

Ephesians 4:1-6

Chosen in Christ, Together in Christ, & Walking in Christ

June 26, 2016

Intro:

1. Joke: A teenage boy had just gotten his driving permit.
 - a. He asked his father when he could start using the car.
 - b. His father said to him, *"I'll make a deal with you. You bring your **grades** up, study your **bible** a little and get your **hair cut** and we'll talk about it."*
 - c. After about a month the boy came back and again asked his father if they could discuss use of the car.
 - d. The father replied, *"Son, I've been real proud of you. You have brought your grades up, you've studied your bible diligently, but you didn't get your hair cut."*
 - e. The young man waited a moment and replied, *"You know Dad, I've been thinking about that. You know, Samson had long hair, Moses had long hair, Noah had long hair, and even Jesus had long hair!"*
 - 1) To which is father replied, *"Yes, you're right, and they also WALKED every where they went!"*
2. Speaking of walking, Paul tells the Ephesians how they should be walking as Christians; let's take a look...

Let's look at our passage: Read Ephesians 4:1-6 (NKJV)¹ and Pray¹

1. Theme of Ephesians: We are **Chosen** in Christ, **Together** in Christ, **Walking** in Christ.
 - a. Our passage today begins the theme, We are **Walking** in Christ.
2. In the first three chapters of Ephesians Paul outlines how we are chosen in Christ and together in Christ.
 - a. Paul wrote of how we are adopted into God's family...
 - 1) **Chosen** before the foundation of the world,
 - 2) **Redeemed** by the blood of the Lamb,

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- 3) And **sealed** with the Holy Spirit.
- b. Paul also shared how we have **access** with boldness and confidence to the Father through faith in Christ.
 - 1) In Christ both Jews and Gentiles are **one**.
 - 2) And by grace we possess the **unsearchable riches of Christ**.
- 3. In today's passage, we'll see Paul take up a new theme in his letter whereby he challenges us to **walk worthy** of the calling with which we are called.

Ephesians 4:1 ¹ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

- 1. Paul knew that he was right where the Lord wanted him, that's why he didn't consider himself a prisoner of Rome, but rather a **prisoner of the Lord**.
- 2. The word **beseech** – could also be translated as **urge** or **beg**.
 - a. This word means to **plead for** in making an **earnest request** or **appeal**.
 - 1) To **beseech** is to compel another into action.
 - b. The rest of this passage should be understood with strong exhortation in mind.
- 3. In this 1st verse of chapter 4 Paul speaks of a **calling** –
 - a. Paul, himself, had **confidence** in his letters and actions because he was confident that the Lord had called him to be an apostle –
 - 1) A leader in the newly founded Christian church.
 - b. If you are going to **walk worthy** of your **calling** then you need to know what that calling is.
 - 1) *Personally*: As a pastor I have dealt with more spiritual warrior than at any other point that I can remember in my Christian life.
 - a) I would honestly say that being a Pastor has been **harder** than being a **U.S. Marine**.
 - b) Being a Marine was often difficult physically and sometimes emotionally when I was away from my family.

- c) But being a pastor, under regular spiritual attack, can be quite difficult.
- d) There are times when I have wanted to **throw in the towel**, to give up, to wave the white flag, to tap out.
- e) You know why I haven't? Because God has time and time again reminded me of my calling.
- My calling to be a pastor, a shepherd, a Bible teacher.
 - When I remember my calling, I am reminded why I cannot quit!
- c. If you want to **walk worthy** then you need to know what your **calling** is! If you don't know, start by...
- 1) Spending time with God in His Word.
 - a) Pick a **time** to read God's Word and make it a priority.
 - b) Pick a **place** to read God's Word, somewhere where the distractions are few.
 - c) Pick a **plan** for reading God's Word.
 - Don't just expect that if you **fan the Bible** open you will **find the will of God** for your life.
 - Pick a book of the Bible to read or follow a Bible reading plan.
 - 2) Embracing your **calling** often means you will have to let go of **your past**.
 - a) **Philippians 3:12–14** ¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
 - b) Satan want to try to discourage you by reminding you of every instance where you have failed, but Paul says forget the past...
 - We need to stop looking back and start looking forward so we can make sure we are walking in the right direction.
4. You need to 1st know what your calling is and then comes the challenge to **walk** in it.

