

Ephesians 4:1-2 Walk Worthy!

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to Ephesians chapter 4?

We're gonna be participating in communion this morning...

As we move to chapter 4, a dramatic shift occurs as Ephesians gives us simple instructions for practical Christian living.

We've spent the last 3 months looking at the 1st 3 chapters because they give us the proper foundation by explaining our relationship with God. Remember, we haven't contributed anything to us being established in Christ, other than we're sinners and God provided the savior!

Now as we begin in chapter 4 the instructions come in light of all of that we've studied in those 3 chapters. And I wanna share with you how some scholars have divided up the book of Ephesians because it may help put this all into context.

One scholar says the book of Ephesians is divided into sit, walk, stand.

The 1st 3 chapters we find ourselves seated in heavenly places with Christ. Chapters four and five are our walk and in chapter 6 we stand against the enemy.

Another commentator writes it as the wealth, the walk and the warfare.

No matter how you divide it up, in chapters 1-3 Ephesians has established us in our relationship with God and anchored us there so that all other relationships would be affected by that.

This is important because what we're about to study in chapters 4-6 over the next few months should affect every relationship we have.

Our relationship with the church, our relationship with the world. It should affect our relationship with our own tongue and our own passions, even our anger. It should impact our relationship with our spouse, our relationships with our children, our relationship with spiritual warfare. Why?

Because those relationships are all hinged on the primary relationship we have with God, the greater reality. And this is hard for us because the greater reality is that we're seated in heavenly places in Christ.

Among all the chaos in our world, that's the one thing that is fixed, that will never be shaken- our destiny in eternity. Everything else is a variable that we often can't control.

Have you noticed how little control we have over life? Have you noticed how quickly it's going by?

Psalm 103 5 As for man, his days are like grass;

As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.

16 For the wind passes over it, and it is gone,

And its place remembers it no more.

There is a point in time that's coming when we will stand in glory and we'll be in that greater reality of heaven.

But we're not there yet. So, until that day, what lies before us are some of the most practical instructions you'll find in the Bible for living as a Christian.

It's as though all other things that we touch should now be different because of our relationship with the Lord that we've studied in the 1st 3 chapters.

Now it's critical as we begin this section to remember, it was something that Oswald Chambers says so well, that Christian perfection is perfection of relationship and it is not perfection of performance.

Listen please we have to grasp this. Our relationship with God is not based upon our performance. It's NOT a perfection of performance. It's a perfection of relationship. Aren't you so glad?

This morning, we're going to study verses 1-2, and the title of this morning's message is WALK WORTHY.

LET'S PRAY

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, just as we saw in chapter 3 verse 1, Paul wasn't the prisoner of Rome, he was a prisoner of Jesus.

Notice this is the first mention in Ephesians of our response to God. Paul has spent three chapters telling us what God has done for us, of what God has given and what God has provided for us. He has spent three chapters unfolding the glorious mysteries of God's love and grace and goodness. How God has reached out to us Gentiles who were once alienated and far away, and He has brought us near.

Now after spending the three chapters telling us all that God has done for us, now he turns around and he says, "Now you walk worthy."

One of the problems in the church is that folks have been emphasizing the walk first. They've been trying to get people to walk before they even know how to sit. But chapters 1-3 get us firmly seated in Christ in heavenly places, and then it says, "Now walk. You learned how to sit, now walk." In a little while as we get to the sixth chapter, he is going to say, "Now stand."

And so as another author of Ephesians has divided it, he spent three chapters telling us of the wealth and of the riches we have in Christ. Now he is going to spend a couple of chapters telling us about the walk that we should have. And then he will spend the last chapter telling us about the warfare that we are in. So the wealth, the walk and the warfare of the believer.

It's important to note that God's work for us is, first of all, mentioned before our response to God. This is the exact opposite of the religions which teach mankind to do work in order that God might respond to us.

But if we are in that works-response, that I work so that God might respond syndrome, we will never have the full relationship with God that He desires to have. Why? Because our works are always going to be failing and feeble.

It's God's work that matters, not mine. It's my response to God which is important, not trying to get God to respond to me. God is the initiator; we are the responder.

Sadly you don't have to search hard and you'll hear how bible teachers try to reverse that in their preaching, making mankind the initiator and God the responder. That's not the case nor is it the gospel. The gospel is that God initiated: God so loved that He gave, and that mankind responds. We love Him because He first loved us.

So any work that we try to do to gain God's favor, any work that we try to do to gain merit, to gain points, to gain righteousness is of no avail. It's only that work that flows freely as we're responding to God and His grace and His love that has any real eternal merit or value.

We need to get this theology correct or else we are going to really be missing out on all that God is wanting for us and wanting to do for us. Let's read verse 1 again

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

The word beseech used in verse 1 means to exhort, to plead, even to beg. It's strong language and it's pleading with us to walk worthy of the calling that we are called to.

You see, our calling has something to do with another world. Our calling has to do with eternity. And the idea is God has a calling on our life.

