

Our Calling: To Walk Worthy!

Ephesians 4:1-32

Pastor Bob DuPar

Community Bible Church

August 13, 2023

Initial Insights

Judaizers

[Acts 15:1](#) (NLT)

While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch of Syria, some men from Judea arrived and began to teach the believers: “Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

Gnosticism

Yes, started formally in the 2nd century ad; but Paul was addressing the early seeds of it.

Tertullian (160–220) identified the false teaching in the Ephesian church as an early, emerging form of Gnosticism. Irenaeus, writing in about 180, also identified the false teaching in the first-century Ephesian church as a kind of Gnosticism. However, it is possible that Tertullian and Irenaeus were projecting the Gnostic heresies of the late second century back onto the late first-century Ephesian church.

Ephesians 4:1–32 NASB95

¹ Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

⁴ *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

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

8 Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men."

9 (Now this *expression*, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.)

11 And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ,

16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is

being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one *of you* with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

26 Be angry, and *yet* do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.

28 He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have *something* to share with one who has need.

29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Our Calling Involves...

1. Walking Worthy

Because when we don't walk worthy, God is not glorified in our life, we are not fully blessed, the church cannot fully function, and therefore the world cannot see Jesus Christ for who He is. So much depends on our worthy walk.

John

F. MacArthur

Commit yourself first to walking worthy by matching your life with your theology!

John F. MacArthur

More depends on my walk than my talk!

Dwight L.

Moody

Walking in a worthy manner is best done in community.

Lynn H.

Cohick

Implore = *parakaleo* “*one called alongside of.*” I, the Apostle Paul, have been called to walk alongside of you, that you might *walk* in a manner worthy of your calling!

The *calling* with which we have been (literally) “*called out*” - *eklesia* (the Church)

The verb “*to call*” is used **3x** in **verse 1**!!

Our calling in life, above and beyond our career, or our mission, or our legacy... Is to be holy as He is holy!

[Leviticus 11:45](#) (NLT)

For I, the Lord, am the one who brought you up from the land of Egypt, that I might be your God. Therefore, you must be holy because I am holy.

2. Using Our Spiritual Gifts To Serve the Body

A spiritual gift is a God-given ability to serve the body of Christ wherever and however He may direct.

Charles Caldwell

Ryrie

What is the purpose of Christ's gifts? It is to serve Christ's people, so that the body itself might become increasingly unified in faith and mature in practice. **James**

Montgomery Boice

The **NASB** version translates **verse 2** as “*showing tolerance for one another in love.*” But, our modern understanding of tolerance confuses the original meaning of the word.

The original Greek word literally means “*To suffer with, or bear with.*”

[Ephesians 4:2](#) (NLT)

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.

We do this so that we can be diligent (**eager**) to preserve (**guard**) the unity of the Spirit in the **bond** of peace! (**verse 3**)

Bond = “That which binds together, as of ligaments by which the members of the human body are united together.”

And look at the unity that Paul speaks of in **verses 4-6**, the oneness...

One **body**, one **Spirit**, one **hope**, one **Lord**, one **faith**, one **baptism**, one **God** and **Father**!

I **never** realized this before, but essentially Paul moves on from stressing unity to talking about diversity in **verse 11** - a diversity of spiritual gifts: **apostles**, **prophets**, **evangelists**, **pastors** & **teachers**!

Too often the Church (Christians) try and homogenize everyone, because differences in others can be threatening. When we see someone with a gift that we don't have, this

can make us feel insecure and inadequate. UNLESS, we see each other's gifts as sovereignly given by God to complement and support the needs of His Body!

God accomplishes (brings about) unity with His people through blessing us with a full array of giftedness!

We're all **Apostles**, because we're all *sent* (apostolos)!

Prophets (prophetes) - remember that prophets are not just those who foretell things but also those who forthtell - speak forth the truth!

Evangelists (evangelistes) are simply those who share good news; and, we can all share the Good News of the Gospel!

Pastors (poimen) is primarily translated as shepherd - The tasks of a Near Eastern shepherd were:

- 1) to watch for enemies trying to attack the sheep;
- 2) to defend the sheep from attackers;
- 3) to heal the wounded and sick sheep;
- 4) to find and save lost or trapped sheep;
- 5) to love them, sharing their lives and so earning their trust.

During World War II, a shepherd was a pilot who guided another pilot whose plane was partially disabled back to the base or carrier by flying alongside him to maintain visual contact.

And, finally - **Teachers** (didaskalos) - we get our English word didactic (instructive) from this Greek word.

All of these spiritual gifts are given in order that the body of Christ might be equipped for the work of ministry! Ministry is work!

And for the edification (building-up) of the Body!

We must understand that to serve in some unnoticed, unrecognized place in the body of Christ is as much the work of Christ as is public ministry. **R. Kent Hughes**

Jamie Winship - finding volunteers at their church in Tennessee. They start with people's passion, their gifting, their identity. The giftedness always divides evenly across the variety of needs for volunteers!

3. Speaking Truth To One Another

Speak the truth, but leave immediately after!

Anonymous

In love (verse 15) - this is how we grow-up/increase in Christ-likeness!

When we speak the truth, we speak Christ's language. When we speak lies, we speak Satan's language.

Randy Alcorn - *The Grace and Truth*

Paradox (2003)

[Ephesians 4:15](#) (NLT)

Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

Speaking the truth is important; speaking the truth in love is all-important. Truth without love can become a bludgeon to beat the heart out of a church. **W.**

T. Purkiser

We're called to speak truth to one another - to tell the Truth to each other! **Not** to tell each other merely what we want to hear, what's popular & convenient!

Speaking the truth in love is a mark of maturity, which will enable us to grow up spiritually. Immature people often fall into one of two opposite errors. They speak the truth, but without love, or they love without speaking the truth. When we do the first, we often brutalize others, pounding them with truth but doing it in an unloving way. When we do the second, we don't tell others the truth, thinking that by shielding them from the truth we are sparing them from pain.

Max Anders

This ties-back into the heresy of **Gnosticism** that taught that it didn't matter what sort of sinful actions you engaged-in in your body, because the body was just a shell/tent that was temporal anyway.

We can no longer live & walk like those who don't know God (**verse 17**) - in the **futility** (vanity) of their **mind**/understanding. The word here for futility/vanity means devoid of **truth** and **purpose**!

Because, as **verse 18** says - when we lived this way we had **minds full of darkness**, we were excluded (**shut-out**) **from God's life and blessings**, we were **ignorant**, and we had **hard (blind) hearts!**

And, as Paul says in **verse 20**,

[Ephesians 4:20](#) (NLT)

But that isn't what you learned about Christ.

Because as **verse 21** says, Truth is in Jesus - and to be taught by Him is to be taught Truth!

So we lay aside (**cast off**) the old life, our former selves (**verse 22**) and put on (or **clothe** - literally "**sink into!**") ourselves with the new self!

[Ephesians 4:24](#) (NLT)

Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

As we do this, we give the devil less opportunities (verse 27)! Literally - place/territory!

Closing Comments