

# The Epistle to the Ephesians

## 5. Ephesians 4:1-12



In chapter 1-3 of Ephesians Paul gives doctrinal information, here in chapters 4-6, Paul gives practical applications. He instructs the church on how to live out the doctrines in our “walk”.

### *Walking in Unity*

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, **Ephesians 4:1-2**

**I therefore:** based on the content of chapters 1-3, based on the identity of Paul’s calling and our calling, we are different from those who are without Christ, and since we are different it should impact who we are. Paul was a Roman **prisoner**, for the Gospel he is setting the example to those whom he is writing the epistle. **Walk worthy:** *axios*: equal weight to ones calling. How we live our life should reflect the person we are, its our way of showing the world our identity through our life. If we live and act like the world, how will our live make a difference? Its not that we are saved by works, but our life and works reflect who we are. **Calling:** Our position, we are the children of God, we are to represent God in this fallen world. We were called by God before He made the universe (Ephesians 1:4). We have been sanctified by the “Blood” of Christ, to a position of “Sonship”. (Romans 3;25, 5:19) (Galatians 4:7)

How do you walk worthy?

**With:** Our attitude as believers. We are to know who we are in Jesus Christ, and understand our destiny, this allows us to interact with this lost world. Our job is to reflect the light of the Kingdom of God into the darkness (Matthew 5:14). But how, how do we reflect light into the world? As a unified body through our outward actions, we should be different than the world. Paul lists

**1.All Lowliness:** humility, we should not elevate who we think we are, being humble is the opposite of human nature, our fallen nature is all about self-promotion and aggrandizement. Imagine being the smartest and wealthiest person in the room but choosing to be humble. Imagine if a group of people, practiced this in unity, the world would take notice, it’s the opposite of the world mantra.

**2. Gentleness:** “prautetos” meekness, Moses was known as the meekest of all men, (numbers 12:3) **Being** meek means have the power but choosing to restrain the power and position. Why restrain? Because there is a greater goal in focus, to reflect the Kingdom of God, and bring the lost to salvation.

**3.longsuffering:** Are you willing to suffer long? Or do you react on a short fuse? Being able to suffer the burden of rejection, ridicule, hate and spite is what the early church had to suffer. When someone became a believer in Ephesus, they had to be prepared for confrontation. The same goes for us. We should be willing to tolerate injustices because we have a greater purpose.

**4. Bearing..In love:** Our love should be a demonstration of this calling. Are you easily offended? This is within and without the church. Satan's goal is to divide and prevent the Church from presenting the Gospel. One of his tools is to cause division, we overcome this weapon by bearing and holding on and



not giving in to our fallen human nature. We must think about the endgame of salvation. It's so easy to get offended, politics, looks, a wrong word and etc.. We could forever lose the opportunity to share Christ if we are not willing to bear others. Paul gives a great explanation of this in I Corinthians 13:1-9.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all

things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. **I Corinthians 13:1-9**

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. **Ephesians 4:3-6**

**Endeavoring to keep:** How we walk is an intentional action, this is something we have power over, the Holy Spirit is dwelling inside the believer, the Holy Spirit gives us the power to choose how we walk.

Working to keep the fruit of the spirit, we are to keep a vigil.

Rom 8:9-11

(9) You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

(10) But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

(11) If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

**Unity of the Spirit:** God's Spirit is in all saints. We must work to be team players, we are on "Team Jesus", letting the Spirit direct us, as opposed to our flesh. The Holy Spirit is not limited by culture, ethnicity or status, so we need to let God's Spirit take control of our thoughts and actions.

#### Unity in What?

Is Paul saying the Christians are to unify with other faiths? What about Islam, Judaism and Hinduism are they part of the same faith? No, Paul makes a distinction in verses 5 and 6, there must be a unity of faith. There are essential doctrines in Christianity, where we can unite behind while agreeing to forebear on less important doctrines.

Paul lists 6 unified aspects of the body of Christ, the Church.

**1. One body,** The united body of Christ through the Spirit.

**2. One Spirit,** The Holy Spirit indwells the church. The same Holy Spirit in me is the same Spirit in my brothers and sisters from different countries, races and denominations. The flesh looks for divisions and reasons to hate, but we as saints are called to unify as one body.

**3. One hope:** Jesus Christ is the only hope.

**4. One faith:** We are saved by our faith in Christ, we must be Born Again through the Spirit (John 3:3,16). This does not mean we are to be naive to heretical and false teachings, that's why Paul is saying One Faith, One Hope and One Baptism. He wants the church to unify the Spirit with the correct doctrine.

**5. One baptism:** Part of the faith is be Baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19, Acts 8:36). When we accept Christ and are baptized, it applies to all denominations within essential Christian doctrines. This would exclude false Christian faiths such as LDS, Jehovah Witnesses, Muslim and others which might acknowledge Jesus as Messiah, but deny essential doctrines of the faith.

