

**Ministry of The Holy Spirit**  
**Prison Letters**  
**Ephesians 4:1-16**

Last time...in Ch 3, the Revelation of the mystery of the Church

Eph 1-3	learn how to sit with Jesus
Eph 4-5	learn how to walk with Jesus
Eph 6	learn how to stand with Jesus

Eph 1-3	the riches we have in Christ
Eph 4-6	the responsibilities we are in Christ...relational in nature

This time...starting to learn how to walk with Jesus – walking worthy

v1 I, therefore...the train of thought flowing straight from his 2<sup>nd</sup> prayer for the Church in Ch 3:14-21

the prisoner of the Lord...NOT the prisoner of Rome even though in a “Roman prison” chained to a Roman soldier 24/7

Paul is “trapped in a bummer of a place”, but is in a “good place with the Lord”

- Phil 1:12-14
- appointed time to record 4 inspired letters, including this one

Therefore, Paul is in a “good place”

We can also be “in a bad place” in the world (circumstances, relationships), but in a “good place with the Lord”

- Phil 2:12b-16a
- used by Him to bear witness of His love and grace to others

Therefore, being in a “good place”

beseech you...beg you urgently, implore you

that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called...

ye: the Church, the Body of Christ, the household of faith (Gal 6:10)...  
all of us and each of us

walk...live your lives before God and man, a lifestyle observable by others

worthy...appropriately

of the vocation...the calling/invitation of God

- to come out of the world and into the kingdom of His dear Son
- to come out of darkness of the world and into the Light of the world
- be (state of being) “in Christ”

wherewith ye are called...to the obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, the called of Jesus Christ, called ~~to be~~ saints: (Rom 1:5-7)

Walk worthy: in context, first and foremost – to John 13:34-35

Walk worthy: To live

- every day
- in every circumstance
- in every relationship, especially in the Church
- in word, deed, and countenance

according to

- who you are (the children of Light, Life, and Love)
- Whose you are (Jesus', purchased by His blood, we are not our own)

and NOT

- how you feel in the moment
- how the world lives

Why would a child of darkness accept our invitation to come out of darkness and into the Light if we look, act, and sound the same as them?!

Matt 5:14-16 *Ye are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Walk worthy: To live a lifestyle observable to others that is steadfastly consist with the life of Jesus Christ...as we have learned Christ

Walk worthy: To live each day “far-sighted” rather than “near sighted”

- “eternally”, with God’s eternal perspective in mind
- not “temporally”, being whipsawed by the flesh and the world

2 Cor 4:16-18 but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

By walking worthy we bring into every relationship we have the Light, Life, and Love that the Lord Jesus Christ has brought into our relationship with Him Even if the other person despises the Light, Life, and Love of God

We are to always be kind, nice, polite, respectful, gentle...even if the other person is unkind, nasty, rude, disrespectful, and harsh

We do not respond in kind (Matt 5, Rom 12), we follow Jesus with...

v2 By abiding in the True Vine and the True Vine abiding us, we bear the fruit of the Spirit that glorifies our Father (John 15:1-8, Gal 5:22-23)

We follow Jesus by living our lives before God and man, in the Church and in the world, with

all...given completely over to, not just dabbling in when we feel like it or when the other person “deserves” it

lowliness...humility of mind, modesty...not self-righteous haughtiness

Rom 12:3

Phil 2:1-5...the mind of Christ

meekness...gentleness...not harshness or condemnation

Gal 6:1-3

1 Peter 3:15 sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear

2 Tim 2:23-26 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

longsuffering...fortitude, mental and emotional strength in facing difficulty and adversity with calm and courage

Ps 86:15 But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

2 Peter 3:9 God is still longsuffering in these wicked days!

forbearing one another...with kindness and forgiveness enduring people who are messy and “prickly”, graciously putting up with difficult people... not being a “snapping turtle” and forgetting that we too can be messy and “prickly” and difficult at times

Prov 25:15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

Prov 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

in love...the heart of the matter, the key to following Jesus: His *agape* love,  
receiving and giving as much as you have received

The essential “ingredient” of being lowly, meek, longsuffering, and  
forbearing (none of which our flesh wants to be) is love/*agape*

1 Cor 13:1-8a *agape*, a new Greek word written only in NT

Matt 22:36-40

James 2:8 The Royal Law...the Law of the King of all the earth

Matt 7:12 **Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should  
do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the  
prophets.**

(and do unto others as you would have God to do to you –  
forgive, be gracious and kind and longsuffering, etc  
because He loves/*agapes* you...)

Rom 13:10

Matt 5:38-48 all others, regardless...perfect love

1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to  
us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in  
God, and God in him.

