

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

"Walking as a Christian"

Ephesians 4:1-3

Introduction

1. Doctrinal heights are everywhere in the first three chapters. Some of the most important issues are raised – election, sealing, salvation, church, and the grace dispensation.

2. The second section of the epistle commences with the pivotal verse (4:1). Doctrine (1-3) runs itself into practice (4-6). Remember, practice always senses its footing in doctrine. Note: The Gospel concerns redemption and sanctification.

3. Bridging the area between doctrine (belief) and practice (behavior), Paul makes an enormous appeal. The segments of it are evident:

1. APPEAL MADE v. 1

a. Logically

The connective "therefore" (οὖν οὖν) relates all previously written (1-3) as the basis for the appeal (cf. Ro. 12:1).

b. Earnestly

The verb employed is common (παρακαλῶ parakalo), but so rich in significance. Has concept of "calling alongside" of one. Used of Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16, 26).

c. Personally

The grammar notes Paul as a prisoner "in" (ἐν in) the Lord. It was in His cause and by His appointment. Because he was bound in union to Christ. No sense of sympathy, but a statement of glory in his chains just as a king would glory in his diadems.

2. APPEAL STATED v. 1

a. As a walk

The aorist tense of the verb (περιπατήσαι peripatesai) indicates a brand new departure, hence, "set out to walk." Enoch so walked (Gen. 5:22) and believers are urged to do the same (1 Jn 2:6). The qualifying "worthy" (ἀξίως axios) means it is to be in correspondence with the position assumed.

b. As a Calling

Cognates are used here: "Calling by which ye were called" (κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε kleseos es eklethete) This not only has reference to the general

benignant Gospel invitation, but to the specific voice of grace as it moved to effect what it bids. God calls as the Creator in a way so as to twine and wind the heart in the way God Himself pleases (Ro. 8:29). Man's personal responsibility is never sacrificed in this action. Heavenly grace is exercised to effect it all. The calling is: 1) High (Phil. 3:14), 2) Holy (2 Tim. 1:9), 3) Heavenly (Heb. 3:1).

3. APPEAL DETAILED vv. 2, 3

a. Lowliness (ταπεινοφροσύνης tapeifrosunes). The term used means "lowliness of mind." It denotes a low estimate of oneself based on guilt and weakness. It is opposite to self-complacency, self-conceit, self-explanation. There is no desire for the honor of men (cf. Acts 20:19; Phil. 2:3; 1 Pet. 5:5).

b. Meekness (πραόστητος praostetes). Softness, mildness, and gentleness are concepts in this word. It is the unresisting disposition of the mind which bears up without resentment or irritation the faults and injuries of others. It is the manner of a lamb (cf. 2 Cor. 10:1; Gal. 5:23; 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25; Titus 3:2).

c. Longsuffering (μακροθυμίας makrothumias). Here is the idea of suppressing anger (2 Cor. 6:6; Gal. 3:22; Col. 3:12). It is attributed to God for deferring the infliction of punishment (Ro. 2:4; 9:22; 1 Pet. 3:10). It is expected toward our fellows (1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:2).

d. Forbearance (ἀνεχόμενοι anechomenoi). The use of the middle voice in the verb admits of personal restraint in reference to one another (cf. Mat. 17:17; 1 Cor. 4:12; 2 Cor. 11:1, 4, 9, 20). "In love" may very well be taken here or with the next phrase.

e. Oneness (τὴν ἐνότητα ten henoteta). The unity which belongs to the Holy Spirit is community, identity, and a sense of common experience of the grace and power of the Holy Spirit (Jn 17:21). It is organic rather than organizational. "Endeavor" (σπουδάζοντες spoudazontes) means to make haste (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15; 4:21). Watchful custody (τηρεῖν terein) is to be exercised. The unity does not come by legislation, but creation (new birth). The means employed is the bond of peace (cf. Col. 3:14). Hatred and contention are opposites.

Conclusion Faith must have feet. The former is what I believe; the latter how I behave. God give us to walk as we talk. Amen.