

THE BELIEVER IS TO WALK WORTHY OF HIS CALLING

EPHESIANS 04:01–06

DIVISION OVERVIEW: (Eph. 04:01– 06:09) Believers

How is the believer to live as he walks day by day throughout life? This chapter begins a discussion on the walk of the Christian believer. We are choosing to use the word walk instead of the word *life* because it is a more descriptive word of the day by day *walk* of the believer's life. The instructions are very practical. Up until now the instructions have dealt with doctrine:

- => the eternal plan of God for Christian believers.
- => the great blessings of God.
- => the knowledge and power of God.
- => the work of God's mercy and the gift of God's grace: our great salvation.
- => reconciliation and peace.
- => the church — the true church — the new body of people God is creating to be the citizens of the new heavens and earth.

We have seen great theological truths revealing the *believer's position in Christ* — truths that show the believer soaring in the heavenlies! But now, coming down to earth and dealing with where we are: How are we to live day by day? How does our *position in Christ* work itself out in our lives? How does Christ help us deal with the trials, problems, difficulties and sufferings of day to day living? The believer's walk is the subject of Ephesians from this point on.

- A. The Believer is to Walk Worthy of His Calling, Eph. 4:1-6.
 - B. The Believer is to Walk by Using His Gifts, Eph. 4:7-16.
 - C. The Believer is to Walk Differently From the Gentiles, Eph. 4:17-24.
 - D. The Believer is to Walk Putting Off the Garments of the Old Person, Eph. 4:25-32.
 - E. The Believer is to Walk Following God, Eph. 5:1-7.
 - F. The Believer is to Walk as a Child of Light, Eph. 5:8-14.
 - G. The Believer is to Walk Carefully and Strictly, Eph. 5:15-21.
 - H. The Believing Wife and Husband are to Walk in a Spirit of Submission and Love, Eph. 5:22-33.
 - I. Believing Children and Parents are to Walk Under God's Authority, Eph. 6:1-4.
 - J. Believing Slaves and Masters (Employers and Employees) are to Walk Under God's Authority, Eph. 6:5-9.
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Introduction: (Eph. 04:01–06)

We owe God more than we could ever pay. God has taken His own dear Son and...

- provided the Ideal and Perfect righteousness for us.
- provided a Substitute to die for us — to actually bear our punishment for having rejected, rebelled and cursed God, and for having broken God's law.
- provided deliverance from death for us through the reconciliation of Christ.
- provided a new life for us — a life of love, joy, peace and power through the Holy Spirit living within us.
- provided the absolute assurance of living eternally with God forever and ever.
- provided so much more that even an eternity could not describe it.

God has honoured us as much as a creature can be honoured. He has seated us with Christ in the heavenlies to rule and reign with Christ forever and ever. God has done so much for us that He could do no more than what He has done. We do not see it all yet, for we are still on this earth — left here to be witnesses to the great and glorious salvation that is in Christ Jesus. But the day is soon coming when we will experience it all. God is going to make a new heavens and earth that will be perfect, in which there will be no suffering and no death, and we shall live eternally, ruling and reigning with Christ.

As stated, we owe God; we owe God so much that we could never even begin to pay Him. What then can we do? Very little, but there is one thing that we must do: we must walk worthy of our calling. We must walk worthy of the honoured position to which God has exalted us.

I. The way to walk worthy (vv. 1-2).

II. The purpose for walking worthy: to keep the unity, the peace (v. 3).

III. The seven basic reasons (vv. 4-6).

I. Ephesians 04:01–02 Believers Walk Worthy

How can the believer walk worthy? What must the believer do to please God as he lives day by day...

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| • at work? | • with fellow believers? | • at play? |
| • with family? | • at school? | • with friends? |
| • at church? | • with neighbours? | • at home? |

Once a person believes in Jesus Christ and becomes a member of God's people and of God's church, what must he do to walk worthy of God's great calling — to bring honour to the name of Christ and His church?

1. The believer must walk with all humility (see *Humility*, Ph. 2:3).

2. The believer must walk with all gentleness (see *Gentleness*, Gal. 5:22-23).

3. The believer must walk with patience (see *Patience*, Gal. 5:22-23).
4. The believer must walk bearing with one another in love (see *Love*, Gal. 5:22-23. Also see *Love*, Gal. 5:13-15.)