- a. David **Guzik**, “The idea is clear. We don’t walk worthy so that God will love us, but because He does love us. It is motivated out of gratitude, not out of a desire to earn merit.”
 - b. **1 John 4:19** **We love Him because He first loved us.**
 - 1) He is the initiator and we are the responders.
 - 2) This is not a **works-based walk**, but rather a **wonder-filled walk**.
5. How are we to walk?
- a. According to Philippians 3:14 it’s an **upward** direction.
 - 1) It’s a walk that bringing us closer and **closer to the Lord**.
 - b. The word **worthy** – literally means having **weight**.
 - 1) In ancient times, before a buyer would make his purchase he would require the seller to place their goods on the **scales**.
 - a) Their goods would be **weighted** to determine if they were truly worthy to be purchased.
 - 2) Those who have studied the book of **Daniel** might remember when the finger appeared and wrote on the wall...
 - a) Daniel was called to give its interpretation.
 - b) It was a message to **Belshazzar**, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, “*You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting*” (Daniel 5:27)
 - c) He was not worthy.
6. So what does walking worthy look like for us today?
- a. To begin with we must remember that we are **called Christians – little Christs**.
 - 1) It means that the **character, nature, actions, & attitudes** of Christ found in the Scriptures are the very things we are **embracing** and **practicing** in our lives.
 - 2) Do you cuss people out in your head or from within your car because they cut you off?
 - a) Do you get frustrated with others and say things you wish you hadn’t after the fact?

- b) OR, when frustration is setting in do you **stop** and **pray** so that you don't cuss someone out or say something hurtful.
- 3) Have you skipped doing personal devotions just because you are **busy** or you wanted to **sleep** in?
 - a) OR, do you look forward to your devotion time with the Lord for you know it's your source of **life**, **strength** and **encouragement**.
- 4) In what other ways have you been **acting like the world** all around you causing you to blend in rather than standing out like **salt** and **light**?
- b. Walking worthy also means being **consistent** and **genuine**.
 - 1) It's the opposite of being a hypocrite.
 - 2) One of the biggest excuses that people make for not going to church is that churches are full of hypocrites.
 - a) People who say one thing, but do another.
 - 3) And it's true; there are too many hypocrites in the church today.
 - a) But know that that's not how Christ wanted Christians to behave in His church.
 - b) He has called for us to walk worthy in our calling in a consistent, genuine, and loving manner.

Ephesians 4:2a ² with all lowliness and gentleness,

1. **lowliness** – humility.
 - a. In ancient times the Greeks rejected lowliness as a character trait.
 - 1) But God requires it.
 - b. **Philippians 2:3** Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.
 - c. God demonstrated **lowliness** in His own Son.

1) **Philippians 2:7–8** [Jesus Christ] ...made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

a) **Why** would He do that? LOVE!

b) He loves you so much He sent His son to die so that we could live!

d. Again, I think of Eric Liddell who won an Olympic gold medal, but left behind a life of fame and glory to return to the mission field in China...

1) To teach children in school and tend to the poor in that region.

2) Unwilling to leave the people he served in China when the Japanese invaded in WWII, Liddell was taken into an internment camp and there died at the age of 43.

3) Liddell, an Olympic gold medalist, modeled true lowliness and gentleness...

2. **gentleness** – or Meekness – Strength under control.

a. It's being God's gentleman or gentlewoman.

b. In addition to Eric Liddell I also think of the great warrior and leader King David as one who was lowly and gentle.

1) For many years David lived as the anointed yet uncrowned king of Israel.

2) Saul wore the crown as king over Israel, but because of his unfaithfulness before the Lord, the prophet Samuel was sent to anoint David the next king of Israel.

3) Saul became jealous and even began to lose his mind, trying to kill David.

a) But in each instance David would not do anything to harm Saul or to exalt himself over Saul.

4) He acted with complete lowliness and gentleness, waiting upon the Lord to remove Saul and officially raise David up to the throne.

In addition to lowliness & gentleness, **Ephesians 4:2b** [walk...] **with longsuffering,**

1. Patience – literally slow to boil

a. One who is longsuffering is one who has a forgiving and generous heart.

