

The Christian's Walk (1)

Ephesians 4:1-16

Introduction

[4:1](#) ¹Therefore...

A. This word marks the transition from **doctrine** to **application**

1. Ephesians 1-3 emphasizes **what God has done for us** | Ephesians 4-6 emphasizes **our practical response** to what God has done for us

2. Ephesians 1-3 emphasizes **who we are in Christ** | Ephesians 4-6 emphasizes **how to live for Christ**

B. In Ephesians 1-3 Paul taught us about our **wealth in Christ**, now in Ephesians 4-6 he will write about our **walk in Christ**

1. **“Walk”** is an important word in the Book of Ephesians

It appears **6 times** in Ephesians 4-6

2. **“Walk”** refers to the **daily conduct of a Christian**

3. Here, in **Ephesians 4:1-16**, we start learning how to walk:

a. **Walk in unity** | 4:1-6

b. **Walk in maturity** | 4:7-16

Walk in Unity

4:1-6

4:1 ¹I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called...

A. “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord”

1. “I, the **prisoner**”—this reminds us that Paul is under house arrest in Rome awaiting his trial before Emperor Nero

2. “I, the **prisoner of the Lord**”—this reminds us that Paul is a servant of Christ

B. “Beseech”

1. This word means, “to beg”

2. This word is filled with emotion

C. “Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called”

1. “Worthy” means, “equal weight”

“Balances on a scale” illustrate this word

2. “Calling”

a. God called us into **salvation**

1 Corinthians 1:9

⁹God is faithful, by whom you were **called into the fellowship of His Son**, Jesus Christ our Lord.

b. God called us into **one body**—the Church (see Ephesians 2-3)

Colossians 3:15

¹⁵And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were **called in one body**; and be thankful.

3. How we live must be “equal weight” to who we are in Christ

4:2-3 ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

A. When we walk in a manner worthy of our calling, we will **walk in unity**

B. Ephesians 4:2-3 shows us what we need to have and what we need to do to walk in unity:

1. First, we need to have **humility**

- a. “Lowliness” means “low-mindedness”—humility
- b. Humility is putting Jesus first; others second, and we last
- c. The opposite of humility is “pride” and “arrogance”
- d. Walking in unity with others begins with humility
- e. Humility promotes unity; pride promotes disunity

2. Second, we need to have **gentleness**

- a. “Gentleness” means, “non-abrasive”, “kind”, and “tender”
- b. The opposite of “gentle” is “rude” and “harsh”
- c. “Gentleness” is not weakness; it is “power under control”
- d. “Gentleness” is the product of humility

3. Third, we need have **patience**

- a. “Longsuffering” means “long-tempered”—patience
- b. The opposite of patience is “quick-tempered”
- c. Patience is the ability to endure discomfort without fighting back
- d. Patience is the product of humility and gentleness

4. Fourth, we need to be “bearing with one another in love”

a. NAS: “**Showing tolerance** for one another in love”

b. This means:

i. To make allowance for the faults and failures of others

ii. To make allowance for differing personalities, abilities, and temperaments

iii. To maintain positive love to those who irritate, disturb, and embarrass

c. “**Bearing with one another in love**” is humility, gentleness, and patience in action

d. “**In love**”

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT)

⁴Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud
⁵or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

5. Fifth, we need to be “**endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**”

a. Paul is not telling us to *create* unity, but rather, *maintain* it

b. “**Endeavor**” means, “be diligent”; “make every effort”

i. This is **active**, not **passive**

ii. Paul is saying, “Work at it!”

c. “**Keep**” means, “preserve” or “guard” or “maintain”

i. In the Greek, this verb is a present participle

ii. It means to “be constantly endeavoring to maintain” unity

d. “**Unity of the Spirit**”

i. The **Holy Spirit** has made all true Believers one in Christ

ii. The **Holy Spirit** indwells all true Believers making us all one in Christ

e. “**In the bond of peace**”

i. “**Peace**” is the ligament that binds the members of the Body of Christ together in spite of our wide natural differences

ii. “**Peace**” is the “super-glue” that holds Believers together in the unity of the Spirit

iii. **Peace with God** precedes **peace with one other**

4:4-6 ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

A. In Ephesians 4:1-3, Paul implores us to walk in Christian unity | in Ephesians 4:4-6, Paul lists the basis for Christian unity

