

**EPHESIANS 4:1-16**

Session 8

Maybe you have heard the saying -Our beliefs affect our behavior. Our beliefs influence our behavior because we use them to decide between right and wrong. Your beliefs and behavior tell a story of who you are, how you see yourself and others, and why you do things. Paul turns the corner in the letter by explaining how the Spirit-filled life shows us how to walk worthy of the calling to which we have been called.

Paul up to this point in our study of this letter to the church of Ephesus has talked about our vertical relationship we have with Christ. It can be broken down as followed:

 -What God has done **for** us – Chapter 1

 -What Christ has done **in** us – Chapter 2

 -What Christ has done **between** us – 2:11-3:21

****The second part of this letter, Ephesians 4:1-6:24, explains our **horizontal relationship with others** because of who we are in Christ, and how we live out the truth of God’s Word? Paul will explain and show us in practical terms how our internal transformation in Christ results in an external demonstration of the fruit of the spirit in our life which others will see.

Part 2 could be broken down as follows:

 Healthy in **unity** – 4:1-16

 Healthy in our **walk** – 4:17-6:9

 Healthy in **strength** – 6:10-20

* Read the passage on your own
* Read it out loud
* Summarize what you just read

***Helpful Notes:*** Remember Paul is in prison when he writes this letter (vs.1). Paul had a way of not getting sucked in by his circumstances but by seeing his circumstances as a way to minister to others. A person who is called by God to walk worthy can minister anywhere. There is no limit to how and where God can use a vessel of honor for the Lord’s glory. Even from a prison cell, Paul gives five-character traits in verses 2-3 of how we can walk worthy of the calling of Christ. What are those?

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_vs.2

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_vs.2

3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_vs.2

4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_vs.2

5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_vs.3

**Think it over:**

1. Why are these such important character traits to have if we are to walk worthy?
2. How do these character traits affect our unity inside and outside of the church?

**A Healthy Theology vs.4-6**

A healthy church operates under sound theology. In the book of Acts the early church was often described as being of “one accord.” (See Acts 1:14; 4:32) They had one heart, mind, purpose, vision etc. There was a strong sense of oneness in the body of Christ. Paul is saying, if we intend to be of “one accord” then there are some elements of theology we must be one in. When we are united in belief it should result in being united in behavior.

For every believer, whether Jew or Gentile there must be agreement that we are united in belief having . . .

**ONE BODY** – As believers we belong to the body of Christ. The body works together in unity. The leg doesn’t say I’m going to the market and the other leg says, I’m going swimming. That’s not unity. The church is to be unified in such a way so divisions do not ruin or prevent the body of Christ from working together.

**Question**: In what ways do you see your church working well together as One Body?

**ONE SPIRIT** – The Holy Spirit is working inside each believer and leads us into all truth. (See John 14:16-17; 16:13; Romans 8:9)

**ONE HOPE** – There is one saving message (the gospel) which holds out one hope – eternal life and the Lord’s return for every believer who puts their trust in Christ.

**Question**: What are you most excited about when the Lord returns?

**ONE LORD** – Jesus Christ is Lord to every believer. In a world of many false lords (1 Corinthians 8:5) we acknowledge Jesus Christ is Lord over all, so the body of Christ functions having **ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM** and **ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL.** God has no equal and is sovereign over all.

***Helpful Notes:*** Paul could be speaking about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit or about water baptism. Here is the difference.

**Baptism of the Holy Spirit** – Baptism of the Holy Spirit does two things.

1. It joins us to the body of Christ (the church). It identifies us with Jesus Christ whereby He places the believer into union with Christ and into the body of Christ – the church.
2. It symbolizes our being crucified with Christ. (Galatians 2:20) – Being baptized spiritually in His body means we are risen with Him to newness of life (Romans 6:4).

**Water Baptism -** This is an ordinance of the church where a believer in Christ gives a public testimony of their faith, thereby identifying them with a local body of believers.

* It is a command of Jesus – Matthew 28:19-20
* Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist
* It identifies us with Jesus by symbolizing His death, burial, & resurrection

In verses 7-11 we see how our belief in being ONE transforms our behavior as we use the spiritual gifts the Lord has endowed us with for His good purpose.

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**Putting it into Practice**

* **Am I walking worthy? How do I know?**
* **Do my beliefs line up with God’s Word?**
* **Does my behavior line up with God’s Word?**
* **Do I know my spiritual gift(s)? Am I applying them?**
* **Am I growing? Are God’s people growing because of my ministry?**

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