

Course Title: THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK

Goal of This Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to affirm the profession of our faith incorporated into our everyday lives.

Note: This lesson contains important principles, especially for those who really want to understand biblical doctrine. These lessons go hand-in-hand with prayer and revelation.

Reading Assignment: Eph 4:1-16 NKJV

¹ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ [There is] one body and one Spirit, just as 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] above all, and through all, and in you all. ⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore 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? ¹⁰ He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) ¹¹ And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that 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, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ-- ¹⁶ from 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.

INTROSPECTION

Living a Christian life does not absolve an individual from the difficulties of life. Storms rain on the just and the unjust alike, and the Christian's experiences still include a mixture of good and bad days.

What he experiences is the ability to live victoriously through difficulties that would have brought about breakdown and collapse to those who are without Jesus Christ. Living a Christian life is much like "line walking."

We cannot determine what may lie in our path. However, when we walk worthy of our Christian calling, we can overcome all obstacles with the help of the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ has already defeated our Enemy hands down. However, He has left it up to us to enforce every day in earth's trenches the victory He has won in the Heavenly places.

When people become Christians one of the hardest things to do is to retrain them not to continue to operate according to the world system. It took one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but it took forty years to get Egypt out of their hearts.

There is always a battle between the *NEW MAN* and the *OLD MAN*. And that is why we need teaching like Paul gives to us in Ephesians.

WALKING IN HUMILITY

Walking as a Prisoner of the Lord. The prison cell was a familiar place to the apostle Paul. In his service for Jesus, he experienced the personal persecution and reproach that Christ said would accompany those who preached in His name.

While Paul was writing this letter to the Ephesians, he was suffering incarceration. However, even though he occupied a Roman jail, Paul professed that he was not the prisoner of Rome or the Emperor Nero. Contrary to what the casual observer might conclude when viewing the sentries on guard, Paul made it clear that he was a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Years before Jesus denounced the power that Pilate claimed to have over Him by saying, *"Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin"* (Jn. 19:11).

Likewise, Paul declared that the prisons of Rome were powerless over him so long as he lived in the will of God. We should not assume that the prison was evidence of Nero's power or of God's lack of power. For Paul, this prison was God's design; it represented God's will and was subject to His will. The apostle understood that *"all things work together for good to them that love God."* (Rom. 8:28.)

In our Christian life, we should approach every day with the knowledge that we are prisoners of the Lord. We will face tests that intimidate our faith and attempt to overwhelm and control our lives. As prisoners of the Lord, however, we can denounce these attempts because nothing can exercise power in our lives *"except it were given from above."*

Walking Worthy of the Calling. One could never accuse Paul of wavering in his convictions or commitment. As a Pharisee, he exercised his unwavering commitment to religious traditions by actively persecuting the church.

Perhaps one could say that he walked worthy of his former beliefs as a Jew. After his conversion, however, he lived just as committed to the cause of Jesus Christ. His personal example lends credence to his admonishment to the Ephesians to walk worthy of their calling. There are two basic ideas connected to “*walking worthy*.”

- *First* is the idea of balance and equal weight. Paul wanted the Ephesians to balance their doctrinal knowledge with their practice of doctrinal principles. To know truth and not apply it always results in an unbalanced life.
- *Second* is the idea of matching the pieces together as one matches pieces of clothing. Two garments that look nice by themselves can look ridiculous when one places them together, because they clash in color or appearance.

Our Christian walk, or lifestyle, should never clash with the doctrines we hold. Rather, as Paul wrote in Titus 2:10, we should “*adorn the doctrine*” of God. Others should view our Christian life as a garment that is consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Walking in Lowliness, Meekness, and Longsuffering. Paul drew his readers’ attention to the character of the church with his instructions regarding their conduct with brothers and sisters in Christ. Character produces harmony in relationships.

