

Ephesians Chapter 4
Week 2, finish v.1

Eph 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, *entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,*

Think of a time when you have tried to be convincing. What was your approach? What was your motive?

We talked about the importance of talking the talk and walking the walk last week. True faith *produces action* that stems from a changed heart. When the Spirit controls us, we will conduct ourselves differently than when we were controlled by sin.

entreat <parakaleo> to call near, i.e. invite, invoke (by imploration, hortation or consolation):-beseech, call for, (be of good) comfort, desire, (give) exhort(-ation), intreat, pray.

To entreat in the English language means to plead desperately, to beg somebody for something, often repeatedly.

Think – when you really care about a person and you know they will benefit from understanding what you are trying to convey, how do you go about communicating with them? Would you just casually mention something or would you, as Paul has done, *plead* with them to consider what you have to say?

Paul has a heart that is desperate for the Ephesian believers to put their faith to action and to conduct themselves in a way that is appropriate to their relationship with God. This will affirm their calling as God's children and honor Him. We talked about how Paul is focused on his relationship with God even in prison. It is so valuable to him that he considers everything else worthless.

Our dog, Rosebud, is a great example of how you treat something valuable. She absolutely loves her orange ball. She lives to play with it! It is always with her (unless we take it away). I have seen her fall asleep with it in her mouth. She brings it to her bed at night and the first thing she does in the morning is pick it up. She would rather play with this ball than eat and she defends her possession of it with our other dog. She is completely obsessed by her ball, to the point of sitting for long periods of time and staring at it when it falls into the pool or rolls under a piece of furniture. In fact, when she had an injury

recently and was hopping around on three legs, she still had her ball in her mouth wanting to play. She chased her ball even when it was painful for her. When she was unable to continue, she would lie down and rest – with the ball *still* in her mouth – eager to continue as soon as she could.

To be obsessed means to never stop thinking about something, having your thoughts constantly and exclusively on something, being preoccupied about something. It carries the idea of being a fanatic, even possessed or controlled by something.

Remember the question we addressed at the end of our study last week: Does our faith in God possess us? Has it become more important than anything or anyone else? Let us look at Philippians 3:7-8 again and read what Paul conveys to us about his faith:

Phil 3:7-8 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

What are your thoughts about the physical things you have and your accomplishments when compared to the gift of your salvation? How does this show in your life? Would someone easily be able to determine that you are a believer in Christ? Do you “live so that if people get to know you, they will get to know Christ better”? This is the example we have in Paul.

Php 1:12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in [the cause of] Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else,

Paul entreats the Ephesian church to *walk* in a manner worthy of their faith.

What process takes place when you walk? We put one foot in front of the other. In addition to the actual mechanics of moving forward, the word “walk” also carries the meaning of living in a particular way. To “walk in a manner worthy” requires action. We have a destination to reach (heaven) and we have a map for directions (the Bible).

Walk <peripateo> to tread all around, i.e. walk at large (especially as proof of ability); figuratively, to live, deport oneself, follow (as a companion or votary):-- go, be occupied with, walk (about).

The word 'votary' in the above definition means a *dedicated* follower.

The literal translation is the mechanics of walking, the figurative translation is how someone behaves.

In the book of 1 Corinthians, Paul addresses the church and its immature behavior: 1Co 3:3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not *walking* like mere men?

They had claimed salvation but were still walking as ordinary men. They had the car but there was no gas in it. When you enlist in a military branch, you go through basic training. Then you are expected to be prepared to initiate what you have learned when you are put in the front lines. The concern Paul had was that the church was *still* in basic training – they were still newborns. Newborns react off circumstances and the people around them. If they are wet – they cry! If they are hungry – they cry! If they are dry and full – they laugh! They are immature in their abilities. They are needy! In this case, the Corinthian church was still acting as if they were in the flesh.

Colossians 3 gives us a comparison of walking with and without the Spirit:

Col 3:1-10 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, [and] abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its [evil] practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him

How does this section of scripture describe a person walking in the Spirit?

They seek the things of God

Their thoughts are on God
Their life is in God
They are dead to the control of the things of this world
Their minds are being renewed
The glory of God is their future

Someone who is walking in the Spirit has had the ultimate makeover! No amount of money, not the best surgeon in the world nor the most miraculous procedures and expensive products can accomplish this kind of change. Amazingly, it is free!

Now look at the same scripture and the description of someone who is not walking in the Spirit:

Their thoughts are on things of the earth
They practice immorality and impurity
They are taken over by passions of evil desire and greed and practice idolatry
The wrath of God is their future

This is who we were *before* the grace of God opened our eyes to see Him clearly.

What is your response to this thought? Can you see how Paul was able to count all things as rubbish in light of his salvation? He really had nothing valuable to lose but everything to gain.

When we think of the idea of being worthy of something it means it was deserved. The English definition of this word says it means fully deserving something, usually as a suitable reward for merit or importance.

Paul tells us to walk *"in a manner worthy"*

worthy <axios> appropriately:-as becometh, after a godly sort, worthily(-thy).

Unlike our English definition of worthy meaning deserving something because of our own merit, we absolutely cannot be worthy of salvation no matter what we do. We have been given this reward through no merit of our own. It is ours only because of what God has done for us through Christ. We are part of God's family because of His work. He is fully deserving of our love. Our lives need to reflect this inheritance of surpassing value. When we read the words that we are to walk in a manner worthy it means we are called to live in a way

that is characteristic of being a child of God. It has nothing to do with what we have done but everything to do with what He has done. Let us look at some verses that describe what we have and who we are because of Christ.