**6. One God and Father of all:** United in faith, one goal

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7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." **Ephesians 4:7-8**

**Each one of us:** Each "believer" has received gifts from the Spirit of God, equipping us for service.

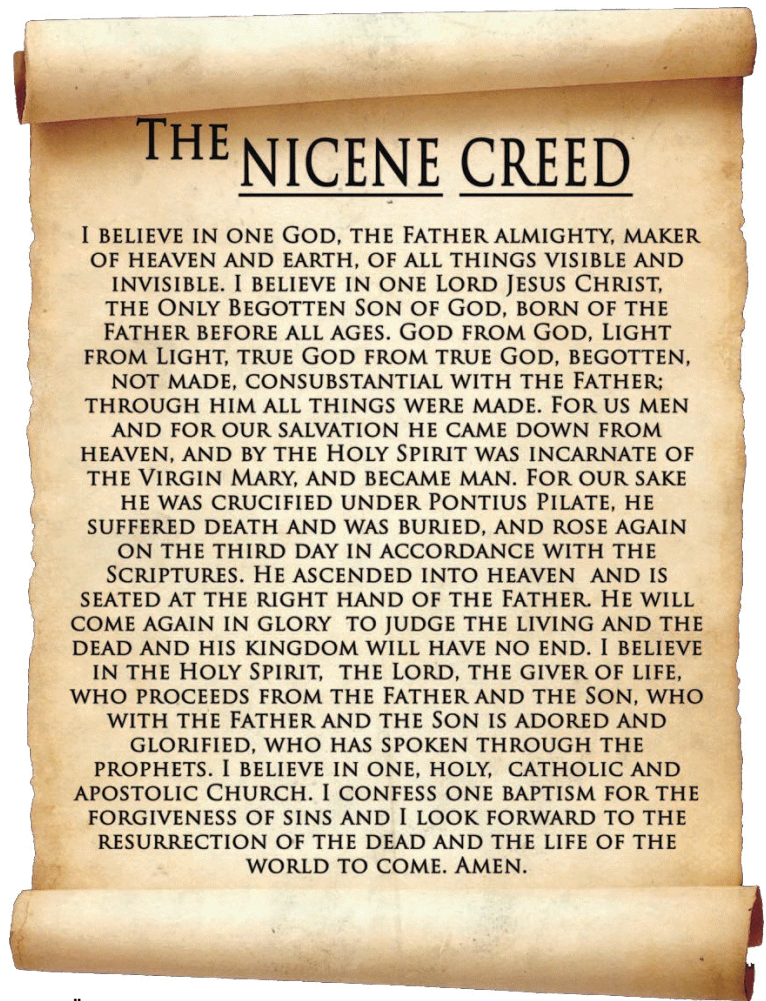
**Grace was given:** Enabling the power of God's Spirit within us.

**According to the measure:** We were not all given the same gift, nor the same quantity of the gift.

He Led Captivity Captive

Paul expands on some doctrinal issues and the gifts of Jesus to the saints. What happened to believers who died before Jesus died on the cross? Where did Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses go after they died? According to scripture they did not go to Heaven, but to place Jesus describes as *Abraham's Bosom*. Why didn't Adam go to Heaven? Because he fell and was under the condemnation of sin, just like all his descendants. The promise made at the fall, was the "Seed of the

<sup>1</sup> The **Nicene Creed** ([/ˈnaɪsiːn/](#); **Koinē Greek**: Σύμβολον τῆς Νικαίας, romanized: *Sýmbolon tis Nikéas*), also called the **Creed of Constantinople**,<sup>[1]</sup> is the defining **statement of belief** of mainstream **Christianity**<sup>[2][3]</sup> and in those **Christian denominations** that adhere to it. The original Nicene Creed was first adopted at the **First Council of Nicaea** in 325.



Woman”(Genesis 3:15) would crush the head of the serpent, but this was in the future. This is known as the *Proto Evangelion* (the First Good News), but this was in the future, so when believers died before the death of Jesus, they went to a place of the righteous known as *Abraham’s Bosom* where they waited for their savior. They were captives of Adam’s sin and their own sin, they needed to be redeemed. Jesus came to redeem lost humanity with the payment of His Blood, the blood of Christ paid for my sins, Adam’s sins and all the sins of humanity.

When Jesus died on the cross, he did not go to Heaven, but to *Abraham’s Bosom*, he promised the thief next to him, that he would go to Paradise. How do we know Jesus did not go to Heaven? Because He tells us.

Luk 23:43

(43) And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

After three days, Jesus was resurrected, the first person to meet him was Mary, Jesus specifically told her not to touch him, why? Because he had not “Yet” ascended to the Father, so where was Jesus? He was in Paradise or *Abraham’s Bosom*, a place where the saved went before the redemption. Jesus tells about Abraham’s Bosom in Luke 16:19-31.

