

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Prison Letters
Ephesians 4:17-20

Last time...in the first 16 verses of Ch 4, we started to learn how to walk with Jesus – walk worthy of our calling in Christ

Walk worthy: 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 we are (the children of Light, the children of the Living God)
- Whose we are (Jesus', purchased by His blood, we are not our own)

and NOT

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

Walk worthy: Grow up and mature in Christ-likeness, in sanctification!

Walk worthy: In the world today, in these times, to live a lifestyle observable to others that is steadfastly consistent with the life of Jesus Christ... as we have learned Christ

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

This time...the flip side of the coin: walk not as the other Gentiles walk

- v17-19 Bearing witness of God's Truth, Paul is inspired by the Holy Spirit to say
- a. do walk worthy of our calling in Christ (v1-16)
 - b. do NOT any longer walk like the unsaved, unregenerate Gentiles (the way we were)

How to **NOT** live before God and man:

As an unbeliever

- who are turned to idols and away from God (opposite of 1 Thes 1:9-10)
- who are conformed to the world and NOT transformed by the renewing of their mind (opposite of Rom 12:1-2)

The lifestyle of an unbelieving Gentile is described as

1. vanity of mind
 - depravity, a depraved mind filled with madness, the foolish and insane way of living of a person who is alive-to-sin but dead-to-God
 - call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Woe to them, Is 5:20)
2. darkened/obscure way of thinking and reasoning
 - an unwashed/unregenerate/dead-to-God mind
 - devoid of Light and Life and wisdom (Jesus, the Word of God)
3. alienated from, estranged from and a foreigner to, the life of God
 - John 1:4
 - John 14:6a
 - not born-again of the Spirit of God, not children of God
 - outside of Life, marching toward the 2nd death
4. ignorance
 - of the Living God, the God of the Living
 - the ways of God
 - truth and wisdom (the Word of God)
5. blind/hard hearts
 - do not believe the testimony of God
 - 1 John 5:11-12 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.
 - 2 Cor 4:3-6 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
6. past feeling
 - apathetic toward the Creator God, absolute Truth, Light, Life
 - willfully-deadened “spiritual nerves”

Nerves in the human body are like cables that carry electrical impulses between the brain and the rest of the body. These impulses transmitted in the body’s nervous system control the ability to move, breathe, see, think, and more.

Deadened “spiritual nerves” make a person unable to move, breathe, see, and think as does the Head of the Body, the Creator.

7. given over to lasciviousness
 - sold-out to unrestrained sexual behavior
as in the Days of Noah and Days of Lot...and today!
 - attempting the impossible – to satisfy the lusts of the flesh
Prov 27:20 Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of
man are never satisfied.
 - unending, unrelenting, consuming self-indulgence
8. work all (every form of) uncleanness (physical and moral impurity) and
greediness (never-enough covetousness, Col 3:5)

v20 But we have not so learned Christ

By following the Lord Jesus Christ, we have learned

- the heart of the Father, the love of God for sinners, for us personally
John 3:16
Rom 5:8
1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us,
and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.
1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.
1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one
another.
- the mind of Christ
 - being a servant to others, not serving Self
 - humility and submission to the will of God
 - obedience to our Father, even unto death (1st death)
 - Self-denying and picking up our cross
- to joyfully live within the loving boundaries of the life of God,
within the safe confines of the Word of God given for our good
- good is good, evil is evil, light is light, darkness is darkness, sweet is sweet,
and bitter is bitter...all terms defined by the Creator of all things
i.e. the Word of God is not religious “spin”, it is absolute, unchanging
truth
- contentment, because Jesus is enough, sufficient for all things!!!

- to look to and for Jesus, the Son of God, God the Son
 - 1 Thes 1:10 wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.
 - Gal 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father
 - Phil 3:20-21
 - John 14:1-3
 - Titus 2:11-13 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ
 - Heb 6:18b-19 we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast
- Every knee will bow to the King of Kings, God's King, the King of all the earth, the King of glory
 - Acts 17:30-31 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: ecause he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

We were all sinners, who were Ch 2:1-3 and lived as described in Ch 4:17-19
But

Ch 2:4-6

- 1 Cor 6:9-11 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.
- Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Does a Spirit-regenerated	thief	still steal?
	liar	still lie?
	fornicator	still fornicate?
	homosexual	still live the homosexual lifestyle?

No

We learned (and are still learning) Rom 6:11-18

Regenerated	thieves	no longer steal
	liars	no longer lie
	fornicators	no longer fornicate
	homosexuals	no longer live the homosexual lifestyle

Does that mean Spirit-regenerated people do not struggle with sin and their flesh?
No!

“Little Richard” documentary on the flight from Madrid to Charlotte
 Raised in the Church
 Gospel singer...a lamb who strayed FAR from the Good Shepherd
 Flamboyant showman and entertainer
 Homosexual
 In his old age, he repented of his lifestyle and asked his Lord to forgive him
 “I have to get back to the Church, I have to go back to my Savior.”
 Because, he had not so learned Christ.

We as followers of Jesus Christ are ever-learning Christ, we have not “arrived”
 but we have the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit, the power of God, to say “NO!” to sin

2 Cor 4:6-18

Sometimes we get away from the busy-ness of our lives for inward renewing
 Jesus did, and took His disciples away too for some quiet time to be refreshed

Monica and I had simple objectives for our adventure, our journey:

1. to relax
2. to be refreshed in body, mind, soul, and spirit
3. to be recharged

2 Cor 11:28 that which comes upon me daily, the care/anxiety/concern of the church

VERY real

We did not set out to see every sight, to visit every museum, to go go go
 We set out with a plan (Paris, Bordeaux, San Sebastian, Bilbao, Madrid) with very few details

Repeatedly on our adventure, the Lord ministered to me about His yoke:

Matt 11:28-30

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

Take 2 Cor 11:28 and “1 Peter 5:7” it!