Now we could try to identify our calling as, you know, I'm called to be an artist or I'm called to be a pastor. I'm called to do construction or be a teacher whatever your vocation may be. But that's not what this is referencing

What it says all throughout God's word is there is a much higher calling.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our calling has to do with fellowshiping with God. **1 Corinthians 1:26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.**

Philippians 3:14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Our calling is an upward calling. And why does this matter- because recognizing our calling should change how we live.

That's why it says in **Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.**

And it says then **Romans 11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.**

Verse 1 is asking us to do something in regards to this calling, and what is it we're asked to do? To walk worthy of the calling.

To walk worthy in the greek is the word is axios which has the idea of 'the same.' **SHOW PIC** The adjective form is describing the scales they would use in a marketplace. See in those days they didn't have the same kind of scales we have today.

Back then when you bought something by the pound, they had the scales and they would put a set of weights on one side and then what you wanted to buy on the other side . **CLOSE PIC**

This is why you see Jesus rebuke those who used dishonest scales, b/c you could say something is 1lb, but shave a few ounces off the weight and who would be the wiser.

So you would take something you wanted to purchase, they would put it on the scale and on the other side use the weight until it weighed down and evened up the scale. And when that happened, they would say Axios- that meant worthy.

It meant the weight of what I'm buying is worthy of the weight that I'm paying for. It's worthy.

And what it's saying here in verse 1 for you and for me is that it's begging us now to walk worthy. To let our walk be equal to the things that are a reality through what Christ has done. Which means our conduct ought to look way different than those who don't have a relationship with Christ.

Take a sneak peak at verses 17-19 in your bibles. **17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.**

One thing the word of God tells us over and over again is that our walk should be different. We should walk differently than unsaved people, because we have the living Christ inside of us.

Later in Ephesians it will tell us in **Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.**

That's again what the whole first three chapters of Ephesians described isn't it? The kind of love that God demonstrated when he gave his Son, when Christ gave Himself. Later it tells us over in **Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light**

So again over and over we see, especially here in verse 1, it says I beseech you that your walk is according to your calling.

That our conduct is equal to the reality of who we are. We're God's children, we're children of the king.

If you're a parent and you have kids, you want your kids to be good representatives of you and your family don't you? You want your kids to represent you properly.

Verse 1 is reminding us we're God's kids, so we should act accordingly. Given all that Christ has done for us, those 1st 3 chapters, let's walk worthy of the calling.

And never forget the world is watching you and I as we live our lives for Christ.

Have you noticed as you've gotten older that the majority of what we communicate in our lives isn't our words, but our actions. You've heard the phrase more is caught than taught.

Scientists tell us that only 7% of our communication is content. 38% is tone of voice and 55% of what we communicate through our entire lives will be our actions.

Yes we need to tell people about Jesus, but the unbelieving world is watching our walk to see how we respond when we're going through trouble, if we still have hope in our eyes. They can tell if you're still able to praise God and have a song in your heart when everything else in your life is falling apart. The unbelieving world

is watching to see if we live out the instructions we declare of God's word.

Story of bible in breakroom-rich cygan

Folks, the world is watching us. Are we walking worthy of our calling as children of God?

Well, if you're not sure of how to practically walk worthy, look at verse 2...

2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,

Now in verse two, there's 2 times the word with is used. One is with all lowliness and meekness, and the other one is with long-suffering forbearing one another in love.

So he uses 2 withs here to describe right off the bat what our walking worthy should be like.

The word lowliness in the Greek is a 6 syllable word and I'm not even gonna try to pronounce cuz I'll butcher it, but lowliness simply means humble.

Notice everything we're called to do in verse 2, to walk worthy, is the opposite of what our world tells us to do! Everything today screams pride-it screams self. Everything in our culture is about elevating oneself, most of the time at the cost of others.

But the first step to walk worthy is lowliness, or humility.

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Now the 2nd way to walk worthy in verse 2 is gentleness. It's the same word we get meekness from. Now to be clear, to be gentle or meek does not mean you're to be a wimp. Be a man. Stand up and have courage. Be a woman, have integrity. Let your kids be proud.

Rather the word gentleness, or meekness is interesting because it's the only characteristic that Jesus uses to describe himself in the Gospels.

Matthew 11:29 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

So there it is-the 1st 2 steps to walk worthy of our calling, as sons and daughters of the Most High God, to represent our father, is to walk in all kinds of lowliness and meekness. And why? Because that's what Jesus did. He was meek and lowly. We represent Him!!!

The 3rd way to walk worthy is with long-suffering.

Long-suffering is really defined for us by the construction of the rest of the verse-it says forbearing one another in love.

Now to forebear in the geek here means to hold one another up. So don't miss this, we're to hold one another up in love.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 17 20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

And it's a reminder that our calling is from another world. Think about our world, this ball of dirt is insane. People are blowing each other up and shooting each other and robbing and stealing and all these things.

And God says, look, you're my kids, Walk worthy of your calling. Do it with lowliness and meekness. Longsuffering and bearing with one another in love.

So there's our marching orders.

Communion

Luke 22 19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Luke 22:20 20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.