

## Ephesians, Chapter Four, Lesson One

WALKING IN LOVE Ephesians 4:1-6

### STIMULATE

\*\* As we concluded our study of chapter three last week, we learned six things that could be said about someone who has been strengthened in their inner man by the Holy Spirit. Do you recall what they were and which one you chose to become more aware of as you walk with the Lord each day?

- 1) They are humble and reverent before God (V.14)
- 2) They are in God's family (V.15)
- 3) The Holy Spirit works on their inner man (V.16)
- 4) Christ is at home in their heart (V.17)
- 5) They understand the scope of the gospel (V.18)
- 6) They experience the love of God (V.19)

For myself, I was compelled to set my mind on the love of God which has been shown toward me and the debt I owe for God's gracious display of that love in Christ.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* Beginning with today's study, the beloved apostle Paul is going to shift the emphasis of his teaching. Having given us the doctrinal background of all that we have "in Christ", he is now going to get extremely practical in showing us how we are to apply what we have learned. Over the next six studies we will be learning that every believer should be:

*WALKING IN LOVE* - Ephesians 4:1-6  
*WALKING IN GRACE* - Ephesians 4:7-10  
*WALKING IN UNITY* - Ephesians 4:11-16  
*WALKING IN LIGHT* - Ephesians 4:17-20  
*WALKING IN TRUTH* - Ephesians 4:21-24  
*WALKING IN KINDNESS* - Ephesians 4:25-32

For today, please join me now in Ephesians 4:1-6 as Paul shows us how we can walk in a manner worthy of our calling if we are counted among those who spend their life "Walking in Love".

Read passage (V.1-3) (V.4-6)

Opening Prayer

### *Walking in Love*

### INVESTIGATE

**V. 1** \*\* As the apostle writes this epistle, he again exposes his own personal view of his circumstances. How does he do that here at the beginning of chapter four?

By stating that he is "the prisoner of the Lord". Throughout all of his letters, Paul will mention this fact six times - knowing that the Lord uses him in any and every circumstance for the advance of the gospel. cf. Philippians 1:12-14

\*\* We saw Paul use the same term back in chapter 3, verse one. Could this pattern in Paul's life become an issue for us in our life today?

Absolutely! Scripture unapologetically informs us that we will suffer for Christ if we are living for Him, because the world hates Him and therefore us as well.

cf. John 15:18-19, 2Timothy 3:12, 1Peter 3:17

\*\* As Paul opens our passage for today, he again uses the word "therefore". Why did he do that at this point in his letter?

As we said at the outset, Paul has spent three chapters giving us the doctrinal truths concerning all that we are "in Christ". Now he is shifting to application and exhortation to help us live out an obedient response to God's marvelous grace.

We must not miss a very important Biblical principle which lies behind Paul's method. We need sound doctrine to energize our obedience! cf. Psalm 119:11

\*\* So, because of all the doctrine he has given to the Ephesians, does he now feel comfortable issuing a command for them to obey?

No - He begs or pleads with them. "Entreat" translates the word parakaleo, which we have learned before. It means literally to call to one's side, with the idea of wanting to help.

cf. Galatians 4:12

\*\* Here in verse one, what phrase does Paul use that proves to be a good description of an obedient Christian's lifestyle?

"...walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called..."

\*\* We have discussed this before, but for a refresher, what does the word "walk" bring to mind?

A step by step awareness of our need to live in obedience to the One we call Lord and Savior.

\*\* What is a good term for delayed obedience?

**DISOBEDIENCE!** When we have become aware of how the Lord would have us to live for His glory, and then put it off for a later time (perhaps when we think we have grown more in our faith), we are being disobedient to the One who gave His life for us! cf. James 4:17

\*\* Paul has said that our walk ought to be worthy of our calling - let's take a closer look at that calling.

Hebrews 3:1 - A Heavenly Calling

2Timothy 1:8-9 - A Holy Calling

\*\* Does that sound like a lot to live up to? What is the secret to being able to walk worthy, even in light of our frequent failures?

All see - Philippians 3:12-14 The secret comes in not dwelling on our past failure, but rather on the walk of obedience in the present that keeps us pressing "on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

\*\* By the way, what is the goal?

Christ formed in you to the glory of God.  
cf. Galatians 4:19, Ephesians 4:13

**V. 2** \*\* Well, knowing that I do not need to dwell on the failures of my past is helpful, but isn't there some further description of a worthy walk to help us understand what it looks like?

Yes - Here in verse 2, Paul says that the worthy walk comes with "humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another".

humility (in the presence of God) - Isaiah 2:10-12, 17

gentleness - James 3:13, Matthew 5:5, Matthew 11:29

patience (makrothumia, long suffering in any circumstance) - Colossians 1:10-12

forbearance (an unconquerable benevolence and invincible goodness toward others) -  
Proverbs 10:12, 1Peter 4:8

\*\* Where do all four of these characteristics of a worthy walk abide?

