

'Habitational' Walking
Ephesians 4.1-3

- I. Today, we begin the transition from sitting **in** Jesus Christ to walking **in** Jesus Christ
 - A. What do I mean by IN CHRIST?
 1. IN Christ , we means have a new name: Christian
 - a) This name was first used in the church in Antioch as recorded in the Book of Acts:
 - b) *Acts 11:25: So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.*
 - c) We will see that a Christian matures/develops. We mature IN CHRIST because that is what a Christian does.
 2. Example : Human Development
 - a) From the moment of conception, a human exists. The process of embryological development will only yield a human. The Birth of a human is the endpoint of human gestation and at birth a new phase of development of the human begins.
 - b) In Child development-a child will roll over, sit, all-fours, begin rocking, then crawl and pull to knees, pull to stand, start cruising, First steps , to run..
 3. Normal human development ALWAYS shows a progression. ALWAYS. If ever the progression stops or any regression occurs, (goes backwards)—there is always a problem.
 - B. As walking follows sitting in human development, so in Spiritual development/ Maturation —Walking also comes after sitting.
 - A. To describe the process of Spiritual maturation, I have made up a term called **SLIDE: Habitational Walking**
 1. IN Christ, an inner transformation has taken place. We are Christian; We have a new Habitation. —a new residence which requires a new way of living.
 2. Habitational walking is another way to say the Christian has been moved by Christ to a new sphere of living. The old is gone. The new has come. A new creation exists because of the work of Christ.
 3. The Christian lives and moves and has his/her being **in** Christ. (Acts 17.28). We are no longer of the world. We are of Christ . He is in us and we are in Him. Our Habitation is IN CHRIST

4. Walking, then, is the fruit or the evidence of the transformational work of Christ in the life of a Christian.

B. Every Christian learns to walk. I call it Habitational Walking.

III. Now Let's Walk!!!

A. Ephesians 4:1-3. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1. I need to stop us all here first to point out the context of walking.
2. The context in which walking takes place is the Church.
 - a) Look at vs. 2—bearing with each other in love
 - b) Vs 3—Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit
 - c) This means the 'walking' is a Christian's walk with other Christians.
 - (1) Habitational Walking requires interaction with each other and requires a vision that looks outward; out of ourselves.
 - (2) The emphasis is NOT on your 'personal journey' but on the shared journey of the church. It's all of us—together—closely knit.

B. So let's look at what Paul says about the 'Habitational walk' of the Christian.

IV. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...

A. His word 'urge' has the meaning to exhort. Paul uses stronger language than a request or encouragement. He is exhorting them to walk.

B. His exhortation to walk—

1. means to conduct their lives -
2. live their lives in a manner that is worthy of their calling;
3. The way in which they conduct themselves must match their new Habitation: **Christian**. This is an exhortation to evaluate and change behavior.

C. 'Manner that is worthy' carries the idea of bringing balance; eg like making two sides of a scale balanced or equal.

- a) Beam of two scales
- b) Demonstrate this:
 - (1) Before Christ—two sides of scales were in balance
 - (2) Conduct of the Non Christian is in balance with the Calling of the World.

D. Paul urges: That the Conduct of the Christian **must** balance their Calling.

1. The inference of Paul is that the scales in the life of a Christian are not in balance.

2. The two sides of the scale are out of sync. That is, the Walk/**Conduct** of the Christian does not match that of his/her **Calling**, hence Paul's exhortation to "walk in a manner worthy"
- V. The Calling, ie the Habitation of the Christian rests in chapters 1-3
- A. But God,... gave to us His Demerited Grace, as JT taught a few weeks ago.
 - B. God showed his grace to us, not as only dead people , but as the rotting dead. We were not just corpses, but rotting corpses.
 - C. He pours out on us, according to the riches of his glory, Demerited grace
 - D. New life has come by His physical death thus cancelling our debt-the debt of sin while we were the rotting dead; nailing our sin on the cross. The debt is gone. We are Free! We are no longer slaves. We are His sons.
 - E. He disarmed the powers and principalities. The Accuser has no power over us. The Light has come and the darkness shall never overcome it.
 - F. His power, this resurrection power, now comes toward His children! Our new nature is powered by God. Because of it, we walk.
 - G. As Christians:
 1. *Eph. 3:14-19—We are¹⁶strengthened with power through his Spirit in our inner beings, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith.*
 2. We are reconciled to God and we are reconciled to each other. The wall of hostility has been taken down.
 3. We are Changed! We are Christians! Once we were not a people, but now we are the people of God, we are the sons of God.
 4. This is our calling. And our calling is anchored in the word 'called.'
- VI. [Ephesians 4:1-2. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,](#)
- A. Paul exhorts them to conduct their lives in a manner worthy of their calling— Conduct and Calling rests on the word Called
 - B. This is the most important part of this passage:
 1. "You have been CALLED:" It's God the Father who calls and God's call is complete. God's call is final. God's call is irrevocable.
 2. God's call to His church, by definition changes each member's habitation.
 - a) Each member is washed, cleaned, dressed
 - b) Adopted , given a status of son. Named Christian
 - c) If God had not Called there would be no power of the resurrection coming toward us, no rest, no freedom
 - C. The Victory of Jesus is total. It lacks nothing.
 1. Jesus is victorious over our past, our present and our future.
 2. The walk is evidence of the already inner transformation.

