God our Father and his Son our Savior. In lowliness of mind and meekness, God makes us willing for his will to be done rather than our own—we have the mind of Christ. Lowliness of mind and meekness makes us cease speaking our own words and speak God's word—we have the mind of Christ.

Lowliness of mind and meekness makes us willing to renounce all our works, confessing we are nothing but sinners. We confess we do nothing of ourselves—even as Christ did for now we have the mind of Christ, we are his willing servants. We cease making ourselves of reputation. We start giving God all the glory for every aspect of our salvation: for choosing, redeeming, regenerating, and preserving us all by his free grace. We begin to marvel at the depths of God's wisdom and count our wisdom as nothing.

Toward our brethren: lowliness of mind and meekness makes us to cease exalting ourselves over one another. This fruit of the Holy Spirit makes us prefer our brethren above ourselves. It gives us a heart to serve rather than to be served, to rejoice with brethren when they rejoice to mourn when they mourn.

Lowliness of mind and meekness restrains a man from ambition beyond his calling or gifts. Envy makes a sinner desire the gifts or calling of another brother. Pride makes a man presumptuous to think he can do the other brother's business better than he. A proud spirit is sure to cause division.

Psalm 131:1: «A Song of degrees of David.» LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Illustration: It was not until God made me content to serve—out of sight—that God called me to be a pastor. One night, I filled in for my pastor. Then I began travelling filling in for other pastors—it got to be 4 Sunday's a month I would be somewhere preaching. In time, I began to desire just to stay home, to teach a bible class and work my job. Then I ended up out of sight in the back of the church building teaching the young people. I was content. That is when the Lord opened the door here and eventually called me to be your pastor.

Lowliness of mind and meekness of heart makes you honor God in our gospel and in our lives, makes you willing to serve God by serving your brethren, and makes you content to serve wherever God puts you. For we behold Christ who made himself of no reputation and became obedient even unto the death of the cross. By which he highly exalted and glorified God and also saved us from our sins.

**IV. A WALK WORTHY OF THIS HOLY CALLING IS TO BE A PEACEMAKER—Ephesians 4: 2: with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3: Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

With all Longsuffering: means to persevere, to patiently endure whatever comes our way, to be slow to avenge wrongs.

### **Look to Christ**

Christ Jesus patiently endured everything the Father would have him to suffer—even unto the death of the cross.

John 18:11: Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Application: Brethren, know this, whatever comes our way is from the hand of our all-wise, sovereign Lord. Seek his grace to patiently endure whatever we must suffer.

Example: When God sent fire and consumed Nadab and Abihu, Aaron kept his mouth shut. When God pronounced judgment on Eli's sons because Eli failed to teach them—he said, “it is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good.” (1 Sam 3: 18)

### **Our Brethren**

This longsuffering is also in our dealings with brethren—**Ephesians 4: 2:... with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;**

We overlook one another's faults because we love our brethren in Christ for the sake of Christ. Sometimes we do so by holding up one another in love when the other is weak. It takes forbearance to uphold a weak brother rather than deal otherwise with him.

Example: When Amalek attacked the children of Israel, Moses was commanded to hold up the rod of God.

Exodus 17: 11: And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12: But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13: And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

All our enemies—within and without—are conquered through Christ through the rod of the gospel. Sometimes, our hands become heavy. When your brother's hands become heavy, you may see his weaknesses. We should never burden our brethren more when they are weak. The spirit is willing; it is our flesh that is weak. But God uses our brethren to forebear one another's weaknesses—we bear him up just as Aaron and Hur helped Moses.

We do so by encouraging one another the one way we can: by reminding each other of Christ Jesus: what he has done and is doing, by praying for them and waiting on him that his able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. Paul did that for these Ephesian believers by writing them this epistle. Then through the word, the Holy Spirit sets our weak brother upon Christ our Foundation, just as they sat Moses on a stone. Our gracious God uses the word of our brethren to strengthen the hands of our weak brother as we speak to one another of Christ.

Sadly, we sometimes have to forebear a brother speaking a critical word about us. It is sad when brethren criticize brethren to other brethren. But if we are criticized we know the half has not been told! There is plenty more they could say. When a brother or sister falls into the snare of criticizing, forebear one another in love. Also, forbearance makes us not seek to avenge ourselves but to wait on God.

Example: When David's enemies spake of him—and David was a type of Christ in this—he said,

Psalm 38: 13: But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. 14: Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. 15: For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.

1 Peter 2: 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

## **Keep Unity**

With this spirit and by this longsuffering and forebearance with one another, we are **Ephesians 4: 3: Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

Let me tell you what this does not mean. Some teach that this means we ought to be united to those who believe and teach salvation by the will and works of man. I have even heard men say we do not want to make an issue of a “minor doctrine” such as particular redemption, limited atonement.

The doctrine of particular redemption is not minor; it is the gospel. It declares Christ actually accomplished redemption for his people. We declare the sin of a particular people was laid on Christ. That Christ bore the justice of God for their sin and satisfied divine justice.

Therefore, judgment cannot be poured out on them again—the sin of God's elect have been put away by Christ Jesus. So hand-in-hand we preach the doctrine total depravity, unconditional election, irresistible

grace, perseverance of the saints. The truth is all one truth. “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword?” There can be no unity until the dividing lies of the natural heart are overruled by the Holy Spirit of Truth in the new heart.

But then there is the bond of peace! What is the “the bond of peace” by which the Holy Spirit unites his people? It is the blood and love of the Godman Mediator by which Christ has reconciled us to God and made us one with our brethren. When we are washed in Christ blood, we are made to see that his love is everlasting, redeeming, calling, keeping, saving love. We are filled with his love by the Holy Spirit and bound in the peace of our great Peacemaker, Christ Jesus. He makes us to be one blessed family. We will see this next time but read verse 4-6. We are one.

Go home remembering: Oh, brethren, we have been called with holy, heavenly, calling—walk to adorn this calling: in lowliness of mind, in meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, and endeavor—diligently, strive—to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Christ our Peace.

**Amen!**