All the while, in the Church...

v3 Endeavoring...quickly, and earnestly, diligently making great effort

to keep...guard and protect, as one guards and protects something/someone precious

the unity of the Spirit...the precious union, “oneness” with the One (Holy) Spirit,  
unity in the Church/the Temple of the Holy Spirit/the household of faith

1 Cor 1:10-11 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus  
Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no  
divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the  
same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared  
unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of  
Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

1 Cor 1:13a Is Christ divided?

Endeavor to guard and protect the unity of the Church because it is under constant  
attack by the unholy spirit, the author of confusion whose *m.o.* is to divide  
to destroy...a house divided falls (Luke 11:17)

in the bond of peace...”ligament”

Ligament: band of tissue, usually white and fibrous, serving to connect bones and hold organs in place

The peace of God (John 14:27a, Phil 4:7) is the ligament that keeps everything in place in the Body of Christ, the Church

Rom 12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you (and btw, in you is the Spirit of the very God of peace Whose fruits include peace), live peaceably with all men.

Rom 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

1 Thes 5:13b-15 be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*. See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*.

Some people like conflict; they need to repent of that heart condition and pursue peace

In every contentious situation in every relationship, we need to be spiritually minded rather than carnally minded, taking “the High Road”

The view is always better on the High Road!

v2-3 in the Church, the Family of God, in particular, but also outside the Church, for...

v4-6 There is one Body...the Body of Christ, the Church  
called to be one in and one with the One Lord (Deut 6:4, John 17:21, Eph 5:32)

(indwelt by) one Spirit...God the Holy Spirit

called (forth, out of the world) into one hope...our assured expectation

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began

Titus 2:13-14 that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

one Lord...one and only one Supreme Authority, the Lord of all (Acts 10:36),  
Jesus Christ

one faith...one saving faith (Gen 15:6, Heb 11:6, John 14:6, John 6:28-29, Eph 2:8-9)  
in a world of many religions

one baptism...a public profession by man of the internal, 1:1 change by God

Rom 6:3-5 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection:

one God and Father of all, Who is

- above...over, looking up to or inferior to nothing
- through...the reason for
- in...by the indwelling of His Spirit

v7 A gentle reminder, in light of v2-3 and v4-6:

We who can be messy and “prickly” and difficult to get along with have both received and, therefore, are to give grace

Every one of us is by nature a sinner...[Eph 2:1-3](#)

But God...[Eph 2:4-9](#)

Grace, faith, salvation...the gift of Christ that are not possible without Justice satisfied...

The Cross, the grave, Rom 10:4, the innocent for the guilty, warranted by the sacrifice of the only worthy Sin-Bearer

No grace, no salvation from the 2<sup>nd</sup> death!

Rom 5:20b where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

No grace, no Church!

We have been given a “measure” of grace, a “portion”, which we are to reinvest

Luke 19:13 Occupy: invest and re-invest and re-invest...continually

So, in all of our relationships we are to give as much grace as God has given to us

When grace fails, bitterness corrupts and defiles everything

Heb 12:14-15 Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled;

Do you know any bitter people?

Do you like being around them...or do you look for ways to get away from them?

Are you bitter?

Repent and choose grace and peace

Speaking of the worthiness of the Sin-Bearer...

v8-10 Parsed chronologically...

v9b Jesus descended...died, was buried, and entered the Abraham's Bosom compartment of Hades (Luke 16:19-31) to preach the Gospel to the faithful who did not perish but "slept by faith", believing/trusting their eternal souls with God's promised Messiah (mystery of the Messiah which was not revealed in full to them)

v9a Jesus ascended...resurrected, raised from the dead, took up His life again

v10a then He ascended, returned home...the Ascension (Acts 1:9-11) into heaven

v8a taking with Him all those in Abraham's Bosom, leading a multitude of captives who had been awaiting His arrival, filling His Father's house with children

v8b then He and the Father sent the Holy Spirit to birth a new people, a new Body, His Bride (Acts 2), to whom He gave spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12, Rom 12) in order to continue His work of seeking and saving the lost (Luke 13:10, Acts 1:1)

v10b that He might fill/fulfill/satisfy all things...Eph 1:19b-23, Matt 5:17

And in addition to the spiritual gifts, the God of order also gave to the Church...

v11 apostles...12

New Jerusalem has 12 foundations and in them are the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb (Rev 21:14)

prophets...Agabus (Acts 11 and Acts 21) and obviously others

evangelists...Philip (the deacon/waiter-of-tables in Acts 6 and Acts 8) and Daniel

pastors and teachers...to tend and feed the flock of God (Jer 23:4) as faithful messengers of our Teacher, the Holy Spirit (John 14:26)

1 Sam 12:23b teach you the good and the right way

Jer 3:15 I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Neh 8:5, 8 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people...read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.

Ps 119:105 Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.  
Ps 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.