3. The walk is not something the Christian needs to create or invent or make happen.
4. The walk is not something we need to DO because the work of Christ is complete. His power is present and active causing the Christian to mature

VII. What are the characteristics of the Habitational Walk—the conduct of the Christian—remember the balancing of the scales.

A. 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.

1. With all humility and gentleness,
2. With patience, bearing with one another in love
3. With eagerness to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

B. Let's begin with the first characteristic listed: 'all humility'

1. Also translated 'all lowliness' or 'all possible lowliness'
2. The word literally means 'to think or judge with lowliness'. **Esteeming oneself small.**
 - a) Apparently, this Greek term was coined by Christians...to describe a quality for which no other word was available.
 - b) In Greek, if someone was described as being humble, they were seen as a cowering, groveling, beggarly, and inferior human being. It is a derogatory word. A descriptive term used to describe a slave.
 - c) How interesting that the first characteristic of the Habitational Walk is humility.

(1) Paul takes a derogatory term and makes it a distinctive virtue of the Christian.

(2) It's new—it's the new creation. It's supernatural, not natural.

3. Humility is what Jesus Christ shows the church in Philippians 2.

- a) *Though he were God...He emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross,*
- b) A Christian is called to mature in humility because Christ is humble. We do not create humility. We don't pray to be given more; we are urged to practice/mature in what we have already been given in Jesus
- c) And it's Jesus, who not only placed the Christian Virtue of humility in the Christian DNA, it's Jesus who empowers his people to bring their conduct in line with their calling.

(1) Again, There is no 'asking for humility'

(2) There is only maturing in humility through the power of Jesus Christ in the context of the church—Christians esteem themselves small.

4. Humility/ "Esteeming oneself small" is linked with Gentleness:

C. Gentleness

1. Gentleness is mild-spirited and self-controlled—gentleness has no characteristics of being vindictive or of exacting vengeance.
2. Gentleness is characterized by a power under control
 - a) It was used of wild animals that were tamed—like horses
 - b) Such animals retained their strength but the will is under control of its master. Eg. The horse is able to run very fast, but will only do so at the command of its master.
 - (1) Jesus says in Matthew 11: *"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."*
 - c) The will is under control of the Master. God's call is sure. God's call is transformative. Therefore, a Christian will walk with other Christians in gentleness.
 - (1) Think of the Spiritual Gifts given to the church : Power under control—the gentleness in exhorting, in teaching, in shepherding, in serving
 - (2) Gentleness is not something you need more of; you already have it. A Christian is gentle by definition because Christ is gentle.
 - (3) If you find yourself striking out verbally or physically—you need to mature!
 - (4) AND you have, not only Jesus, but you have the Church to help you. The process of maturing/walking is not a journey of one.
3. As you can see, as Humility links to Gentleness; Gentleness requires to patience.

D. Walk in Patience and bearing with one another in love

1. For how can a Christian be patient and bear with another w/o esteeming himself small and without acting with a gentle self-controlled spirit?
2. Patience is LONG-TEMPERED (NOT short-tempered)
3. Look at Jesus—*2 Peter 3.9—The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but he is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*
4. Patient Christians do not blow up or retaliate — especially verbally!
 - a) You do not need more patience. Because Christ is patience, so are you.
 - b) You need to practice patience from the unlimited supply given to you. You have Jesus and the church to help in the maturation process