II. *Ephesians 04:03 Purpose for Walking Worthy: Unity*

The purpose for walking worthy is onefold — unity. Believers are to work at keeping the peace so that they can stay bound together in the unity of God's Spirit. Jesus Christ has broken down all walls and barriers existing between men. Everyone can now be saved:

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| • all nationalities | • the poor | • the red |
| • all peoples | • the rich | • the yellow |
| • all languages | • the white | • the black |

Every person is precious in the sight of God. When a person approaches God through Jesus Christ, he comes like everyone else: on the same ground and on the same level. He is no better and no worse than anyone else: he is a man who stands in need of God's forgiveness; and he, along with everyone else, is bowing before Christ and accepting Him as his Lord and Master. The man, just like everyone else, is subjecting himself to become the servant of Christ. Wealth, position and social status — it is all forgotten. The only thing that matters is the salvation and life which Christ offers.

The point is this: when a person comes to Christ in such a spirit, the Spirit of God enters his life and binds the person to all other believers. There is a great spiritual *bond of peace* wrought by the Spirit of God between all believers. All divisiveness, differences and prejudices are set aside; and a spirit of love, peace and unity exist.

Within the church there is a *prevailing spirit of peace* wrought by God's Spirit. However, note a tragic fact: not every believer walks in the Spirit — not all the time. Too often, believers allow self and the *old life* to re-enter the picture — their old...

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| • prejudices | • differences | • hurts | • jealousies |
| • complaints | • criticisms | • pride | • arrogance |
| • comparisons | • dislikes | • grumblings | • gripes |

The result is catastrophic for the church: divisiveness and a disturbance of the peace and spirit of unity. This is the reason for this charge. Note the words *make every effort* (spoudazontes). The Greek means being diligent, working to take care and to do one's very best, and to make haste to do it. The only way to walk worthy of God's great calling is to work at keeping the peace and unity which God has given us. Nothing cuts the heart of God like divisiveness between His people, divisiveness which tears apart His church. The very thing God is doing is creating a new body of people to live together in the love and unity of His Son. He is going to create a new heavens and earth in which there will be no other spirit. Therefore, He expects us to live in the love and unity of His Spirit now.

1 Cor 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.

2 Cor 13:11 Finally, brothers, good-bye. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Eph 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Phil 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.

1 Pet 3:8 Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

III. Ephesians 04:04–06 Reasons for Walking Worthy

There are seven basic reasons why we should walk worthy and strive to keep the peace and unity of God's Spirit *in the church*. Note what has just been said, for the point needs to be stressed: there is great need to keep the peace and unity *within the church*. Far too often the church is the place where the peace and unity of believers fly apart. Again, there are seven reasons why this should never happen — seven reasons why believers should always walk in the peace and unity of the Spirit.

1. There is only “*one body*.” There are not two bodies nor several bodies of believers. However, in this imperfect world, there are many different denominations and churches. But note what God is doing: God is *creating only one body of people* who trust and follow His dear Son. When a person places his trust in Jesus Christ, God does six things to the believer that place him into the body of Christ:
 - => God gives a *new birth* to the believer — quickens him spiritually — causes him to be born again (Jn. 1:12-13; 3:3-6; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23; 1 Jn. 5:1). God makes a new creation, *a new person, a new self, a new man* out of the believer (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
 - => God places His divine nature into the believer (2 Pet. 1:4).
 - => God puts His Holy Spirit into the believer, actually has His Spirit enter the believer's body. The believer's body becomes a temple for the presence of God's Spirit (Jn. 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20).
 - => God causes the believer to bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).
 - => God places the believer into the *new body of people* He is creating, that is, into the body of Christ, His church.

1 Cor 12:13 For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Note the last two experiences in particular. There is no way a believer can be in conflict with another believer unless he is walking after the flesh (sinful nature) and is in a backslidden condition. There are just some things that are contrary to love and joy and peace that hurt and damage the body...