B. The key word in verses 4 through 6 is “one”

“One” is a **unity** word

C. Paul tells us **SEVEN REASONS** why all Christians should walk in unity:

1. There is **one body**

This refers to the Body of Christ—the New Testament Church from Pentecost to Rapture

2. There is **one Spirit**

This refers to the **Holy Spirit**

3. We were called in **one hope** of our calling

This refers to the assurance of our future inheritance in Christ

4. There is **one Lord**

This refers to **Jesus Christ**

5. There is **one faith**

This refers to the fundamental Biblical truths and teachings that all Christians must believe

6. There is **one baptism**

This refers to our baptism into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit

7. There is **one God and Father of all** who is over all and through all and in all

This refers to **God the Father**

Walk in Maturity

4:7-16

4:7 ⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

A. Here, in this verse, Paul transitions from the **unity** of Believers (“**all**”, v. 6) to the **uniqueness** of Believers (“**each one**”, v. 7)

B. In Ephesians 4:1-6, Paul emphasized the **Body of Christ** as a whole | in Ephesians 4:7-16, Paul emphasizes the **individual members** of the Body of Christ

C. “**To each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift**”

1. Christ has entrusted every Christian with a spiritual gift in order to fulfill his or her unique function in the Body of Christ—

Romans 12:3-8

³For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. ⁴For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; ⁷or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

⁴There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

2. “According to the measure of Christ’s gift”

- a.** Christ individually portions out spiritual gifts to each member of the Body of Christ according to His sovereign will and design
- b.** The emphasis of this phrase is on the “freeness of the gift”

4:8-10 ⁸Therefore He says:

“When He ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men.”

⁹(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

A. Ephesians 4:8 is a quote from **Psalm 68:18**

Psalm 68 is a victory hymn composed by David to celebrate God’s conquest of the Jebusite city of Jerusalem and the triumphant ascent of God up to Mount Zion.

After such a triumph, the king would bring home the spoils and the prisoners.

B. There are two possible interpretations for Ephesians 4:9-10

1. First, Christ descended to **hell** (“**lower parts of the earth**”) at His death, then ascended to **Heaven** after His resurrection

a. In this case, “**hell**” refers to “**the realm of the dead**”

i. Hell is divided into **two compartments**:

aa. The compartment of the **wicked**—punishment

bb. The compartment of the **righteous**—paradise

(Theologians refer to this compartment as “**Abraham’s Bosom**”)

ii. These two compartments are clearly seen in the real case of the “Rich man and Lazarus” (see Luke 16:19-31)

Luke 16:19-31 (NLT)

¹⁹Jesus said, “There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and who lived each day in luxury. ²⁰At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. ²¹As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man’s table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores.

²²“Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and his soul went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side.

²⁴“The rich man shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.’

²⁵“But Abraham said to him, ‘Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.’

²⁷“Then the rich man said, ‘Please, Father Abraham, at least send him to my father’s home. ²⁸For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them so they don’t end up in this place of torment.’

²⁹“But Abraham said, ‘Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read what they wrote.’

³⁰“The rich man replied, ‘No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will repent of their sins and turn to God.’

³¹“But Abraham said, ‘If they won’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they won’t listen even if someone rises from the dead.’”

b. This view teaches that Jesus descended to “compartment of the Righteous” and released all the Old Testament saints from “the realm of the dead” and led them into Heaven—“the dwelling place of God”

Access to Heaven was opened the moment Jesus completed the work of salvation on the cross

2. Second, Christ descended from Heaven to **earth** (“Incarnation”), then ascended back from earth to **Heaven**

a. In this case, “**lower parts of the earth**” expresses the depth of Christ’s descent—from Divinity to humanity, from the realm of eternity into the realm of time

b. The phrase “**He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things**” refers to Christ’s ascension and exaltation after His death and resurrection (see Philippians 2:5-11)

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient

to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

C. “He led captivity captive”

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus conquered Satan and death, and in triumph returned to God those who were once sinners and prisoners of Satan

D. “And gave gifts to men.”

1. Jesus distributes the “spoils” throughout His kingdom
2. After his ascension came all the spiritual gifts empowered by the Spirit