5. The Christian is characterized by bearing insult and injury without bitterness or the dripping sound of whining and complaining.
 - a) As Dan taught, we are always-always-always within arms reach of Christ.
 - b) A Christian who is maturing in patience accepts God's plan for everything—without grumbling—and with praise and thanksgiving.
 - (1) Patience demands self-restraint. One looks to God for perspective on one's circumstances and one looks to God for perspective on one's emotions.
 - (2) We have the church who comes alongside to give God's perspective.
 - (3) But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; THEY shall mount up with wings like eagles; THEY shall run and not be weary; THEY SHALL walk and not faint. (Is, 40)
- E. Humility, Gentleness and Patience lead to bearing with one another in love. (Or enduring with one another)
 1. In Jesus is the gathering of all God's children from every tribe; every nation and ethnicity; every social class and every station in life as ONE body. Think of all the differences!
 2. Bearing with each other is distinctly Christian AND Bearing With each other is WORK! This is not passive. It does not mean over-looking the imbalance or an accepting of the status quo of the imbalance.
 3. **Bearing with one another in love** means a Christian endures with another Christian's process of maturation because all Christians are in process of change.
 - (1) The church's love for each other is Unconditional, no-strings attached, unending, eternal love.
 - (2) This is NOT passive! Love is intentional.
 - (3) Bearing with each other in love is walked out with all humility, gentleness, and patience.
 - b) Bearing with each other will include the action of urging the other to walk!
 - (1) To Grow up. To move from milk of an infant to foods of a child.
 - (2) A Christian minds the gap of another Christian!.
 - (3) A Christian Holds the other Christian up. Wheat does not beat up Wheat.
 - c) Bearing with each other will cover a multitude of sin.
 - (1) This covering is not a place where sin is hidden-like covering up— but it is a place of exposure where the end goal is to not let the sin cause any more damage than it already has.
 - (2) This is a unique characteristic of the Church
 - (a) We not only expose and come alongside each other

- (b) but we also personally accept correction ourselves; accept mercy; accept the service of others; accept the teaching and shepherding of others in the church. (EG: Courageous)

VIII. Habitational walking results in:

- A. Eager to maintain the **unity** (SMARTY WORD) of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. 4.3
 - 1. Another way to say 'eager to maintain' is to say 'giving diligence to keep' the unity of the Spirit.
 - 2. Earnestly Striving; Maintaining watchful care
 - 3. 'Maintain' suggests that the Unity which the Christians have in the Spirit is not something they created or need to initiate, but it is something they already have.
 - a) **"Paul is not calling us to make unity with each other. He is telling us to keep what we already have in Christ!"**
 - b) Unity of the Spirit means that we are ONE in the Spirit. We are one body because we have the same indwelling Spirit.
 - 4. AND Unity in the Spirit Needs to be maintained. Diligence is required.
 - a) Diligence requires
 - (1) Humility on the part of every Christian
 - (2) Gentleness in dealing with each other from every Christian
 - (3) Patience toward every Christian
 - (4) Bearing with/Minding the Gap of each Christian
 - 5. The 'Habitational Walking' of the Christian, when practiced and matured, will maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- B. REMEMBER—These are the 'Habitation' of the Christian. They are not what we need to create; or need to do to obtain Christ's favor. They are not what we need to do to obtain righteousness or to remain in God's good graces. The Christian is a Christian! And all Christians are empowered by God the Father through the power of the resurrection with the indwelling Holy Spirit to Walk in a Manner worthy of the calling to which he has been called— maturing in humility, gentleness, patience and endurance.
 - 1. Remember Child development!!
 - 2. Christians show progression— ie Christian's mature—always! Conduct is always balancing with Calling. If they do not, something is wrong.

IX. Conclusion

- A. So, what keeps us from Walking? Are there obstacles that we need to remove in order to Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called?

B. Are there hurdles which we need to get over before the calling and the walk balance? For our answer,

1. Let's look at Paul

a) Eph. 3.7ff: *"To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God..."*

(1) Paul writes of being the very least of the saints BECAUSE he has memory of what he did.

(2) He can hear bones crushing

(3) He can hear the cries of the people he harmed and he still hears the cries of the families—the children, the spouse, the parent....

b) Let me ask you all a question: True or False: Paul had no business being an apostle because of his past behavior of murder and torture of the Church of Jesus Christ.

(1) Answer TRUE

(2) But God—Jesus entered into Paul's past too, not just his present. "The victory of Jesus is total!" Christ's victory is complete.

(3) **AND Paul has faith in Jesus who called and equipped!**

c) His past did not disqualify him for Habitational Walking with other Christians, nor did his past put a pause on his Habitational Walk.

d) Jesus qualified him! And that is enough, You see, Paul's past was NOT an obstacle but was an opportunity for balance to come to his calling and his walk. Paul's past was opportunity for Paul to speak of Jesus' complete victory.

2. So I ask you—What are some obstacles that are "preventing" you from walking in a manner worthy of your calling? What part or parts of your past (or even your present) did Jesus overlook when He called you? Which part of the Call of God is incomplete in your life?

a) The answer is NONE. As JT said a few weeks ago, 'the victory of Jesus is total!' He is very truly Lord of it all!