We live in perilous, spiritually fierce, times

The Days of Noah and the Days of Lot

Spiritual attacks are going to get more intense in the days ahead

Spiritual warfare is very real – ask Matthew of the others who stand here

Nightmare: I, as an arsonist, had burned down the church

I woke up alarmed, feeling guilty and condemned

But I had no so learned Christ

Rom 8:1

Matt 16:18 with 1 Cor 3:9

1 Cor 6:19-20

Zech 4:6

Phil 4:13

If the church cannot stand without me, it is not a church

In the unhurried and unharried days alone with my wife, with the noise of the world reduced to a minimum, I could hear the still small voice of God speaking to me of

- the sufficiency of Jesus Christ
- the great love He has for me and you

Waking me up in the middle of the night, I heard His small still voice speaking to me about being pleasing and acceptable to God

I can NEVER attain righteousness

I must be given righteousness

Jesus is my righteousness

“It is finished!”

Faith alone is accounted to me as righteousness (Gen 15:6, Heb 11:6a)

I am to follow Him in righteousness, by the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling me,
while I wait for righteousness (Jesus, His return for me) by faith (Gal 5:5)

My faith is weak, the faith of Jesus Christ is strong

When I am weak, then I am strong.

God’s grace is sufficient for me

I heard His small still voice speaking to me about the simplicity that is in Christ (2 Cor 11:3)

The Fall: created in the image of God, man chose sin and death (1st and 2nd)

The Law: revelation of man's problem – death (the 2nd death)

Rom 3:19-20 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Gal 3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

James 2:10

Ezk 18:4

Rom 3:10, 23

John 8:23-24 **Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins. (the 2nd death)**

The Messiah: God's solution of man's problem/enemy

John 1:1, 4, 14

Heb 2:14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us

Rom 3:22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe

Rom 6:23

Grace: God's gift for His solution of man's problem

Rom 4:13-16

Eph 2:8-9

Faith: the vehicle whereby God's gift for His solution of man's problem is conveyed

Hab 2:4

Gen 15:6

Gal 3:22-29

Eph 2:8-9

The Issue addressed in Scripture: Life

The Word of God is all about God's promise of Life to the dead

The Living God is the God of the living

Do you who are dead-to-God want Life, to be alive-to-God?

Only the Living God can give Life

Life is given by grace and one can only receive Life by faith

Our commission is to know Jesus and make Him known (so learn Christ) as His witnesses and ambassadors of the simplicity that is in Christ

After an 8 hour flight from Madrid, we landed in Charlotte NC

Went thru Customs and Immigration

Claimed and re-checked our luggage

Went to the gate for the flight to Phoenix

The airport concourse was crowded and noisy, the people hurried and hassled

We were tired and eager to get home

Not wanting to sit down yet, I was pacing back and forth

On one pass, I saw a little old lady talking with an airport worker collecting the trash from the trash bins

I thought that was odd; why would she ask him for information when there are Customer Service people also walking around helping people?

I kept walking in the midst of the crowd

When I turned back, the trash collector was putting on his ball cap and he and the little old lady hugged.

Then she dug into her purse, came out with a bill of some denomination and gave it to him and turned to carry on to her gate

Hmmm

Now I'm watching her

She had not walked 10 steps when she stopped 2 Customer Service guys and said something to them

I took a photo

One Customer Service guy kinda rolled his head and walked away

The other did not move, bowed his head with her, and hugged her before she carried on to her gate

So I went up to that Customer Service and asked him, "Did that little old lady just now share Jesus with you?"

"She sure did and everything she said is true and I receive every word of it."

She has so learned Christ!

“Oh, I am so convicted!! What am I doing, what am I not doing? I’m thinking only of myself.”

“Amen, brother, you and me both! But we can do the same!”

He then stopped the Customer Service guy who walked away and, right there in the middle of the Concourse, talked to him for a solid 5 minutes before they resumed their duties

Truth is precious!

Boldness is contagious

Can not all we who are saved proclaim Is 12?

Should we not be as eager and as joyful as that little old lady to do so?

The message of Life is the simplicity of Christ we have so learned

Man’s problem is death (the 2nd death)

But God has provided a solution – Jesus Christ

God’s gifts (grace/forgiveness and Life) are conveyed by faith

We have so learned Christ and now are blessed with

- Joyful life, life and that more abundantly both now and forever
- Peace with God, the peace of God
- Love that draws and conquers

We so share Christ in our appointed days, ambassadors of

- Peace in the midst of confusion and distresses
- Joy

Basque Food Tour: “If we could find a minister like you, we would go back to church! We appreciate your energy!”

Who did they see in me?!

- Hope
- Love unending
- Grace...2 Peter 3:18

Call to Action: On your journey in time, learn Christ

Believer:

Are you a believer in Jesus Christ?

Are you a **follower** of Jesus Christ?

Are you a hearer of the Word or a hearer AND a doer of the Word?

Learn Christ

Is 26:4

Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH *is* everlasting strength

Is 26:21a

For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity

Col 3:3-4

Time is short!
Jesus is coming!
Are you ready?

Unbeliever:

Learn Jesus!

Is 9:6

unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Is 53:10-12

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Ps 103:8-15

1 Peter 1:16

Phil 2:9-11

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Time is short!
Get on the Ark!
Confess your sin, turn from your sin and face the Light, call on the name of Jesus
Jesus is coming!