

A Worthy Walk

Week 37: Sept 10-16 – *Ephesians 2-5*

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Helpful Resources

Map of Paul's Missionary Journeys

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

Paul's letter to the Ephesians has six chapters, and *Ephesians 4:1* is the turning point. Notice the word *therefore* at the beginning. The word *therefore* signifies a change of direction in the letter. We might call this verse the hinge. We are all familiar with how hinges work. Hinges allow us to swing a door or a gate, to see both sides. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Chapters 1-3 are on the front of the door. Then, we swing the letter on its hinge (*4:1*), and we get to see the back of the door, Chapters 4-6.

In Chapters 1-3 (the front of the door), Paul explained what Christ has done for us in salvation, the benefits of the gospel. In Chapters 4-6 (the back of the door), Paul explained how we ought to live (our behavior) in light of what Christ has done for us. The word *therefore* (*4:1*) is the pivotal term, highlighting this shift from doctrine to duty.

In other words, Chapters 1-3 explain the motives — why we do what we do — while Chapters 4-6 explain the methods, the how. That's why Paul wrote, "I urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called" (*4:1*). A worthy walk — that is the springboard for everything that follows. Because of what Christ has done for us, we should walk (or live) in a worthy manner. Thus, in this review, we will consider both parts.

- What Christ Has Done

1. **Spiritual Blessings** (*1:3-14*): Paul began his letter by recounting eleven spiritual blessings that we have received because of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Which of the spiritual blessings did you find most encouraging? Explain why.

2. **Made Alive in Christ** (*2:1-10*): Even though we were dead in our trespasses and sins, Christ regenerated our heart and resurrected us into new life in Him.
3. **Peace with God and Others** (*2:11-22*): Because of Christ, we have not only been reconciled to God, but we have also been reconciled to others. With Christ as our common bond, different people can live in one body as His Church.
4. **A Prisoner of Christ** (*3:1-21*): Though Paul was a prisoner of Rome, waiting for his trial before Caesar, he did not refer to himself in those terms. Because of all that Christ has done, Paul called himself "a prisoner of Christ." Prisoners have either surrendered themselves to their captors, or they have been taken captive into custody. In Paul's case, he viewed himself as both. He had been taken captive by Christ and, yet, he had surrendered to His will and ways. His life was in God's hands, and he yielded to His plan.

- What We Do for Christ

1. **A Worthy Walk** (4:1, 2): Because of what Christ has done, Paul challenged us to “walk in a worthy manner,” meaning to live a life that honors Him. Since Christ has given His all for us, we should now give our all to live for Him. We start by exhibiting humility, gentleness, patience, and forbearance (forgiveness).

What does it look like to exhibit humility, gentleness, patience, and forbearance? Why are these qualities essential to demonstrate in the church?

2. **Preserve the Unity** (4:3-6): Christ “put to death the enmity (strife) between” all people groups (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and obtained unity and peace within the body of the Church (*Eph. 2:13-16*). It is our responsibility to maintain that unity and peace for Him.

Are you living in peace with others, doing your part to protect the body from disunity?

3. **Equip the Saints** (4:7-16): God has given Christians leaders and spiritual gifts to equip the saints for ministry. One of the purposes of those gifts is to strive for “unity of faith,” to help people mature in their spiritual growth so that they can combat false doctrine.

How are you using your gifts to equip the saints for service and spiritual growth?

4. **New Lifestyle** (4:17-5:4): There should be a visible difference between the lives of Christ-followers and those in the world. Our “former manner of life” should be laid aside, and we should be renewed in our mind. We should also be characterized by honesty, self-control, integrity, contentment, love, morality, and wholesome, edifying words.

Is your life characterized by these qualities? If not, why not? How can you improve?

5. **Children of Light** (5:7-14): Since we are “children of light, no longer walking in darkness,” we strive to “learn what is pleasing to the Lord, not only abstaining from the deeds of darkness but also exposing them.”

6. **Walk in Wisdom** (5:15-17): As God’s children, we no longer think as the world thinks but strive to understand the will of God for our lives, which produces wisdom in us.

How can we discern the will of God for our lives?

7. **Led by the Spirit** (5:18-21): Rather than being under the influence of worldly forces (i.e., alcohol), we seek to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit. As we make ourselves more available to His leadership in our lives, He changes our heart, our mind, our attitude, our words, and our actions.

The Bottom Line

God expects us to walk (live) in a manner worthy of what Christ has done for us.

Questions to Consider

1. Why should self-control be a characteristic of Christ-followers?
2. Re-read *Ephesians 4:26, 27*. How should Christians deal with their anger?
3. Re-read *Ephesians 4:29* and *5:4*. How are Christians to be exemplary in their speech? In what area of your words do you most struggle?