

# Ephesians 4

## Ephesians 4.1-6

**V1** – Why would Paul remind them again that he is a prisoner? A sobering message to get them to think about the cost of being a faithful Christian

-**How should we walk?** In a way that is consistent with our “calling”

-When people become citizens of the United States, they have certain obligations placed on them

-It is the same with a person who becomes a Christian

-**Problem?** People want to be known as Christians, but they don’t want to walk in the proper manner

**V2** – What are four ways that should characterize our walking?

1. Humility

2. Gentleness

3. With patience

4. Showing forbearance to one another in love

-So in our dealings with one another, we are to show patience and love and to be longsuffering, not vengeful

-**Have you ever seen a large dog and a little tiny poodle?** The poodle will snap and bark at the large dog, run around him, and irritate him

-The large dog could bite his head off with one snap, but he is forbearing and patient

**V3** – What should be our goal as members of the church? To keep the church united

-**At all costs?** No, we cannot allow false doctrine to be taught

-But if not it is not a doctrinal matter, our goal is to do nothing that would upset the church

-Sometimes we upset people without realizing it; we might learn of it months or even years later

-It is so hard to know what upsets people

-But caution is the watchword

-We are to be diligent – it takes great effort to keep a church at peace and doctrinally sound

**V4** – Paul here lists the seven ones of the Christian faith, emphasizing the unity of Christ

-1. One body – **Which body is that?** The body of Christ

-Today, we have thousands of religious groups

-They cannot all teach contradictory things and still be the body of Christ

-When a congregation is teaching and practicing error, it can no longer be the body of Christ

-Paul: Gentiles and Jesus cannot have their own churches - The church must be united

-2. One Spirit – emphasizing unity again – There is only one Holy Spirit

-3. One hope – **What is our hope?** Home in heaven (not purgatory and heaven both)

**V5** – 4. One Lord – no idols or other false lords; only one is allowed

-5. One faith – not “*Of what faith are you?*”

-We don’t have a choice of faiths

- 6. One baptism – **Do we have a choice of baptisms today?** No - Remember Paul had to re-baptize twelve members at Ephesus – only one baptism was proper: Christian baptism
- Contrary to what some are teaching, we do not have both Holy Spirit baptism and baptism in water for the forgiveness of our sins – that would be two baptisms
- Also, we do not have sprinkling, pouring, and immersion – there is only one baptism, and that is immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins

#### **V 6** – 7. One God and one Father

- Paul: Everything is united in the Christian faith
- So the different religions in the world cannot all be right

### **Ephesians 4.7-10**

**V 7** – We do not all have the same talents, but we are given the talents that we can handle

**V 8** – *Psalm 68.18* – Jesus has us as his captives (we were once captives of Satan), but Christ freed us from Satan

- But there is a big difference between being a captive of Satan and a captive of Christ
- What is that difference?** Christ has given wonderful gifts to his "captives"
- What kind of gifts has he given to his captives?** The promise of eternal salvation, the joy of being a part of the church here on earth, the peace of mind that we have, the encouragement we receive from our brothers and sisters in Christ (many other answers to this question)
- Do captives normally receive gifts?** No

**V 9-10** – **What sort of a parenthetical statement do we have on Christ's ascension?** Christ first descended into earth and died for us, and he has now ascended to heaven

### **Ephesians 4.11-16**

**V 11** – Notice the assignments given in First Century church based on talents and spiritual gifts:

- Apostles – one of the twelve (we don't have apostles today)
- Prophets – they had gift of prophecy (again, we don't have this gift today)
- Evangelists – preachers of the gospel
- Pastors (literally shepherds) – the elders over the congregation
- Notice that evangelists and pastors are two separate jobs – it is wrong to call a preacher "pastor" unless he has been appointed as an elder of the church
- Is it possible for a preacher to also serve as an elder?** Absolutely – See *1 Tim. 5.17* and *1 Peter 5.1-2* – Peter was both a preacher and elder (and an apostle)
- Also, see *2 John 1* – John was an elder and a preacher
- Where are "pastors" mentioned in the New Testament?** See *Acts 20.28*
- The elders at Ephesus were to "shepherd" the flock of God (the Greek word for "shepherd" is where we get our English word "pastor")
- Teachers – Every congregation needs many good teachers

