

"The Practice of the Believer"

Ephesians 4-6

Part 1

Introduction: The past 33 studies in Ephesians have been focused upon the Position of the Believer in the first 3 chapters. Now as we come to chapter 4, we go from Position of the Believer to the Practice of the Believer.

To begin with this morning, I want to do a quick review of some of what we learned in the first 3 chapters. The church at Ephesus was made up of almost all Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:11

¹¹ *Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;*

Ephesians 3:1

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.

So, as Paul wrote to these Gentiles, he needed to ground them in Doctrine and so in chapter 1 he began by taking them back before the creation of the world.

Ephesians 1:4

⁴ *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

Before the foundation of the world God predetermined that He would have a bride for His Son known as the church. Now there is an invitation given to all that whosoever will may come and whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved and will become members of the body of Jesus Christ.

John 3:16

¹⁶ *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

When a person is saved, they become a part of something that did not exist until the Day of Pentecost and that is the church.

Ephesians 2:15-16, 19-20

¹⁵ *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*

¹⁶ And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

¹⁹ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

²⁰ And are **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

Ephesians 3:4-5

⁴ Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

⁵ Which **in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men**, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Paul also explained in chapter 1 the riches that belong to us who are members of the body of Jesus Christ.

So, if I can simplify what we have learned in Ephesians 1-3 it would be that we who know Jesus Christ/we who are washed in the blood of Jesus are members of a the body of Jesus Christ and we have been made rich in Him. We are members of a new man that did not exist before Pentecost. We are now God's elect and by that, I mean we are His representatives here on this earth just as Israel was the elect/His representatives in the Old Testament. Israel rejected her Messiah and so now God is gathering a people for His name from the Gentiles and we are His representatives.

2 Corinthians 5:20

²⁰ **Now then we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Once the bride/church is complete God will again work with Israel in the Tribulation period.

Romans 11:25

²⁵ For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**

We then are the elect of God and blessed with all spiritual riches in Christ.

Now we come to chapter 4.

I. A Call for Unity
Part 1

A. The Foundation for Exhortation.

Notice Ephesians 4:1

The word "**therefore**" sweeps back over all that we have been taught in chapters 1-3. Based upon all that we have been taught Paul now exhorts his readers to walk worthy of their calling. In other words, as representatives of God/elect we are to live in a way that manifests who we are in Christ. We are now children of God. We are royalty and so our lifestyles should magnify our position.

This statement runs parallel with what we have been studying in Romans.

Romans 12:1-2

*I beseech you **therefore**, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The point is that we are to conduct our lives in a way that honors God. Our should desire to live separated lives because of what God has done for us. He has sacrificed His only begotten Son so that we can be His children so out of love for Him we should live in a way that is honoring to Him.

Philippians 1:27

²⁷ Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Colossians 1:10-14

¹⁰ That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

¹³ *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

¹⁴ *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

Now let us understand that it is not so much as HOW we walk but WHERE we walk.

1 John 1:7

⁷ *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

We are to walk in the LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD. We must understand that many people watch our conduct and the way we live is a major part of our testimony.

Illustration: There is a story told about a man handing out Gospel Tracts and he handed one to a man who could not read. The man asked, "What is this?" The man replied, "It is a Gospel Tract. Read it to see what it says." The man responded, "I cannot read it, so I will watch your tracks."

B. The Character of a Worthy Walk.

Notice Ephesians 4:2-3

In these two verse Paul mentions 7 graces that should be found in the life of every believer.

1. Lowliness

Lowliness is humility. Pride has no place in the body of Jesus Christ. Humility or lowliness is the flagship of Christian character.

Philippians 2:3

³ *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

This thought also connects with our Wednesday evening study of Romans.

Romans 12:3

³ *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

In Romans 12:1-2 Paul called us to the ultimate worship of giving ourselves completely over to the Lord. Then starting in Romans 12:4 he talks about service. But here in verse 3 he

shows us the bridge that connects worship with service, and it is ATTITUDE. Our attitude should be one of lowliness. We must keep in mind that whatever good comes from our service is because of what God has given to us and His power working within us. There should be no pride involved in serving the Lord.

Proverbs 11:2

² *When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.*

Proverbs 13:10

¹⁰ *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.*

Proverbs 29:23

²³ *A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.*

2. Meekness

Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is power under control. The Bible calls two men meek.

Numbers 12:3

³ *(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)*

Moses was a very powerful man, but he was a meek man. He exercised control over the power in his life.

Matthew 11:28-29

²⁸ *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

²⁹ *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

Jesus was meek yet we are told He drove the money changers from the temple.

Luke 23:33-39

³³ *And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.*

³⁴ *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*

³⁵ *And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.*

³⁶ *And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,*

³⁷ *And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.*

³⁸ *And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

³⁹ *And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.*

3. Longsuffering

4. Forbearance

5. Love

I want to keep these three graces together because they work together

Longsuffering literally means "long-tempered". This is being patient with people. Not being short tempered. The church is made up of many different kinds of people and we all still have our sin natures.

Longsuffering and forbearance is being patient with others and holding back any thought of vengeance.

So, we must be patient because we all make mistakes. These two graces are the result of the love we have for one another.

1 Corinthians 13:4a

⁴ *Charity suffereth long, and is kind;*

These graces are the spirit that has the power to take revenge, but never does. It is characteristic of a forgiving, generous heart. When we love others we are longsuffering and we practice forbearance.

6. Endeavoring

Notice Ephesians 4:3

We are to "endeavor" to keep the unity in the body of Jesus Christ. This is something that is very important to our Lord. Let me show you what Jesus prayed for in John 17 in His High Priestly prayer:

John 17:11, 20-21

¹¹ *And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, **that they may be one, as we are.***

²⁰ *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;*

²¹ ***That they all may be one;** as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, **that they also may be one in us:** **that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.***

7. Peace

Romans 14:17-19

¹⁷ *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, **and peace**, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

¹⁸ *For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

¹⁹ ***Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace**, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

Conclusion:

We live in a world full of divisiveness and hatred which manifests itself in riots and killings. The world should be able to look at the church and see something completely different. There should be love, unity and peace within the body of Jesus Christ. They should see us as humble, meek, longsuffering, and forbearing one another in love. We have such an opportunity to make a difference as we exercise these graces in the body of Christ. This kind of lifestyle is appealing to people today because it is so rare in our society.