Lu 10:20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that *your names are recorded in heaven.*"

John 14:2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for *I go to prepare a place for you.*

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but *you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,*

Php 3:20 For *our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;*

1Pe 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to [obtain] *an inheritance [which is] imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Have you ever tried to get reservations at one of our state campgrounds? It is not easy! You have to call on the exact day that reservations open up and hope you can get through. Trying to get a specific campsite is even more difficult. We have a place in heaven reserved for us – God has taken care of everything and it will be perfect!

There are beliefs, customs, practices and behaviors that are associated with being born into a particular culture or society. Have you experienced being in a different culture? What things did you notice that were different? Some things that are completely acceptable in one culture might be very offensive in another. The language we speak, the clothing we wear, even certain mannerisms are adaptations of where we live.

How would you describe inappropriate behavior? What are some examples? What makes them inappropriate? (not suitable, wrong, out of place, unacceptable, unbecoming, offensive)

Where is our true citizenship? Would others know by looking at our lives? Have we adapted more to the world we live in or are we set apart from the world, living for Christ? Are we living in a manner that appropriately reflects our Father?

Remember what Phil 3:20 says: For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

Walking in a manner worthy speaks of behavior that appropriately reflects being a child of God, a citizen of heaven.

Php 1:27 Only *conduct yourselves in a manner worthy* of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Col 1:9-12 For this reason also, since the day we heard [of it], we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may *walk in a manner worthy* of the Lord, to please [Him] in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

1Th 2:10-12 You are witnesses, and [so is] God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we [were] exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father [would] his own children, so that you may *walk in a manner worthy* of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

2Th 1:11 To this end also we pray for you always *that our God may count you worthy of your calling*, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power;

3Jo 1:5-6 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially [when they are] strangers; and they bear witness to your love before the church; and you will do well to *send them on their way in a manner worthy* of God.

According to the verses above, what does it look like to “walk worthy” or to behave as a citizen of heaven?

- we stand firm in one spirit with one mind – united as a family
- we strive together for the faith of the gospel – focused on the same goal
- we pray and ask to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding
- we please Him in all respects
- we bear fruit in every good work and increase in the knowledge of God
- we are strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience
- we joyously giving thanks to the Father
- we behave devoutly, uprightly and blamelessly toward believers
- we exhort, encourage and implore each other as a father would his own children
- we act faithfully in whatever we accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; and they bear witness to our love before the church

In James Boice's commentary on Ephesians, he states, "A workman 'worthy of his hire' is one whose service merits the wages he receives. This does not mean we check off a list of doing things that *make* us worthy – that is impossible. ***But it does mean that the life we have in Christ is to be used for His purposes reflecting the value of the gift we have received***".

What does it mean to be called?

The last part of verse 1 says we are to walk in a manner worthy "[...of the calling with which you have been called,](#)"

In the KJV this word is translated vocation: <klesis> an invitation;

A vocation is a mission, even a passion, to follow a certain direction. However, a vocation is usually something *we* choose. An *invitation* is something that is *given* to us.

The invitation to be a child of God comes from Him. The ability to respond to His call comes from Him. The desire to follow Him comes from Him. God is the One who calls us. **Why is this important to understand?** We cannot take any credit for our salvation. The only credit we can righteously take is for our sin.

1Co 1:23-27 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the *called*, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your *calling*, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,

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

2Ti 1:8-9 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with [me] in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us, and *called* us with a holy calling, *not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace* which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Heb 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly *calling*, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

2Pe 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about *His calling and choosing you*, for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

According to the verses above, who is clearly responsible for your salvation? How does this truth affect your response to the invitation you have accepted?

Next week we will look at Ephesians 4:2-3 and address the heart attitudes we are to have as we strive to walk worthy in Christ.

Application Questions
Week 2, Eph 4:1

Small group prayer: take 5 minutes and quietly think about the study this morning. What is God saying to you personally? What one area do you need to focus on?

The themes we discussed today might help formulate your prayer:

- 1) Paul's life showed the value of his salvation. What does your life show?
- 2) Are you walking in the Spirit? Or playing in the world? Are changes necessary?
- 3) We are worthy because of God's gift to us in Christ. Does your behavior appropriately reflect your Father?

You will have an opportunity in your small group to pray about your personal application following ACTS. Your leader will begin each section with scripture.

Adoration – "I praise You for..."

Confession – "Forgive me for..."

Thanksgiving – "Thank you for..."

Supplication – "I pray for..."

If your group is done before 12pm please use the time individually to quietly work on memory verses or begin working on the questions below. Our time for visiting will begin at noon.

This week: Read through Ephesians 4; use the "Apply It" bookmark; the questions below may help you with personal application. Pray for the concerns of those who were in your small group. Pray for your growth in the areas God has brought to your attention. Memorize Eph 4:3-4.

Paul shares a sense of urgency in his desire to see the church walking in a way that reflects who they are as God's children. What kind of opportunities do you have to encourage others to shine for Him? Will you respond to those opportunities?

What occupies most of your time? Thoughts? Take a mental note of your typical schedule. What does it say about what is important to you? Do you frequently find yourself too busy to read and study God's Word? What adjustments can you make to improve in this area?

Read Col 3:1-10. Consider what you have been saved from. Make a list from this scripture that describes who you are in Christ. Take some time to praise God for His great mercies. Ask Him to continue to empower you to overcome the fleshly temptations that are still present in your life.

We all resemble our biological parents in some way, either by the same characteristics or mannerisms. How are you doing at resembling your heavenly Father? Would others know you are His child by the way you think, speak and act?