4:11 ¹¹And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

A. Jesus assigns spiritual gifts to those he has called into service in His church

B. Notice that Paul tells us here in verse 11 that Jesus gives gifted men to His Church as gifts—“He gave some as...”

C. Ephesians 4:11 lists four specific ministries in the Church:

1. Apostles

- a. The word “apostles” mean “one who is sent with a commission”

b. The Apostles of Christ were commissioned and sent out by God as representatives of Jesus Christ and His message

c. The **apostles of Jesus Christ** (see Galatians 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1):

i. In the Gospels, Jesus selected twelve men to be His apostles; in Acts, Jesus appointed Matthias to fill the apostolic position vacated by Judas Iscariot, and He also commissioned Paul to be an apostle

ii. In this category of apostles, the position was limited only to these 13 men

There are no apostles today in the same category of these 13 Apostles

iii. Two important facts about the **apostles of Christ**:

aa. First, their qualifications:

Acts 1:21-22

“Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these *must* become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

bb. Second, their work:

bb (I). They testified of the resurrection of Jesus Christ as eyewitnesses (see Acts 1:15-22)

bb (II). They helped lay the foundation of the church (see Ephesians 2:20)

bb (III). They received, declared, and wrote God's word (see Ephesians 3:5; Acts 11:28; 21:10-11)

bb (IV). God confirmed His word through signs, wonders, and miracles performed through the apostles

d. The **apostles of the churches** (see 2 Corinthians 8:23):

i. In this **broader category of apostles**, there were others in the New Testament that were referred to as "apostles"

aa. For example, Barnabas (Acts 14:4); Silas (1 Thessalonians 2:6); Timothy (1 Thessalonians 2:6)

bb. Their responsibilities was to proclaim God's word and establish churches

ii. In this broader, more general sense of the term "apostle", it's my opinion that there are still people who function as "apostles" today

For example, cross-cultural missionaries and church-planters

2. Prophets

a. These were not ordinary Believers who had the gift of prophecy, but specially commissioned men in the early Church

Agabus is an example of a New Testament prophet (see Acts 11 and 21)

- b.** The office of prophet seems to have been exclusively for work within a local congregation
- c.** They sometimes spoke practical, direct revelation for the church from God (see Acts 11:21-28) or expounded revelation already given (implied in Acts 13:1)
- d.** Their messages were to be judged by other prophets for validity (see 1 Corinthians 14:32) and had to conform to the teaching of the apostles

3. Evangelists

“**Evangelist**” means “bearer of Good News”

- i.** These men delivered the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ to unbelievers
- ii.** These men traveled from place to place to preach the Gospel and win the lost
- iii.** Philip is an example of a New Testament Evangelist (see Acts 8)—“Philip the Evangelist” (Acts 21:8)

4. Pastors and teachers

- a.** Literally “Pastor-Teachers”
- b.** “**Pastor**” means, “shepherd”, and the primary responsibility of shepherds is to feed (“**teach**”) their flock

i. A person can be a teacher without being a pastor, but he cannot be a pastor without being a teacher

ii. All pastors are called to be “pastor-teachers”

c. For this reason, an essential qualification for pastors is the gift of **teaching**

i. Paul makes this point in 1 Timothy 3:2—

1 Timothy 3:2

An overseer (“pastor”), then, must be...able to teach

ii. The gift of teaching is the supernatural ability to explain God’s word to others

aa. D. Martyn Lloyd Jones called it “Logic on Fire”

bb. The gift of teaching informs the mind and sets the heart “on fire”

D. Ephesians 4:12-16 explains **why** Christ gave “[apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastor-teachers](#)” to the Church

(1) Equip the Saints

[4:12](#) ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

A. “Equip” means “to prepare for a particular situation or task”

B. “Work of ministry”

1. “Work” means, “labor”; “task”
2. “Ministry” means, “service”
3. “Ministry” is serving others for their benefit

C. Gifted people (see Ephesians 4:11) are to serve God’s Word to others so that they in turn are prepared to get involved in serving others

1. Ministry is not limited to an elite few
2. All Christians are ministers, and should be ministering in the church

D. The purpose for service is “for the edifying of the body of Christ”

1. “Edify” means, “to build up”
2. This is “Body building”
3. Ephesians 4:13-16 describes what happens when the Church is being “built up”

(2) Unity of Believers

[4:13](#)¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith

(3) Full Knowledge of Christ

[4:13](#)¹³ till we all come to the unity of...the knowledge of the Son of God

(4) Spiritual Maturity

4:13 ¹³till we all come to...a perfect man—“to a mature man”

(5) The Likeness of Jesus

4:13 ¹³till we all come to...the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

(6) Protection against Immaturity, Instability, and Gullibility

4:14 ¹⁴that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

(7) Growth in Christian Love

4:15-16 ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.