

## **8.25.19 ~ Ephesians 4:1, Walking Worthy of Your Calling?**

Last week we studied about the name we as believers and followers of Christ have been given by God, we are Christians [adherents of Christ, i.e., following, sticking to, inseparable from, all things Christ].

**Read Ephesians 4:1...** Paul urges us to walk [live our life] in a manner worthy of the calling [as Christians, sons and daughters of God by faith] we have received..

In chapters **1-3** Paul informs us of all the blessings, privileges, and resources, we have been given in and through Christ, as God's children.

In chapters **4-5** Paul gives us instruction in reference to the responsibilities we have as Christians [what we are to do with what we have been given], i.e., how we are to live our lives for Christ..

When you receive Christ as Savior, you become a citizen of God's kingdom and a member of God's family. God expects us to serve Him in the Body of Christ, the Church, with a willingness to be conformed to the character of Christ.

Our spiritual birth into God's family occurs when we believe in and receive Jesus Christ as Savior, confessing Him as Lord (see **John 1:12-13; Romans 10:9-10, 13**).

This birth takes place in our inner being, our eternal spiritual self where we become totally and forever God's child.

In **Ephesians 3:16-19** Paul prayed for us to be strengthened in our inner being by the Holy Spirit; only God's Spirit can give life to our inner self; and when God's Spirit takes up residence in us, our belief system and our behavior will begin to change.

Paul urges us, in **Ephesians 4:1**, to live like we have been born again; what we do and why we do it must align with the teaching of God's Word [reflecting our conviction and compassion concerning Christ].

We cannot apply to our life what we do not know; those who don't know what the Bible teaches about salvation cannot be saved, and those who don't know what the Bible promises about our future cannot have God's peace or power to contend in the present.

No one can live a life pleasing to God without knowing what God wants and trying to do it. No one can do anything to please God without knowing God personally; no one can know God personally without God's Spirit living in them; no one can receive God's Spirit until they are born again; no one can be born again until they repent of their sins and trust Jesus Christ to forgive them (see **Romans 3:23; 6:23; Acts 2:38**).

There is only one way to be saved (**John 14:6**, through Jesus - the Way to, the Truth about, the Life from, God); and there is no quick fix for Christian growth; it takes proper diet (feeding upon God's Word), proper exercise (obediently applying God's Word to your life), and proper rest (trusting in God).

Our sense of purpose and power will not come from new and improved methods or programs. In order to grow and mature as Christians, we must be transformed in our heart and our mind, as we seek to know and to do that which pleases God (see **Matthew 22:37-40; James 2:8; Romans 12:1-2; 2Timothy 3:16-17**).

All God's children make mistakes, but we also sin. There are no perfect people, and that includes Christians. Peter tells us (**1Peter 1:14-16**) "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

The only way to be holy is to accept God's payment for sin, receiving forgiveness and eternal life through Christ (see **1John 1:5-10; 1Peter 2:9**).

And the only way to live holy is to find out what pleases God and do it (see **Hebrews 12:14; 2Timothy 1:8-10**).

**Ephesians 4:1** is an appeal for believers to walk worthy of the high calling we have received in Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 2:6** says, "God raised us up... and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus," and **verse 10** tells us that we have been called to "do good works" here on earth.

Is serving God easy? No! But we have all that we need to succeed (see **Philippians 4:12-13, 19; 2Peter 1:3-4**).

Paul considers himself (**Ephesians 4:1**) "a prisoner for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ," whether in jail or free, Paul viewed everything in relationship to Christ.

Paul's motives, actions and standards were based on the teachings and the character of Christ; Paul was in the fullest sense a willful captive or prisoner of Christ. Paul's highest expression of freedom was in being a believer, follower, and servant of Jesus.

Can you honestly say, you live to exemplify Christ? What are your priorities? What keeps you in check, on the path, living in a manner that is pleasing to God, giving honor to the high calling you have received as a Christian?.

Woodrow Wilson's encounter with D. L. Moody:

"I was in a barber's shop, sitting in a chair, when I became aware that a personality had entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself and sat in the next chair to me. Every word he uttered, though it was not in the least didactic (intended to be instructional), showed a personal and vital interest in

the man who was serving him; and before I got through with what was being done to me, I was aware I had attended an evangelistic service, because Mr. Moody was in the next chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he left and noted the singular effect his visit had upon the barbers in that shop. They talked in undertones. They did not know his name, but they knew that something had elevated their thought. I felt that I left that place as I should have left a place of worship."

Paul exhorts us to live as God's children, serving God on earth while bringing glory to God in heaven. Yes, God is sovereign, but we have free will, and we can choose to obey or disobey, to honor or dishonor.

As a pastor, there are two major concerns I have:

1. Telling God's people who they are in Christ.
2. Urging them to live like Christ really makes a difference in their life right now, as well as for eternity.

I am convinced that many Christians believe ignorance is bliss, and they would rather not know all they have been given in Christ if it means that they are expected to actually apply these things to their life.

**Romans 11:29**, "God's gifts and His call are irrevocable" [i.e., unchangeable, unalterable, i.e., permanent, eternal].

As Christians, our calling is secure, our calling is eternal, our calling is from God; if you belong to God the Father through God the Son, made effectual through God the Holy Spirit, you have been given everything you need to know God, trust God, and serve God.

I urge you to walk worthy of the forgiveness and eternal life that you have received, to live in a manner that brings glory and honor to the Father and the Son, through the indwelling Spirit of God, Who serves to strengthen and grow the Body of Christ [the Church, the Fellowship of Believers] -- so that we might live as His witnesses, proclaiming through our lives and our words, the message of salvation by grace, through faith, in Christ, to everyone who will listen.

**1Corinthians 1:18-21**, "For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.' Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

**1Corinthians 1:26-31**, "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, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, 'Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.' "

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