

## Ephesians 4:1-3

1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

### I. Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord -

- a. Here's a question: Why does Paul begin this section this way? I believe there's an answer but first let's look at how Paul began his other chapters of Ephesians:
  - i. **Ephesians 1:1 (NASB95)** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:
  - ii. **Ephesians 3:1 (NASB95)** For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—
- b. Notice how he begins chapter 4: ***“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord”***
  - i. Seems interesting that he would open this chapter or section of his letter with something he has already said.
    1. But is it exactly what he had already said? No.
    2. Notice he opens the letter by giving his name, ***“Paul”*** and then his formal title, an ***“Apostle of Christ Jesus”***
    3. In chapter 3 he gives his name again but this time he's ***“the prisoner of Christ Jesus”***
    4. This time all he says is ***“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord”***
    5. Why has Paul started this section this way, and is there even a reason? I believe there is. Before I tell you why, let's take a look at an important word in this verse:

### II. Therefore - Important word (“what's the therefore there for”). Paul is connecting us to his previous thoughts with the current thoughts in the beginning of Chapter 4.

- a. **In other words said another way:** “Because of the things I just finished telling you in the last 3 chapters, there's a way that the Believer ought to walk that is in step with what he has been called to.”
- b. **Calling & Called** - what have you and I been called to? It must be lofty because Paul tells us to walk in a manner that's worthy of it.
  - i. **What is that Paul just finished telling us in the last 3 chapters:**
    - a. **Ephesians 1:3 (NASB)** 3...blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,
    - b. **Ephesians 1:5 (NASB)** 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself,
    - c. **Ephesians 1:7 (NASB)** 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,
    - d. **Ephesians 1:10 (NASB)** 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.
    - e. **Ephesians 1:11 (NASB)** 11 also we have obtained an inheritance,
    - f. **Ephesians 1:13-14 (NASB)** 13 ...having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our

inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

- g. **Ephesians 2:4-6 (NASB)** 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
- h. **Ephesians 2:19 (NASB)** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

- ii. Paul tells you and I that we have those lofty things in chapters 1-2 under the banner of his formal title of Apostle.
  - a. This makes sense. Which means more, the VP of my division telling me that I've been promoted and the benefits that go with that promotion or his admin assistant? **The one speaking from the position of authority means more.**
  - b. But we then see in chapter 3 that Paul drops the formal, authoritative title and speaks to us from the position of prisoner.
  - c. Now in chapter 4 Paul continues to speak to us from the position of prisoner but drops the formality of using his name again.
    - i. There is something here for us!! Even if Paul didn't intend for it to be this way there's something here for us to understand.

II. How we live this life here, how we walk out our faith matters.

III. Paul has just completed 3 chapters talking about some very lofty things that you and I have simply because we are associated with Jesus Christ.

- i. Sam Walton was arguably one of the most powerful and influential men in all of the Retail Business at one point in his career (his net worth was \$8.6B, Walmart today is \$247B).
  - a. Yet he drove around in a beat up pick up truck all the time. When he was asked why didn't go buy something more impressive, he said matter of factly "Where would I put my dogs?"
  - b. When he and his executive team would travel they'd bunk together at none prestigious hotels.
  - c. When he'd go on vacations he'd take an old yellow notepad into stores and take notes and look around and help associates with anything that they needed help with.
  - d. What's the point? Sam Walton was a CEO, but he lived his life and completed the duties of his job like he was a stock boy.
- ii. This is the essence of what Paul is saying here. Paul is one of the 12 Apostles, one of the loftiest spiritual titles there is and yet he is living his life as though he were a prisoner or a servant. Paul understands this.
  - a. **Matthew 19:27-29 (NASB95)** 27 Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" 28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

- b. **Matthew 20:26,27 (NASB95)** 26 “It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;
- c. **Matthew 23:10-12 (NASB95)** 10 “Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. 11 “But the greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 “Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

iii. Paul, understanding this, urges the churches to follow the example he is setting:

- i. **1 Corinthians 4:16 (NLT)** So I urge you to imitate me.
- ii. **Philippians 3:17 (NLT)** Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example.
- iii. **1 Corinthians 11:1 (NASB95)** Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

b. Jesus Himself was humble, yet He has the greatest reason of all to relish in His formal title but He realized this first time that He came walking on this planet He must come in a different way:

- i. **Philippians 2:6-7 (NASB95)** 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
- ii. **John 13:13-15 (NASB95)** 13 “You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 “For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.

c. Notice this truth about our inheritance:

- i. **Ephesians 1:13-14 (NASB)** 13 ...having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given **as a pledge of our inheritance**, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.

d. What does this verse tell us? That we don’t have our inheritance yet!

e. “Don’t go borrowing your inheritance early.” It only creates disappointment. The prodigal son proved that!

**IV. 1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

- i. **implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called** - Walking in a manner worthy of our calling is not going to look like what most humans who have been given an inheritance like the one we've been given would think you walk.
- ii. **2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,** - Here we see exactly what we'd expect Paul to say after reviewing everything we have about the way a Believer is to consider his position in Christ.
- iii. **3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace - Where does this unity of the Spirit come from?**
  - a. **John 17:21-23 (NASB95)** 21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

**V. We are not citizens of this world, we are citizens of another one.**

- i. **Philippians 3:20 (NASB)** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
  - a. We should not live our lives like our inheritance is here on this planet and we also should not allow ourselves to be puffed up by a lofty spiritual inheritance that we've yet to receive.