- *Lowliness* refers to humility. By our thoughts of God’s love, wisdom, and power we put an end to our human pride. Pride is an enemy to the unity that Paul claimed should be evident in the relationships of the church. Pride always insists on making self, first. It is impossible to possess the unity necessary for positive relationships in the church without humility.
- *Meekness* admonishes us to cultivate the Spirit of the Lord Jesus. Meekness is a rare commodity in the present-day assessment of a person’s strength of character. True believers in Christ Jesus measure character by heaven’s standard, and they celebrate those who display meekness as being mature and strong.
- *Longsuffering* is an expression of love. Paul wrote that love suffers long. (Cor. 13:4.) Jesus encapsulated this quality of love in His earthly ministry. By nature, we may tend to be impatient in relationships with people regarding their spiritual development. These verses, however, remind us of the fruit of the Spirit that Paul contrasted to the works of the flesh. (Gal. 5:19-23.)

The foundation of our Christian character must reflect the nature of the Holy Spirit within us. Man’s natural state does not produce this kind of character; it produces the opposite, which is self-centered and results in division. As Spirit-filled members of the body of Christ, however, we should strive to be like Him.

WALKING IN UNITY

Keeping the Unity of the Body and Spirit. When Paul spoke of unity, he was not merely speaking of friendship or camaraderie, nor was he contrasting the unity found in the church to the division found in the world.

The church should unify around the revelation of truth rather than manifesting an ecumenical nature. Some say that it does not matter what one believes, and that Christians should come together in unity and not consider differences of interpreting the Scriptures.

However, Paul spoke of unity with regard to truth and doctrine. The unity of the church should be founded on the principles of the Oneness of God, repentance of sins, water baptism in Jesus' name for the remission of sins, receiving the Holy Ghost, and living a life of holiness.

This world's view of truth and doctrine is perverted; it sees them as divisive and destructive when they are actually the source of true unity. *"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Ephesians 1:10).*

Paul wrote to the Ephesians of the necessity of unification in Jesus Christ to counter the destructive force of sin. Too often, we relegate sin's destruction only to the sins of the flesh. However, division is one of the most evil results of sin because it frustrates the purposes of God. God hates division, and sin is continually dividing, separating, and splintering the eternal purposes of God.

- It took the redemptive work of Christ's blood to reconcile the division of sin's activity. (Eph. 2:11-18.)

The purpose of the Incarnation was to redeem mankind from sin and thereby create one unified body of Christ—the church. Through Christ Jesus, God has broken down the *"middle wall of partition"* between Jew and Gentile to put all into one unified body.

Keeping God Above All. The ascension of Jesus Christ exhibited God's glory and power. It showed His triumph and strength over the devil and even over death itself.

Further, it was evidence that the devil could not prevent His resurrection from the dead. Although he could hinder the answered prayer of Daniel for forty days, the devil could not prevent Jesus' ascension from the Mount of Olives after His forty-day ministry that followed the Resurrection.

The Lord defeated every foe and “*spoiled principalities and powers*” and displayed His triumph. (Col. 2:15.) Sadly, though Satan could not prevent Jesus’ ascension, a person is able to lower the ascended Christ to a place of minimal significance in his own life. Paul declared that Jesus ascended to fill all things—not speaking only of filling the universe, but that He wants to fill individuals with His Holy Spirit. He desires for every person to be born again and grow spiritually until he attains the stature of a mature, “*perfect man*,” and to the “*fulness of Christ*.” (Eph. 4:13.)

- One’s level of maturity in the body of Christ depends on the level at which he places God in his own life. All true believers should keep Him positioned above all other areas of their lives.

Until All Come to Unity of Faith. We are to continue living our Christian lives faithfully until we arrive at a mature, full-grown, or completed state. Paul mentioned the five-fold ministry in Ephesians 4:11-12, which aids the church in bringing individuals to spiritual maturity.

- Spiritual maturity empowers us to perform the will of God effectively.
- God never asks or requires of us anything beyond our ability to perform, but in every instance He enables us to perform His will.

Paul gave us spiritual markers that are visible to the observer. We are to keep maturing until we come to the unity of the faith. Paul contended that unity of the faith is evidence of true spiritual maturity rather than one’s ability to operate in the gifts of the Spirit. The state at which unity is lacking is a stage of immaturity. But Paul revealed that every believer should mature in the body of Christ, which should include exhibiting a growing unity with fellow believers.

WALKING IN PURITY

Walk as Christ. A person’s decision to become a Christian is more than just an effort to raise the level of his morals. It is more than a decision to join the roster of a church membership. To experience regeneration is the most profound change that could ever happen to a person. The Gentile people had never experienced regeneration before Paul’s missions of taking the gospel to the Gentiles, thus he referred to their lives before salvation as that of people who walk in the vanity of their own mind.

