

THE CHRISTIAN WALK

Ephesians 4:1--5:21

Having considered the wealth of the believer in Christ, we now come to the real test for us. If this wealth is to be enjoyed it must be appropriated and used.

This fourth chapter of Ephesians commences the more practical part of the epistle, and with great tact it leads us from the doctrines to the duties or the deportment. Instruction is followed by exhortation. There is not a commencement of something new at this point, but a continuation. In the Bible, doctrine is never separated from life, nor faith from practice. There is no change of subject here, for the "heavenly calling" demands the "heavenly conduct." It is duty that springs from the doctrine, answering to it and enforced by it. To turn from the doctrinal to the practical is not a break or a breach. There is no divorcement of Christian doctrine and Christian doing, or between faith and works. According to God's Word as recorded by Paul, duties are always based upon doctrines, creed determines character, and belief is expressed in life. In the first three chapters of this epistle the great doctrines are set forth, and in the last three these doctrines are applied to life. Even though it is far more pleasant to dwell on the blessings and privileges of Christianity and leave its responsibilities out of sight, Paul informs us that we are called not only into privileges but into obligations as well. So, we now pass from doctrine to devotion, from adoring to adorning, and from what we are to what we ought to be because of what we are.

I. A Christian Is To Walk Worthily. Ephesians 4:1-16.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, exhort you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called." The word, therefore, reaches back to all the blessings and the exalted position which believers enjoy in Christ, and then looks ahead to the obligations which such privileges put upon them. Paul designated himself as a prisoner in the Lord, meaning that he was a prisoner because of his connection with Christ, and for no other reason. He was a prisoner because of his service for Christ, but he bore cheerfully his hardships on that account, happy that he was counted worthy to suffer for Him.

Paul exhorted all Christians to "walk about, to conduct themselves, or to order their behavior in a manner worthy of their vocation or calling." Walking expresses a duty and responsibility corresponding to our privileged standing. Christians are to see to it that their practice measures up to their profession. The two must match. That his walking should measure up to his standing is the very essence and goal of the duty of the believer. Paul repeatedly emphasized the importance of walking worthily as a Christian. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Ephesians 4:1. "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Colossians 1:10. "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." I Thessalonians 2:12. It is commanded, urged and expected that Christians will walk worthily.

What are some of the characteristics of a believer who walks worthily of the vocation wherewith he is called?

1. He is a worshipping Christian.
God's measure of a Christian who walks worthily is when, where and in what spirit he worships God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
2. He is a walking-with-the-Lord Christian.
Walking with the Lord in lowly service brings honor and glory to His name.

3. He is a witnessing Christian.
Any Christian who walks worthily bears witness to the saving, sanctifying and satisfying power of Christ. He witnesses to the deity of Christ, and worships Him as God.
4. He is a working Christian.
He cheerfully works for the Lord under the supervision of the Master-workman.
5. He is a watchful Christian.
He watches his thoughts, his temper, his tongue and his outward walk before others. He is prayerful, careful, considerate of others, and concerned about the will of God. He studies to discover the will of God and then strives faithfully in the doing of it. He wants God to direct and use him so that he may not become a castaway in Christian service.
6. He is a wise Christian.
A wise Christian surrenders all to God, and then receives from Him the wisdom and grace which are needed for daily living and acceptable service. Any wise person, whether saved or unsaved, avoids needless disputes, wrangling and quarrels. A wise Christian avoids the appearance of evil. He neither courts sin nor compromises with it. He follows the directions of the Holy Spirit and of the Scriptures, which are never contradictory.
7. He is a waiting Christian.
A Christian who lives worthily waits upon God for help in time of need. He prays to God and patiently awaits the answer. Moreover, he waits for the return of the Redeemer. While he waits and watches for His coming, he works to carry out the Lord's plan and program for his life.

As God's children we must never forget whose we are and whom we serve. Those of us who have trusted in Christ are Christians, or Christ's ones. There is a dignity about His family which challenges every one of us to the highest level of conduct for the family's sake.

1. Walking worthily of our calling. Ephesians 4:1-3.
This calling is referred to in the Scriptures as follows:
 - (1) A heavenly calling. Hebrews 3:1.
"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." It comes from heaven and draws us toward that wonderful place.
 - (2) A high calling. Philippians 3:14.
"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This call is from God.
 - (3) A holy calling. II Timothy 1:9.
"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The end and purpose of it is holiness.
 - (4) An honorable calling. I Timothy 1:17.
"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." We are called to serve an honorable Master.

Walking worthily of our calling is within the reach of any consistent Christian. Such a walk is an impressive, continuous and unanswerable sermon.