- an ill spirit
- seeking our own way
- reactions
- forming cliques
- feeling superior
- selfishness
- struggling for position
- envy
- self-centred differences
- anger

Such things have no place in the church, not in the *new body* which God is creating. There is only one body of true believers, not two — not one body over here and another body over there. This is the reason we are to strive to keep the peace and the unity of the Spirit. There is only one body, and only as we keep the peace and unity of the body can we walk worthy of God's great calling.

Rom 12:5 *So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

1 Cor 12:27 *Now you are the body of Christ [the church], and each one of you is a part of it.*

Eph 1:23 *[The church] Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

Eph 4:12 *To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*

Col 1:24 *Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.*

Col 2:19 *He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.*

2. There is only "one Spirit." The same Spirit that dwells within one member of the body dwells in all members of the body.

=> It is God's Spirit that causes a man to be born again.

John 3:5-6 *Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."*

John 6:63 *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."*

Rom 8:11 *And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.*

=> It is God's Spirit that calls and gifts and directs each member to fit in and work within the body.

Acts 13:2 While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Rom 8:14 Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

1 Cor 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (see 12:8f)

The point is this: each member is to do his part in carrying out the mission of the body — for Christ. Acting independent of the body is of another spirit, for there is only One Spirit creating the body of Christ.

3. There is only "one hope." Every genuine believer has the same hope: the great day of redemption. It is to be a new world created perfectly for Christ Jesus and His people. Life in the new heavens and earth will be a life of love, joy and peace — a life of oneness and unity and brotherhood — all perfected. What God is after is for us to live as we shall live in the future. Our future lives in the new heavens and earth are to be the pattern for the way we live together now. We shall be redeemed and reconciled to God and to each other — all living together in a perfect world of love, joy and peace forever and ever. The hope for eternity — the hope that fills our hearts for such a world — is to be the driving force that stirs us to live together in peace and unity.

Rom 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Col 1:4-5 Because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints — the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel.

Titus 2:12-13 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

1 Pet 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you.

1 Pet 1:15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.

1 John 2:2-3 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.

4. There is only "one Lord." There is only one Master and King. Every believer has knelt before the same Lord to become His subject and to receive His orders. As His subjects, believers are unequivocally instructed...

- to live as He said: holy, righteous and pure, bearing the fruit of His Spirit (Gal. 5:19-21).
- to carry out His orders as one body (Mt. 7:21-23; 1 Cor. 12:5; Ph. 2:9-11).

Mat 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

1 Cor 12:5 *There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.*

Phil 2:9-11 *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

5. There is only “one faith.” There are not two faiths nor several faiths. There is only one faith that leads into God’s presence and that is the faith founded by the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other approach to God. If a person wishes to live with God — to be approved and accepted by Him — that person has to approach God through the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The point is this: every believer has come to God in the very same way — by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith in Him is the only way, the only true faith. Therefore, standing before God and having come to Him through the same faith, there is no room for any differences. We all stand on the same ground, on the same level: the ground and level of faith.

Gal 1:23 *They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”*

Jude 1:3 *Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.*

6. There is only “one baptism.” All believers have given public witness to their faith by submitting to the ordinance of water baptism. Each has been identified as being members of the same body because each has been initiated through the same ritual. Therefore, having entered the church through the same ordinance, we should not become divisive. Divisiveness denies and brings shame to the meaning of the ordinance. Divisiveness is a reflection of the depth of our commitment. It shows that our sincerity in being baptised was lacking, greatly lacking. It shows that we care little for Christ and for our baptism experience, for the great ordinance which initiated us into the church.

Rom 6:3 *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?*

1 Cor 12:13 *For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

Gal 3:27 *For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

7. There is only “one God and Father of all.” This is probably a primitive confession of faith.

=> “One God”: God is creator of all and as such is supreme over all.

=> “One Father of all”: as Father, God loves all. The Christian belief begins with God as love.

=> “Over all”: God controls all.

The point is striking: If there is only one God and Father of all believers, how then could He be leading two believers to stand toe to toe against each other? The answer is obvious: He could not. One or both believers are following their own fleshly, carnal ways. Someone is not following the only God and Father.

Mark 12:29 *“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.’”*

1 Tim 2:5-6 *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.*

1 John 5:7 *For there are three that testify: ■*