

Sunday Celebration (March 1, 2009)
"Well Informed Walking"

"Walking in Newness of Life" (Pt. 5)

INTRO... TIME... ENERGY... ATTENTION SPANS are dictating today's way of life

When it comes to Addressing Life's Issues, we've become PRAGMATIC & THIN CONVICTED (we just want something that WORKS, whether or not it is well thought out or studied or very Biblical).

WARNING: The Christian Walk is Poorly Lived if it is Ill-Informed ... It takes GOOD KNOWING to produce GOOD LIVING

[from the chapter "Knowing is for Living"] The rather disturbing thought began to dawn on me that many of us who are professing Christians are distressingly weak in our grasp of the basic framework of biblical doctrine. We assume that we know the elements of the message of the New Testament, but sometimes our understanding of them is like that of a child. As I began to ponder on this situation I realized that, perhaps, it was not very different from the conditions with which the apostle Paul was faced. I remembered his repeated question in the Letter to the Romans and the First Letter to the Corinthians: 'Do you not know? ... do you not know?' Sinclair Ferguson, "The Christian Life", p. 1

Eph 4:1

"I urge you"

"The appeal is couched in urgent terms not easily translated into English: 'the imperative excludes passivity, quietism, a wait-and-see attitude... Yours is the initiative! Do it now! Mean it! You are to do it! ... such is the overtones" (Barth-quoted in "The New Bible Commentary" p. 1237)

"Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called"

- Who is responsible for this? ... YOU – it is an imperative statement that rests in your hands

indicative > a simple statement of fact, rather than something imagined, wished, or commanded.

imperative > expresses a command or exhortation (Oxford Dictionary)

- What word is to describe the "manner" of your life? (Your attitudes, actions, and lifestyle)—"**WORTHY**"

WHAT DOES A WORTHY WALK LOOK LIKE? – Eph 4-6 ... an Imperative Laced "What to do" Manual

- Eph 4:17 ... "don't walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds"
- Eph 4:25 ... "speak the truth to one another"
- Eph 4:26 ... "don't sin when you become angry"
- Eph 4:28 ... "don't steal anymore"
- Eph 4:29 ... "don't let corrupt talk come out of your mouth"
- Eph 5:4 ... "stop all filthiness, foolish talk, and crude joking"
- Eph 4:31 ... "put away bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander and malice"
- Eph 5:3 ... "don't let sexual immorality and impurity be mentioned among you"
- Eph 5:18 ... "do not get drunk"
- Eph 5:22 ... "wives submit to your husbands"
- Eph 5:25 ... "husbands love your wives"
- Eph 6:1-2 ... "children obey your parents"... "honor them"
- Eph 6:4 ... "Fathers don't provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord"
- Eph 6:5 ... "slaves obey your masters"
- Eph 6:11 ... "put on the armor of God and resist the devil"
- Eph 6:17-18 ... "pray at all times in the Spirit... keeping alert and persevering"

NOTE: Is the Bible calling on you to do things that you CANNOT DO?

"THEREFORE" ... What's it there-for?

The Bible is Filled with Imperative Statements—and we Need to Hear them... But they are NOT THE STARTING PLACE!!

Paul spends 3 Chapters Digging into a Pile of INDICATIVES and God-Centered Theology (He begins with WHO GOD IS and What GOD HAS DONE)... Only Then are we Prepared, Envisioned, and in Faith to "Walk in a manner worthy of your calling"

[In Eph 4:1] *he turns from exposition to exhortation, from what God has done (in the indicative) to what we must be and do (in the imperative), from doctrine to duty, from credenda... to agenda, from mind-stretching theology to its down-to-earth, concrete implications in everyday living.* **John Stott**, "The Message of Ephesians", p. 146

... Too many are looking for a "TO-DO MANUAL" rather than a "TO-KNOW MANUAL" that leads to well informed doing.

Eph 1:16-20 ... Paul was 1st Concerned with INDICATIVES (Who God is and What God Has Done)

Paul never slips into giving pointers for life, because he has much bigger goals in view. He pleads with God that he would open our hearts to know Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. So we don't dare read the communication discussion at the end of Ephesians 4 and only say, "Paul teaches four key principles... (tell the truth... Keep short accounts... Speak constructive words... Forgive others). Now those are terrific principles! But they are gutted of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which is the point of human life and the power and reason to obey in truth.

*When people think about God by instinct, not by revelation, they ask many of the wrong questions. Will he meet my felt needs? Will he be co-pilot in my life? Can I get him to make my day, my spouse, my kids, my health, and my finances work out? Is he like a rabbit's foot? If I do my bit for God, will he do his bit for me? ... In the letter to the Ephesians God tells us who he is and what he is like. Unmistakable. Radically different from our instinctive opinions." **David Powlison**, "Seeing with New Eyes", p. 43, 44*

... God is MORE about me KNOWING HIM than He is about me being HEALTHY... WEALTHY... WISE... etc.! Many people live their Christian Walk CONTENDING & COMPLAINING—because they Never Get This Truth in their Soul!!

INDICATIVES in Eph 1-3

...It is Who God is and What God has Done, that EMPOWERS, MOTIVATES, and INSPIRES us to be able to "Walk in Newness of Life"

Eph 1:3-14

- v. 3 ... The Indicative Fact: We are CURRENTLY blessed with every spiritual blessing
- v. 4-5 ... Our Walk is Effected by Our Understanding of God's Choosing & Predestining Us
- v. 7... Our Walk is Effected by our Owning Our Forgiveness and Acceptance
- v. 9-11 ... Our Walk is Effected by our Understanding that GOD HAS A PURPOSE – Things are Going ACCORDING TO PLAN!
- v. 13-14 ... Our Walk is Effected by the INFUSION of the Holy Spirit (Ez 36)
- v. 15-23 ... Paul's Prayer: That they would KNOW THESE THINGS

Eph 2:8-9 ... Our walk is built on the Lavish Grace of God... NOT on the Basis of our Works

Eph 2:13-15 ... Our walk has immediate access to God ... because of the blood of Christ that cleanses us and the life of Christ that met the Law's demands

Eph 3:14-21 ...

THEREFORE ... Walk in a manner worthy!

Is Your Walk Being Adequately Informed?... Or are we just jumping into a List of Imperative Principles

Introducing: The Book of the Month Club