(1) Let us Faith here—There is no sin from which Jesus has not forgiven us. There is no sin committed against us from which He has not freed us! There is no sin which he holds over our heads and there is no sin from which he withholds himself from us.

(2) The sin which we commit and the sins we have committed AND the trauma committed against us AND difficult experiences of our lives (both past and ongoing) are covered by Jesus.

- (a) Jesus is not a firefighter who needs to come rescue us from a burning building. He does not need to come rescue us because **he already has.**
 - (b) He is eternally, intentionally, persistently present and active in it all!.
 - (3) **These experiences matter; They not only matter to Him but they matter to His church. They matter deeply.**
 - (4) He is living in those places in your life right now! And provides to you a place to rest in them. The Victory of Jesus is total!.
 - (5) [How wonderful it is for a Christian, to be given the will and power to Leave themselves alone. To come to the realization that all of their past experiences are the testimonies of Christ and His sufficiency.](#) To be able to visit these areas of our lives that hold such difficult experiences, and find Jesus there. This is our hope. Right?
 - b) You see, the idea that there is anything we need to do before we walk with Jesus and His church or the idea that there are obstacles we need to overcome before we walk with Jesus and His church, or the idea that anyone of us NEED to work through our past traumas as a pre-requisite to walking with Jesus and engage His church is a lie.
 - (1) This lie, in its essence, is a denial of the complete and total work of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This belief is a False Gospel-; It's a Wall- it's a Barrier and we know that Jesus has knocked it down.
 - (2) To believe this lie will hamstring you. Do you know what to 'hamstring' someone means? To sever the tendons behind your knee.
 - (3) When one is ham-stringed, he/she becomes lame. That person is not able to walk.
- C. Things to remember as you-ALL OF YOU- THE CHURCH— mature in humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with each other in love—maintaining the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace:
- a) **Slide: Don't ignore or forget about the debt you owed!** Never forget that you were once Rotting Dead!
 - (1) Remembering will aid you in your maturation in humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with each other in love.
 - (2) To aid you in remembering, Remember often and find Jesus there
 - b) **Slide: Stop paying on the debt!!** We do not owe God back so there is no penance to pay!
 - (1) The debt is PAID by Jesus. The whole debt. In Full. His Victory is complete—His victory lacks nothing and is missing nothing.

- (2) There is no pre-requisite to revisit your past in order to 'work through' the traumas before you Walk. You will not and you will never find the balance God calls for this way. Jesus is all you need. There is no other substitution.
- (3) Stop paying on the debt through
 - (a) physical self-harm; mental self-harm and emotional self-harm.
 - (b) If you are a cutter—Jesus paid it all. Cling to Him not to the pain that makes you feel alive. Immerse yourself into Jesus and into the Church
 - (c) If you believe that the sins of your past disqualifies you from Walking with Jesus and His church—It's Jesus who paid it all. You paid nothing , just like the rest of us. Immerse yourself into Jesus and into his church.
 - (d) If you believe that the abuses of your past makes you unclean, unusable, and fills you with shame—Find comfort in the fact that your life's experiences MATTER both to Jesus and to His church. Jesus called you and His call is sure. In Jesus, you are clean; your shame has been removed; you are a necessary part of the Body of Christ.
 - (e) **Jesus paid it all! Faith it!**
- c) **Slide: Live FREE.**—If God is for us (the collective us), who can stand against us?
 - (1) Let the past go.
 - (2) Let God deal with it in His time and manner.
- d) **Slide: The great, but created, Accuser cannot harm us.** He has been disarmed and has no power over us. But he can deceive us— I have heard many lies, which are currently culturally relevant, as to why a Christian cannot live a life that is balance with his/her calling.
- e) Church we are in danger here. An assault is being waged against us. Examples:
 - (1) You don't need to love yourself more. Love Jesus and His church more.
 - (2) You don't need more Me Time. Pour your life out for the Church
 - (3) Self-Care is not your act of spiritual worship. Worship Jesus. Fall in love with him and care for His church
 - (4) You don't need to believe in yourself; Live your truth, speak your truth, or You be You—Your Faith rests in Jesus. In Him and in His church you will find life!
2. Martin Luther ,when confronted by Satan- the accuser and deceiver, simply said: "I am a Christian."

3. "WE" are Christian!

- D. Final Exhortation: Hebrews 12: — *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. ⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood...¹² Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. ¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.*
- E. NOW—ALL OF **US**—LET **US** LOOK OUTWARD TOWARD EACH OTHER AND WALK IN HUMILITY, GENTLENESS, PATIENCE, BEARING WITH EACH OTHER IN LOVE , EAGER TO MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE.
- F. (Parts of IX. C: Adapted from a sermon from Mike Whitmer—Cedar Springs Baptist Church)