- b. If you are one who blows up easily or loses your patience often, pray that God would help you be longsuffering and patience.

Ephesians 4:2c bearing with one another in love,

- 1. NLT: Making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.
 - a. True love has no limits so let love be the motivating factor as you bear with others.

Ephesians 4:3 ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

- 1. The word **endeavoring** – Eager; making every effort; diligently, working hard at
 - a. Notice we are not charged with **creating** unity, only **keeping** it.
 - b. God creates it, but we can certainly ruin it by being hardheaded, by giving way to sin and selfishness.
- 2. The Lord desires that His children be United.
 - a. Concerning unity, listen to how Paul instructs the believer in Rome:
 - 1) **Romans 12:18** 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.
 - b. We've seen our city come together in incredible ways.
 - 1) Our city has rightly come together to condemn the great evil that was committed and to mourn those who lost their lives.
 - c. And the church at large needs to be coming together in unity through Christ as well.
 - 1) Now Paul's words are not intended to force us into one model or mode where we all look and act the same.
 - 2) Differences are okay, divisions are not.
 - 3) We are to have unity of heart and belief in Christ, *but* not necessarily unity in action.
 - d. Next week we'll look at some of the unique individual gifts that God gives us.

As believer, we have unity because of what we share in common...

1. In the following verses Paul uses the word “**one**” seven times.

Ephesians 4:4a ⁴ *There is one body...* This is a reference to the **Church** at large.

- a. This encompasses every born again believer; we are all members of one body.

Ephesians 4:4b *one Spirit* This is the Holy Spirit

1. Who convicts us of sin and fills us at the moment we are first saved.

Ephesians 4:4c [Paul says...] *just as you were called in one hope of your calling;*

1. This one hope is **eternal life** with God Himself.

Ephesians 4:5a ⁵ *one Lord,* This refers to our **Lord Jesus Christ**.

- a. His **lordship** over the church is what brings the unity that Paul speaks of in Vs 3.
- b. It's His church and we follow Him.

Ephesians 4:5b *one faith,*

1. In **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
2. There are not many roads that lead to heaven...
 - a. There is only one road, one way, one faith, faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Ephesians 4:5c *one baptism;*

1. While we follow the practice of water baptizing new believers, Paul is not referring to water baptism here.

- a. This **one baptism** occurs at the moment of initial faith and salvation.
- b. **1 Corinthians 12:13** For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.
- c. At the point of conversion believers are filled and sealed with the Holy Spirit.
- d. This **one baptism** occurs when the Holy Spirit initially seals the believer with eternal life.
- e. The word baptism means to **immerse** and in this sense the new believer is immersed in God’s grace.

Ephesians 4:6 ⁶ one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

1. God is the Father of all who believe in and follow Jesus.
 - a. And He not just some old guy in heaven. He is **above all**, but He’s also **through all, and in you all**.

Conclusion:

1. In addition to serving here at the church, I also serve at Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ)
 - a. When I am around Senior Leadership in Cru or the Josh McDowell Ministry I act a certain way.
 - 1) I use words of respect;
 - 2) I attempt to act in a manor that is similar to their behavior and temperament.
 - 3) Keep that thought in mind...
 - b. When I first joined the Marines, the Drill Instructors at Boot Camp would tell us, “*Stand up straight, roll your shoulders back, lift your chest high.*”
 - 1) We were to walk with pride.

2. Paul is telling us to do something similar.

a. In today's passage, Paul has challenged us to walk worthy of the calling with which we are called.

1) There is a certain way that Christians should behave and walk.

a) Not for our own salvation, but so that others might see Jesus in us.

2) The Christian life is one that is to be marked by faith, hope, and love.

a) It is to be a life marked by grace.

b. This is why I emphasize daily devotions and read through the entire Bible.

1) You must know the Word if you ever hope to consistently live by the Word.

2) People are watching your life; can they see Christ in you by the way you are walking?

ⁱ The following people and commentaries were used in preparing these notes: Life Application Bible, ESV Study Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, D. Guzik, J. Courson, J.V. McGee, C.H. Spurgeon