The Condition of Vanity (Eph. 4:17). A person who lives in vanity lives with emptiness, producing nothing. The word *vanity* describes the misery of a lost person and it appears in only two other places in the New Testament. (Rom. 8:20; II Pet, 2:18.) Vanity or emptiness in mankind resulted because of his fall into sin.

The Cause of Vanity (Eph. 4:18). The Bible frequently describes the person who is not a Christian as a fool: *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Rom 1:21-22).

- Unbelievers are estranged from God because of their lack of understanding.

The Consequence of Vanity (Eph. 4:19). People who live in the darkness of separation from God willingly give themselves over to works of uncleanness. They are “past feeling,” which means that they have become insensitive toward the Spirit of God because of their calloused spiritual condition. It is not that Satan and his legions have conquered or overtaken them; rather, they have surrendered themselves to the works of their own flesh.

The mature Christian has learned of a better life through Jesus Christ. Foolish people give themselves to philosophy and thought, boasting about their knowledge and understanding. On the other hand, Christians do not follow philosophy or vain deceit, but they seek to follow Jesus Christ.

Christianity is not a concept about Christ; it is following Jesus Christ Himself! Instead of learning *about* Him, we seek to know Jesus Christ in the intimacy of a true spiritual relationship.

Walk as a New Person of Righteousness and True Holiness. Bible scholars generally agree that the words “true holiness” would translate better as “holiness of truth.” Paul effectively was making the case for living a Christian life. He did so in chapter four of Ephesians by illustrating the vast differences between:

- Pagan Gentiles and Christian converts;
- The old man and the new man;
- Deceitful lusts and holiness of truth.

Deceitful lusts govern the entire lifestyle of the unregenerate person, and these lusts prey on a person’s emotions and fleshly desires. The unredeemed person walks through the muck of confusion, which is the result of constantly changing emotions.

This lifestyle offers no stability, and a person becomes enslaved to an emotional roller coaster. A person can also make the mistake of relating to his salvation only in terms of feelings or emotions. The test of one’s salvation does not turn on emotions.

- A person’s life in the holiness of truth is not based on a simple emotional response; it is the result of a renewed mind. (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:23.)

Paul appealed to the Gentiles to learn, know, and understand holy truth. It always frees a person to live a life of spiritual abundance in Jesus Christ, and it never fails! *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (Jn. 8:32).

WALKING IN LOVE

Walking as Dear Children. Nothing is more natural to the human family than children imitating their parents. Boys want to dress like dad and even style their hair the way he does. Likewise, young girls walk around the home in mom’s high heels, lugging one of her handbags as they try to be like her.

The same is true in the family of God. We are to imitate God and follow His example, manifesting a stark resemblance to Him. At times, we may want to cry unfair at the high level of expectation placed upon us.

- It seems that the requirement to follow God is an unreasonable request when we look at our human imperfections. However, it is natural for us to become like Him because we are His children and He is our heavenly Father!

What a privilege it is to be part of the family of God! After the establishment of our relationship with Him, we put on our “new man” created “after God,” after His pattern. Anything else would be unreasonable.

Walk in Love in Christ’s Pattern. Only Jesus’ example of love could motivate Christians to live according to His pattern. Hate drives a person and prods him to lift his hand in revenge toward others. Jealousy shoves and pushes people to respond to others with disregard to friendship. Anger, bitterness, and shame can direct a person’s life down dangerous and destructive avenues of life. There is a great difference between being driven and being led; one is under the constraint of force and the other is attracted by willful submission.

- Jesus does not drive us; He leads us. He does not force us to love others; we do it because we want to follow His divine example of love.

WALKING CIRCUMSPECTLY

Waking Up. Most Christians would agree that these days in which we live are the last days. In one of his letters written to Timothy, Paul described the last days as perilous times. (II Tim. 3:1.)

One Bible translation describes “*perilous times*” as those times when it will be “difficult to be a Christian.” For days such as these, nothing less than a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life will be sufficient for successful Christian living.

