

INTRODUCTION

Sept 20, 1981

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: Doctrine always senses its footing in doctrine. NOTE: The Gospel concerns redemption and sanctification.

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

1. APPEAL MADE v. 1.

a. Logically

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

b. Earnestly

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

c. Personally

The grammar notes Paul as a prisoner "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 Walk

The aorist tense of the verb 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 John 2:6). The qualifying "worthy" 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." This not only has reference to the general benignant Gospel invitation, but to the specific voice of Grace as it moves 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 (Rom. 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

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

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. Long-suffering

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 (Rom. 2:4; 9:22; 1 Pet. 3:10). It is expected toward our fellows (1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:2).

d. Forbearance

The use of the middle voice in the verb admits of personal restraint in reference to one another (cf. Matt. 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

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 (John 17:21). It is organic rather than organizational. "Endeavor" means to make haste (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15). Watchful custody 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.