



# Ephesians

## Part 24

Ephesians 4:1-7  
Week of August 22, 2021

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Before Connect Group

- Read Ephesians 4:1-7
  - Watch the sermon by going to <http://switzerlandcommunitychurch.org>
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*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

*Ephesians 4:1-7, ESV*

# Sermon Notes

*Obedience to God has always been and always will be a product of God's faithfulness in grace, redemption, and covenant toward us.*

Chapter 4 marks a major shift in the entire book of Ephesians. Identified by both shift in content, and the language used. Note that the end of Chapter three, the end of this portion of Paul's prayer, draws us as readers to the conclusion of thought with *Ephesians 3:21* "to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." "Therefore" in the opening of Ch. 4 marks a shift from the whole of chapters 1-3. It might be better to call it an outflow.

There are two main shifts, or outflows, that I want to address this morning that will help us to navigate the weeks to come. The two are very similar, but I believe that there is an important distinction. So it might help to see them as building blocks. The first will provide the foundation for the second.

## From Theological to Practical

### Textual Movement

- Ch. 1-3 Paul has spent his time declaring the Glorious, Gracious, and merciful work of God to draw us to salvation in love. As many of you made mention throughout the past few months, is that there seems to not be as much practical instruction. There have even been pleas at times to provide more practical application to the texts we were navigating.
- This is not a bad sentiment, I think it is a good to want to know how we can respond to such great declarations about God... But as we navigated the first three chapters of Ephesians, I challenged you to lay down your anxiety about "doing" something and to just allow the beautiful words of the Apostle here wash over you the glory of the Gospel. My greatest desire was for you to be filled up beyond measure with the power of this truth in Christ... I have even joined Paul in his prayer for the Ephesians that you might be "strengthened with power through the Spirit in your inner being."
- However, this week marks a shift where we will pick up the challenge to live our lives in alignment with the real beauty of the Truth that has been proclaimed over us. Chapters 4-6 will work their way through our hearts in conviction for the work of sanctification and obedience.
- There are a few basic thoughts that will need to be a baseline for our approach to this shift or outflow of Theological to Practical.

## God Moves First, We Respond

- This may sound like a simple concept at first, and at the most basic level, it is. However, this is something that often drifts into the back of our hearts as we continue our journey of faith. Yet, it belongs at the front. Because within this truth is the correct perspective to boldly live out our lives of obedience in Christ.
- Make sure you always read chapters 1-3 before you try to process the commands of chapters 4-6.
- The reason that Paul prays for strength and power to "know" the work and love of Christ, in the first three chapters, is because it is the only source of strength for the Spirit's work of sanctification in your life over the next 3. (We will stop and discuss this word "sanctification" in our next point)

- Obedience to God has always been and always will be a product of God's faithfulness in grace, redemption, and covenant toward us.
- God moves, not as the outflow of our merit but despite our lack of merit. God moves through grace and reigns sovereign and supreme across all creation.
- This is vital for our own understanding and expression of love.
- God's love cannot work on merit. It can't. We have no merit of ourselves only what God has imputed to us as our own.

## Out of Theology Must Flow Praxis Or Faith Is Not Present

- Therefore "I urge" you...
- This language here in this text is important. Paul is implying that if you said "amen" with him at the end of Chapter 3, then you are bound to heed what he is going to say. The force of this word "urge" carries a sense of emotion. Paul is appealing to your faith and your will.
- There are two possibilities within our own reading of Ephesians which we should seek to avoid.
  - The one who reads the first 3 chapters and stops. This is the person who seeks to reduce the Glory and redemptive work of God to a set of propositions that should be meticulously ordered within the limited scope of logic.
  - The one who skips the first 3 chapters and finds all value only in the last 3 chapters. This person values their own morality and self-righteousness over the person and work of Jesus Christ who has accomplished all things in salvation and righteousness and has offered them to you by faith alone.
- The constant battle is to find our comfort living upon the bridge between these two.
- We must always be gazing into the glory of what has been revealed and sacrificed for us and responding in heartfelt conviction to move toward Christ in obedience.
- The movement from Theology/Doxology to Praxis is important for two reasons.
  - **For The Sake of the World**
  - *Matthew 17:1-8 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.*
  - When we are most consumed with the Glory of Christ is when we most want to remain in His presence. This is the "right" response... However, it is also when we must come down the mountain ready to live a life "to the praise of His glorious grace!"
  - Yes, we are about to be told all of the ways that we are to live this life to serve and love others. But one of the most dangerous misconceptions of Christianity today is that we are able to do that without the mountaintop experience of Glory!
  - **For Your Own Assurance**
  - Paul's "urge" in this text is also of great concern for your "rooted and grounded" in faith. Your knowledge of the love of Christ.
  - Obedience is not what will earn you the grace of God, but it is surely indicative of

- your faith within it.
- *1 John 3:4-10 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.*
- We have created a false justification that what we do on the outside is not evidence of who we are on the inside. This is not what the Bible says.
- What we do on the outside cannot dictate who we are on the inside, but who we are on this inside absolutely shapes our obedience on the outside.
- How can I know that I am a true child of God. That I am convicted of my sin, I am repentant in my heart, I wage war in the Spirit, and I glorify God with the members of my body.

## **From Walking Worthy of Sin To Walking Worth Of Our Calling**

- This statement in our text is meant to draw you back to the beginning of chapter 2 because it uses the same phrasing.
- *Eph. 2:1-2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience*
- After the gracious and powerful work of God in you, you are not to walk as you once did (which will be the way he phrases this in 4:17)... but you are to walk in a manner reflecting or of outflow of the calling into the family of God.
- Peripateo: to walk "around", in and out, all throughout.
- This word is one of fullness.
- It would be like someone saying to you I "walked through Disney this week"... you might ask a question in regards to how literal you are to take this. How long did you stay?
- The idea is that they did not just simply accomplish an action, but they were so consumed that you could conclude that it defined them.
- Could someone determine that your walk of life is that of faith by simply describing to them your daily activity?

If a silent movie of your life were played, to what conclusion would people arrive about what is most important to you? Would you be someone who could describe the feel of the Spirit, the power of salvation?

# Connect Group Discussion Questions

- Why is it important that we understand the glory of God before we move on to application? What happens when we try and ignore our identity in Christ and jump straight to application?
- How does pursuing the glory of God in our life impact the world around us? How does it lend itself to our assurance of faith?
- What is the relationship between theology/doxology and praxis or what we do? Why is the order of these two things important? What happens when we reverse the order?
- Are you more prone to be a person who jumps straight to application or never gets to application? Why do you think you more prone to this?
- What does it mean to walk in a manner worthy of the calling you have received.

## Challenge For The Week

Our theology leads to doxology which leads to a total change and renewal of our life according to how God intended us to live.

- As Christians, we need to continually wage war on the sin in our life. What sins do you need to bring to the cross of Christ and wage war on? Discuss this with your discipleship partner.
- Who do you know who needs an encounter with God? How can you witness to them this week? Make plans to pray for them and look for opportunities to share your story with them.