"In love" - Paul was specifically telling us that our forbearance with other people is in love (agape), but it is important for us to understand that our humility, gentleness and patience are to be based upon that same love. Everything we think, say and do should demonstrate that we are "Walking in Love".

**V. 3** \*\* Knowing that our calling has equipped us with these four characteristics so we can be "Walking in Love", what does Paul now ask us to do?

Be "diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit".

\*\* What word in that exhortation describes our part?

To be "diligent" - spoudazo, lit. "to make haste, hence to give diligence". We are to rush to the work! Nothing should hold us back from this vital role in the body of Christ.

\*\* Is our job to create unity, invent unity or somehow to manufacture unity?

No, that job has already been completed by the Holy Spirit. Our job is to work hard at preserving it! It is **His** unity which we are to preserve. cf. 1Corinthians 12:13

\*\* What is the environment where all of our hard work takes place in preserving the unity of the Spirit?

In the bond of peace - this is the bond created by God that brings genuine peace between brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as peace between them and their Creator.  
cf. Philippians 2:2 and Romans 5:1

## Verses 4 - 6

\*\* As we look together at these last three verses of our passage for today, we will see seven "ones" that prove to be the basis of our worthy walk - even that which enables us to practice "Walking in Love", while at the same time showing us a masterful portrait of the Trinity.

**V. 4** \*\* Let's begin with the Holy Spirit - what is the first thing we see as the handy work of the Holy Spirit?

We were placed into **one body** by the Holy Spirit.  
cf. 1Corinthians 12:13 (again), Romans 12:4-5

**\*\* Just for the record, Who is the **one Spirit**?**

The Holy Spirit! cf. 1Corinthians 6:19

**\*\* From what we learned in chapter one of this epistle, what is the Holy Spirit's role in the **one hope** of our calling?**

We were sealed in that hope, and given the Holy Spirit as a pledge or down payment toward the fulfilling of that hope. cf. Ephesians 1:13-14

**V. 5 \*\* Next, let's look at our beloved Savior - how many master's can a man have?**

**One!** cf. Matthew 6:24, and there is only one Lord!  
cf. Acts 4:12, Romans 10:9 & 12, 1Corinthians 8:6

**\*\* How is Jesus Christ tied to the **one faith** statement?**

The unsaved world around us is in love with the concept of having faith. They simply believe in believing, without any reference to the so called reality in which they have placed their faith.

"I have faith that my football team will win the Super Bowl", "I have faith that my old car will continue running until I can get a new one", "I believe that for every drop of rain that falls, a flower grows". These are all statements that the world would view as honorable and courageous.

When the Bible speaks of one faith, it is talking about the only true faith that can save a man's soul from eternal death...faith in Jesus Christ! cf. Jude 1:3, Acts 6:7, Galatians 2:16, John 14:6

**\*\* What is meant by **one baptism**?**

Unlike the work of the Holy Spirit in verse 4, baptizing or immersing us into the body of Christ, this is referring to the one sign of our identification with Christ given to us by the Lord, that of water baptism. cf. 1Corinthians.1:13-17, Acts 10:47-48, Matthew 28:19

**V. 6 \*\* Alright, we have seen the Holy Spirit's part and our Lord Jesus Christ's part in being the basis for our "Walking in Love" - how about our **one God and Father**?**

We have all derived our name from Him! cf. Ephesians 3:14-15

**\*\* In your own words, what three attributes of our God and Father does Paul now place before us?**

His Sovereignty - Over all  
His Providence - Through All  
His Intimacy - In All

It is glorious to think about our loving heavenly Father being behind us as we are "Walking in Love".

## **EXTRICATE**

**\*\* What are the four characteristics of "walking worthy of our calling"?**

1) Humility, 2) gentleness, 3) patience (with the circumstances of life) and 4) forbearance (with the people in our life).

### **DELINEATE**

\*\* This is a hard question, because it may make you think that I am asking you to brag. Which of these characteristics have you seen manifested in your life since becoming a Christian?

All of them - even though there are times I fail, it is His work in me that produces my worthy walk. It is truly to God be the glory!

### **EVALUATE**

\*\* If we are willing to always be "Walking in Love" for the sake of Jesus Christ, what will we be doing at the same time according to verse three of our text?

We will work hard at preserving the Holy Spirit's unity in the body of Christ, while enjoying the environment of peace that Christ purchased for us with His own blood.

### **ACTIVATE**

\*\* Please take a moment now to go before our gracious Lord and let Him examine your heart. For those times that you know you were not "Walking in Love", ask Him to forgive you and then leave it in the past. Let's all press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ by trying each day to be one of His children who is always "Walking in Love".

Closing prayer