**V 12 – What was the purpose of these five categories?** For equipping the saints and for building up the body of Christ

-This should be the goal of every person in the church today

**V 13 – The ultimate goal?** Unity of faith and a mature congregation

-Also the spiritual gifts would continue until the full knowledge of Jesus came with the completion of the New Testament Scriptures (*1 Corinthians 13.10*)

**V 14 – “Children”?** Indicates childishness

**-In what sense are we no longer to be like children?** Not to believe all we are told, not to be tossed about by all kinds of doctrines

-All kinds of doctrines accepted – premillennialism, faith healing, speaking in tongues, women preachers, setting dates for end of world, etc.

-Whatever false doctrine comes down the road, some people will believe it

**-Cause of false doctrines?** The trickery of men and their craftiness and deceitful scheming

-Remember story of older prophet in *1 Kings 13* - **Read 1 Kings 13.18** – People don’t consider the possibility that somebody might be lying to them

-Paul is urging them to hold to sound doctrine

**V 15 – Our philosophy:** *“speaking the truth in love”*

**-Is it enough to speak the truth?** No, but we are to have a loving attitude when we present the gospel

**V 16 – The whole church is to work together as a unit with the proper working of each individual part**

-We all have jobs to do in the church

**Ephesians 4.17-19** – further details on “walking” (not “sitting”)

**V 17 – What does Paul urge the Ephesians to do?** Stop waking as the unsaved Gentiles walk

**-How do the unconverted look at life?** Futile

-We see the depravity of modern rock groups and artists and philosophers

-They believe in the futility of life, that life is not worth living

**V 18 – What do they miss by not obeying the gospel?** A life in God

**-Why are they not converted?** Ignorance and the hardness of their hearts (not predestination)

**V 19 – What happens to those who pursue a sinful life?** They get calloused

-That is an accurate description of many people

## **Ephesians 4.20-24**

**V 20** – Do we learn Christ by pursuing sensuality? No

-We do not discover Christ by testing out all the various sins of this life

**V 21** – How do we find out about Christ? We hear of him and we learn of him

**V 22** – What is required of us when we are converted? We must lay aside the old self

-Why? It becomes more and more corrupted

**V 23** – We are to be renewed in mind

**V 24** – We put on the new self

-What is the new self like? In the likeness of God, righteous and holy

-So a change is required when a person becomes a Christian

-If a person doesn't want to change, there is no reason to baptize him

## **Ephesians 4.25-28** – Living “the Christian life”

**V 25** – Paul discusses four prominent sins –

-1. Not telling the truth

-Why should we tell the truth? We are members of one body

-Imagine one part of the body lying to another part – example: nerve endings in the hand telling the brain that the stove is cool, when it is burning hot

**V 26** – 2. The second sin we should avoid? Sinful anger

-Is it ever right to be angry? Yes, we must practice the kind that is not sinful

-Examples of righteous anger? Jesus cleansing the temple – *Mark 3.5, John 2.13-17*

-We must make sure that our anger is from the right motives, not pride or selfishness

**V 27** – What is Paul's advice about anger? Don't go to bed angry, and don't give the devil an opportunity to cause us to sin

-How can the devil use anger as a way to get us to sin? Use evil words, physical abuse, etc.

-We can say and do things in anger that we would never do in calmer circumstances

**V 28** – 3. Sin to be careful about? Stealing

-Paul wants to make sure that all of the Ephesians' bad habits have ended

-Instead of stealing, how are we to support ourselves? Working with our own hands

-What activities would this eliminate? Gambling, pyramid schemes, a Ponzi scheme, etc.

-The purpose of our having decent jobs: to be able to share with those not as fortunate as we are

**V 29** – 4. Sin involving bad words coming out of our mouth

-Negative command: stop bad words

**-What is the positive command?** Speak words of encouragement, and give grace to others

**V 30** – Our sinning grieves the Holy Spirit (just as children sometimes grieve their parents)

**V 31** – Paul ends the chapter with a list of things that must go from our lives, once we make a decision to be Christians

**-Six things:**

-bitterness

-wrath

-anger

-clamor

-slander

-malice

**V 32** – Instead, we are to be kind to each other

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