

The Call to a Worthy Walk

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Paul urges Christians to walk in a manner worthy of their calling
2. aim – to cause us to desire to live consistently with what it means to be a follower of Jesus
3. passage – Ephesians 4:1-2

b. opening

1. the reality of an **anti-Christian** society
 - a. the USA *used to be* a semi-Christian society, then became a post-Christian society
 - b. the USA *is now* anti-Christian – it hates everything about those who profess Christ
 - c. **although we live in a society that hates the message of the gospel, those who are Christ-followers are charged by Scripture to stand firm upon its message, and to live radically different lives because of it – especially given that we will be hated for doing so**
2. **see now Eph. 4:1** – the end of the **indicative** section of the letter (outlining these **truths**):
 - a. **#1:** God decrees to adopt a people to himself and lavish them with his spiritual riches
 - b. **#2:** God creates this people by raising them from their spiritual deadness to faith in Christ
 - c. **#3:** God draws this people together into a new structure as living stones of worship to him
 - d. **#4:** God uses this structure to glorify himself in a great cosmic drama of redemption in the world
 - e. these are the **truth statements** upon which Paul builds the flow of his argument
 1. he (**then**) assumes that these truths will result in a great change in those who believe them
 - f. **Paul turns his attention to “urging” (note 4:1) his readers to react appropriately to these great truths by living out their calling, to heed some imperatives from these truths**

I. The Call to a Worthy Walk (Ephesians 4:1-2)

Content

a. the sense of a call

1. “calling” (n. *klesis*) = a new station in life; a new task; a new relationship – a sense of something entirely different from what was before, both in terms of *relationship with God* and in *action of life*
 - a. first, an **effectual call** of the Spirit upon the dead sinner, raising him to life and to faith in Christ
 1. effectual call = an act of God, through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he *summons* specific people to himself in such a way that they are converted and respond
 - a. a *Trinitarian* work: the Father calls people *through* the Spirit *to* faith in the Son (Jesus)
 - b. a *real* work: the call comes *through the human proclamation* of the gospel (**i.e.** means)
 - c. a *specific* work: a specific call to specific people at a specific time (not a general call)
 - d. an *effectual* work: a call that *must* and *will* produce the results that God demands
 2. Paul mentions the reality this “calling” in most of his letters – more than **50 times**
 - b. second, a **continuing call** of the Spirit upon the believer, working through him in all of life
 1. a continuation of the effectual call = the work of the Spirit through the Word to bring the fullness of God’s purpose to fruition in the lives of those called by him (**i.e.** their obedience)
 2. the term “calling” (then) includes the following realities for believers:
 - a. for some, a call to the ministry = the call to full-time Christian service (**i.e.** pastor, missionary)
 - b. for all, a call to a ministry = the call to specific forms of Christian service
 - c. for all, a call to vocation = the call to ministry through secular occupations (**see above**)
2. **Paul assumes that every believer is such because he or she has been called by God to that state – we are followers of Christ because he has sought us out**

b. the sense of a worthy walk

1. **the first great imperative:** “walk” in a manner “worthy” of this calling
 - a. “walk” = to behave; to live; to conduct one’s life; to be occupied with; lit. to tread all around
 - b. “worthy” = properly; suitably; after a godly sort; lit. as is befitting your station
 - c. a worthy walk is a life modeled after Christ himself – it is the *natural response* of a person committed to Jesus because of the calling of the Spirit of God upon him or her
2. **Paul assumes that every believer must live their life in a manner that is consistent with what it means to be called by God – to be a Christian means to live as one**

c. the call to a worthy walk

1. the connection to **Ephesians 5:15**

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil."

- a. to walk worthy (then) as a **Christ-follower** (!) is to live in a manner that is befitting the fact that you have been called to Christ by the Spirit *in spite of the fact that the entire world around you is filled with evil*
- b. **or, to walk worthy is to hold fast in allegiance to Christ and his Word even though everyone else around us hates the very thing we cling to**