Men called to teach the Bible, the Apostle's doctrine (Acts 2:42)  
not "about" the Bible  
not "from" the Bible  
not just "things"/topics in the Bible  
not things outside the Bible  
not other books instead of the Bible

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

1 Peter 5:2-3 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

2 Cor 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye (sit, walk) stand.

2 Cor 4:2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

James 3:1

What is God's purpose in giving these gifts to the Church?

v12 1. For the perfecting of the saints

2 Tim 3:16-17 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Rom 12:1-2 by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. 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.



2. for the work of the ministry

Serving the Lord and serving others (Matt 22:36-40) is a spiritual, emotional, and physical toil

The apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors/teachers then and now toil to “lead the charge” of continuing Jesus’ work on earth

If Jesus’ work (Luke 13:10) is to continue thru His Body/Bride (Acts 1:1), the saints must be equipped to toil in the ministry themselves

3. for the edifying of the body of Christ

To encourage and strengthen the one Body (1 Cor 14:3)

To make the Temple of the Holy Spirit structurally sound behind enemy lines

To protect the unity of the Church

Rom 16:17-18 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches (contrary to their actions) deceive the hearts of the simple.

What is the “expiration date” on these gifts (v11) and their purpose (v12)?

v13 Until...to a certain point

we all...the entire Church, the one Body, all of us and each of us come into...arrive at that certain point, the terminal point

1. the unity/oneness/union of the faith

- the faith of Christ (Heb 12:2)
- no divisions, no contentions
- of the same mind (of Christ) and judgment

2. the knowledge of the Son of God

2 Peter 3:18

knowing Jesus = knowing the Word of God

3. a perfect man

complete, living by the same nature as Jesus

The Bride ready for her Bridegroom, to be one with Him

4. the measure/maturity of the stature of the fulness of Christ

in Whom dwells all the fulness of Godhead bodily (Col 2:9)

So...has the Church arrived at ANY of those terminal points?

Have any of us “arrived”?!

Not even close, each of us and all of us

The Church and each of us are still works-in-progress!

When will we and the Church arrive at ALL of those terminal points?

In the meantime, the work continues so that...

v14 we...the Church, all of us and each of us followers of Jesus Christ  
are no longer...because we have been and we may be right now  
children...immature in the things of God, not thoughtful about or discerning about what  
we hear/listen to  
tossed to and fro...manipulated and tricked by what other voices say  
carried about...trafficked, “child of God trafficking”  
with every wind of doctrine ...false gospels and false doctrines that are always blowing  
thru the Church  
like the Prayer of Jabez and Purpose Driven and Holy Laughter and endless others

2 Peter 2:1-3a But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there  
shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in  
damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and  
bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow  
their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be  
evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned  
words make merchandise of you

2 Cor 2:17a which corrupt the word of God

2 Tim 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine;  
but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers,  
having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the  
truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

because the children were not interested enough or wise enough to Acts 17:11 to discern

- the sleight of man...fraudulent behavior to deceive
- cunning craftiness...the sophistication of subtilty and trickery to deceive
- a wolf-in-sheep's-clothing lying in wait

By the Holy Spirit working thru v11 for the purpose of v12 until v13 so that we don't  
v14,

v15-16 Let us now

- speak the truth in love...Self-less, Self-last, sacrificial love of God, His nature  
And also, therefore, not speaking the truth if it cannot be spoken in  
love/agape  
Just because something is true does not mean it should be spoken  
If “it” cannot be spoken in love/agape, then “it” should NOT be spoken  
until “it” can be spoken in love/agape

Zech 8:16-17 (encouragement and instruction while building the Temple  
of God) These *are* the things that ye shall do; Speak ye  
every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment  
of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you

imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the LORD.

- grow up! Mature in
  - Christ
    - in Christ-likeness
    - John 3:30
    - dying to Self daily
  - all things
    - Jesus Christ the Lord of and defining all of our relationships
    - Jesus Christ the foundation of all of our relationships
    - Jesus Christ the reason for everything we do (Col 3:23)

After all, Jesus Christ is the Head of the Body of which we are but a part

Every part serving the Head

Every part doing the will of the Head...serving the other parts

Every part “rowing in unison and in the same direction”, led by the Holy Spirit

And the Head of the Body Sovereignly puts every individual part where He wants it to do what He wants

We, the sum of the parts, are Masterfully put together and compacted/united by what every individual part contributes to the functioning of the Body

As our bodies, so is the Body of Christ fearfully and wonderfully made!

A healthy Body walking worthy of its vocation with the Lord Jesus Christ

- walking by faith and not by sight
- gifted by God (v8b, v11)
- bearing the fruit of the Spirit
- Spirit-filled and Spirit-led

grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
strengthening and encouraging itself in love...the *agape* of God

Now is the time to walk worthy of our vocation with the Lord Jesus Christ

Now is the time to grow up!