

### **9.01.19 ~ Ephesians 4:2, Living as Christians!**

Last Sunday we studied the awesome name given by God to everyone who repents of their sin, trusting in Jesus as Lord and Savior; they become part of the Church [the Body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head. As believers and followers of Christ, we are Christians; in fact, we are sons and daughters of God, by faith.

in **Ephesians 4:1**, Paul writes, "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called."

Today we pick up where we left off, with **Ephesians 4:2**, where Paul continues his exhortation to us, that we should walk "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love."

The phrase "with all humility" is a compound Greek word meaning, "to think or judge with lowliness," i.e., to live in a manner that expresses complete humility.

Humility is to be exemplified in our lives, although the world we live in exalts pride, arrogance, and boasting (see **2Timothy 3:1-5; Philippians 2:5-8**).

No one can please God without humility. We must see ourselves in relationship to the Holy God of Creation, for He is the standard by which everyone will be judged.

**2Corinthians 5:19**, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself."

**Colossians 1:15-20**, "He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

"He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

**Colossians 2:8-10**, "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority."

**John 1:1-4**, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men." **14**, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only

begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." **18**, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*."

Jesus Christ is God in the flesh [Immanuel, *God with us*], He is the very source of Life on earth, and throughout the whole universe, for all of eternity; He is the Light, the revelation of God, and therefore He alone has the right to command how we are to live.

**1John 1:5-7**, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

True humility forces us to see ourselves as God sees us, as sinners in need of forgiveness through Jesus Christ, leading us to repent and be saved.

**1John 1:8-10**, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us."

We are to walk in God's service with a humble heart, everything being placed in subordination to God's holiness and sovereignty.

**1John 2:3-6**, "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." (see Mark 10:45)

Godly humility will always produce gentleness. We cannot walk in a manner that is worthy of Christ, without humility, which will express itself with gentleness.

Scripture never insinuates that gentleness has anything to do with being wimpy or timid; in fact, the Greek word for gentleness was often used of a wild animal, like a powerful horse, that had been trained to be under control. The animal still had its strength and its spirit, but it yielded its will to its master.

Scripture describes gentleness as power under control, meaning that we willfully place ourselves under God's authority, in order to live and act in a way that expresses our love for Him, i.e., we are to submit our heart, soul, mind and strength to our Master, the Lord Himself.

**Galatians 5:22**, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

**Colossians 3:12**, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

Following Paul's exhortation (**Ephesians 4:2**) to be completely humble and gentle, we are commanded to "with patience, show tolerance for one another in love."

The Greek word here translated *patience* means, "long-tempered" [*long suffering*], for it is often through the patient endurance of trials and suffering, that our character is matured, in God's own timing.

Biblical examples of patient people: **Noah** built a large boat, in a place where it had never rained; for 75-80 years he warned people to turn from their sins or they would perish in a flood. No one believed him, only Noah's family (8 people in all) were saved.

**Abraham** was promised numerous children and grandchildren, through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed; yet it wasn't until 25 years later (at age 100) that his son (Isaac) was born.

But Isaac's son (Jacob) became the father of the 12 tribes of the Nation of Israel, of which (through the tribe of Judah), Jesus Christ was born, and He continues to bless everyone who believes in Him.

**Paul** is a great example of how humility, gentleness, and patience are brought about in a person's life through God's training program, i.e., an extended bootcamp, or the school of hard knocks" (cf **2Corinthians 11:24-27**). Paul learned to trust in God's provisions and obey God's Word, through Christ (cf **Philippians 4:12-13, 19**).

Along with humility, gentleness, and patience (**Ephesians 4:2**), another trait in a Christian's life ought to be, "showing tolerance for one another in love."

This does not mean that we are to put up with one another's failings/ ineptitudes, or that we are responsible to shoulder another's burdens; but instead, we are to treat others the way we would want to be treated, i.e., we are to relate to one another out of Christian love [*agape* love, from above], meaning: God-given, unconditional, unselfish, impartial, willful and intentional, love that desires the very best for the other person, even if it is uncomfortable or inconvenient for us.

True Christian character brings glory and honor to God, especially as we live out humble, gentle, and patient lives, expressing God's love to those around us, as if we were serving the Lord Himself.

**Colossians 3:17**, "Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." **23-24**, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve."

It is my prayer that each one of us will not only become more aware of the responsibilities we have as believers and followers of Christ, but that we will earnestly seek to demonstrate our love and obedience to God, by humbly, gently, and patiently, showing tolerance for one another in love, as if compelled by God's Spirit and God's Word to do so.

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