Joh 20:17

(17) Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

When Jesus was resurrected, He had victory over death, he conquered it, not only for Himself but for all those who died waiting for redemption, including Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses. Before the death of Jesus Christ they were in Abraham’s Bosom or Paradise. When Jesus was resurrected, He was leading those who were captives of death to freedom in Heaven.

**When He ascended:** When Jesus met Mary, He was on his way of ascending to the Father, along with those who were in *Abraham’s Bosom*. Mary was to announce His victory, Jesus would deliver the captives to Heaven, including the thief on the cross, who was promised Paradise along with all the Old Testament saints, they were in Jesus’s train.

**On high:** Jesus was taking those who were captive to Heaven, he was leading those who were captive to the freedom of their Redemption.

**Led captivity captive:** When an army freed the prisoners a vanquished foe, they led them to freedom, that is the picture being presented. The captivity were those who were in the prison of *Abraham’s bosom* awaiting redemption. Jesus was leading them captive to Heaven.



**Gave gifts to men:** The victor gives gifts to those who identify with Him.

18 You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even from the rebellious, That the Lord God might dwell there. **Psalms 68:18**

9 (Now this, "He ascended"--what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

**Ephesians 4:9-10**

**Now this:** Commentary on verse 8, this is a



parenthetical commentary. What did Paul mean? Here he tells us in expanded form.

**He ascended:** Ascended into Heaven after His resurrection, first he had to descend. Descend to where?

**First descended:** Before Jesus went into Heaven, he descended into Abraham's Bosom and preached to the spirits in prison

1Pe 3:18-20

(18) For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh

but made alive in the spirit,

(19) in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,

(20) because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.

**Lower parts of the earth:** Jesus descended into Abraham's Bosom, also known in the Greek as Hades. Jesus gives the explanation of this in Luke that corresponds with Ephesians 4:8-10.

Jesus is the **One** who both **Descended** and **Ascended**, leading the lost into Heaven. Now from this point on all saved go to Heaven, because of the blood of Christ. We see this in Revelation 6:9, 7:9-17, 15:1-4, the dead are in Heaven after they die. Before the death of Christ this was not the case.

Jesus proclaimed liberty to the captives as prophesied in Isaiah

Isa 61:1-4

(1) The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and **the opening of the prison to those who are bound;**

(2) to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

(3) to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

(4) They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.



#### Abraham's Bosom

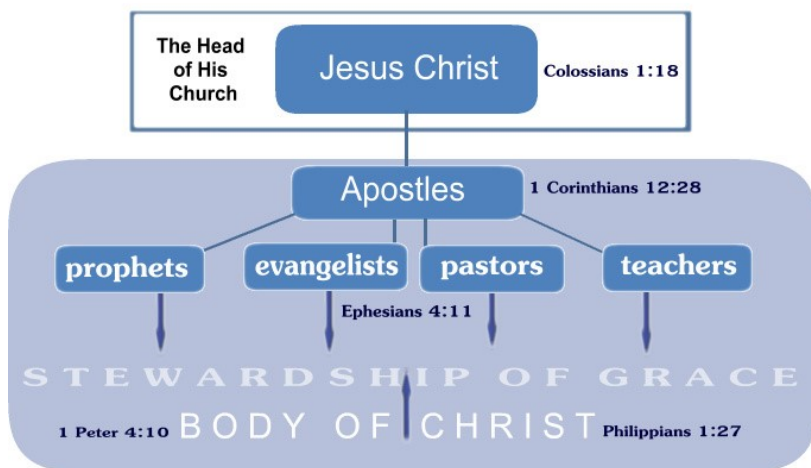
Both the rich man and Lazarus die, but they are in two separate areas. In one area, there is fire and torment in the other there is water, Abraham is seen alongside of Lazarus. The rich man can see Abraham and has a conversation with him, asking him to send Lazarus to comfort him giving him water.

They are separated by a chasm or gulf between the two compartments. Some important things to note here are:

1. Abraham's side there is water and comfort
2. Lazarus is present with Abraham
3. There is a gulf between the two side
4. People on both sides are aware of each other
5. The rich man recognizes both Abraham and Lazarus
6. The rich man is aware of his five brothers and is concerned about them
7. He wants Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers
8. Abraham tells him, that they have Moses and the prophets as a more powerful witness

19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' 27 Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29 Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' " **Luke 16:19-31**

## New Testament CHURCH GOVERNMENT



11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **Ephesians 4:11-14**

**He Himself gave some:** Jesus has equipped his church for the spreading of Gospel the Good News of Salvation to fallen humanity. He established a hierarchy of gifts.

1. **Apostles**
2. **Prophets**
3. **Evangelists**
4. **Pastors**
5. **Teachers**

**equipping of the saints for the work of ministry:** The job of this group is give the saints the equipment and resources to reach the lost.

**edifying of the body of Christ:** Saints are saints because of the Spirit of God living in them, they still need to acquire knowledge and understanding. This is the job of the church hierarchy, to edify and equip the saints for service in the Kingdom of God.