We first must wake up to the times in which we live and not be overtaken like individuals who are on the brink of sleep. In the sleep-state, our senses are dull and the acute awareness necessary for discernment is absent. The words of Paul, *“arise from the dead,”* graphically illustrated this condition. (Eph. 5:14.)

- Anyone who lives in the Spirit, however, does not allow the affections of his old nature to control him.

Looking Up. We have heard the stories of soldiers who fought for the freedom of America, and we listened with great respect to their experiences. One such story involved a soldier on patrol who walked as the front or point man. He spoke of the intense alertness and carefulness that one must possess as he makes his way through enemy territory. Every sense is on high alert to avoid the traps set by the enemy. That is what Paul meant when he penned the words *“looking up”* and *“walking circumspectly.”*

We should walk through this world—enemy territory—on high alert. We should not live haphazardly and carelessly, but be alert so as not to fall prey to the traps that await us.

Speaking Up. Christians should speak up because the *“father of lies”* is not hesitant to do as much damage as possible with his lies. We should encourage ourselves and build up our own faith, and we also should strive to edify others with our words of faith and encouragement. The Scriptures admonish us to *“speak to”* ourselves with edifying words. In our response to this world, we should be careful that our first words expressed are those of faith in God.

Giving Up. We should *“give up”* in submission to one another in the fear of God. A person manifests a Spirit-led and Spirit-filled life by his willingness to be accountable to others. The character of corporate America was exposed in 2002 and has revealed much corruption since that time. The common thread among the leaders of these multi-billion dollar companies was the *“I deserve it”* attitude and the lack of accountability to others. If we have given up in surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ, then submission to others will be no problem at all for us.

- The key to living for God is not learning how to run, but rather learning how to walk with God.

CONCLUSION

In the wicked generation of Noah’s day, sin was abundant and righteousness was scarce. The personality that stood out was the man who walked with God, Enoch. Jesus prophesied, *“As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man”* (Lk. 17:26). God is looking for those who will walk faithfully and consistently every day and diligently follow the ways of God.

**Assignment
WORKSHEET****Student Name:** _____
Print Full First Name Middle Initial Print Full Last Name**Church Name:** _____ **Pastor:** _____**Date:** _____

Take your time to review the lesson before you provide your answers.

1. According to the lesson, living a Christian life does not absolve an individual from what?

2. According to the lesson, the Apostle Paul made it clear that we was what?

3. According to the lesson, our Christian walk, or lifestyle should never clash with the doctrines we hold, but rather we do what?

4. According to the lesson, the Apostle Paul spoke of unity with regard to truth and doctrine, and the unity of the church should be founded on what five principles?

5. According to the lesson, one's level of maturity in the body of Christ depends on the level at which he places what?

6. According to the lesson, unbelievers are estranged from God because they lack something. What is that?
 1. _____
 2. _____

7. Please fill in the blanks. According to the lesson, there is always a b _ _ _ e between the _ _ _ _ man and the old _ _ _ .
8. Please fill in the blanks. According to the lesson, we will face test that i _ _ ti _ _ id _ _ te our faith and will _ _ _ to overwhelm and _ _ _ our lives. Please select the best answer below:
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. attempt and fail | C. control and overwhelm |
| B. overwhelm and control | D. attempt and control |
9. According to the lesson, lowliness refers to humility, meekness admonishes us to cultivate the Spirit, and longsuffering is an expression of joy.
- Please select the best answer: ☐ True ☐ False
10. According to the lesson, it took the redemptive work of Christ's blood to _ _ _ _ the division of sin's activity. Please select the best answer below:
- | |
|----------------|
| A. reveal |
| B. reconcile |
| C. recondition |
| D. redeem |
11. Please fill in the blanks. According to the lesson, spiritual _ _ _ _ u _ _ _ _ y empowers us to perform the will of God _ _ _ _ _ .
12. According to the lesson, a person's life in the holiness of truth is not based on a simple emotional response; it is the result of a _ _ _ _ .
- | |
|---------------------|
| A. renewed mind |
| B. restored heart |
| C. refreshed spirit |
| D. reconciled life |

Congratulations on completing this lesson. While some lessons may seem harder than others, you must always study to show yourself approved unto God, and reveal to others, what God has given you.
