

## 1. We are to Walk Worthily of Our Calling

- a. "Worthily" literally means "bringing into equilibrium"
- b. Walk "in-line" with your calling
  - i. Similar to Galatians 2:14
  - ii. Peter's struggle was always with desiring too strongly the approval of men (denial of Christ, hypocrisy of not eating with Gentiles b/c the Jewish contingent had issues), and this struggle was not obliterated with the coming of the HS, either
- c. This urging is based upon their calling in chapters 1-3 (therefore)
  - i. Election, Adoption, Union into the New Community
  - ii. All the spiritual blessings given by grace from the Father
    1. Emphasizes the gracious calling of the Father
    2. Passive voice, indicating the initiation, working, and instigation of the Father in our salvation
      - a. You were chosen, called, justified, glorified in Christ by the Father
      - b. Therefore, walk like the chosen, called, justified, and glorified
        - i. Knowing and praying for the Spirit of God to strengthen your heart to *really* believe and comprehend the love of Christ (trust Him enough to follow Him)

## 2. Walking Worthily is Attitudinal

- a. To walk is referring to conduct, but Paul tells us not what to walk, but how to walk in line with the calling of the Father
- b. Our conduct is determined by our attitude, so the how we walk
  - i. Since you are saved and blessed by grace, and nothing of YOU gained a positive verdict
  - ii. Therefore, we are to walk in all humility
  - iii. This word, *humility* (ταπεινοφροσυνη), means "lowly minded" or "unassuming"
    1. It is used in opposition to "selfish ambition" and "conceit" in Philippians 2:3 and is further expounded as "regard others as more important than yourselves."
      - a. What Scripture calls "the Flesh" is that part of yourself that works for a verdict of acceptable, significant, and special based upon its performance (determined in different ways for different people). (Freud's "ego")
        - i. For example:
          1. The Flesh says, "I am acceptable *because* I am beautiful and attractive"
          2. The Flesh says, "I am acceptable *because* I am wise, wealthy, or strong"
      - b. Humility is *self-forgetfulness*, like a body part that is functioning normally. You don't notice a body part until it doesn't work correctly, until there's something wrong with it.
        - i. Your flesh does the same thing: it is always drawing attention to itself, because it has something incredibly wrong with it, about how it looks, how it was treated, how it feels. We're constantly saying "You hurt my feelings." What does that mean? Do your feelings have feelings? It wasn't your feelings that were hurt, your flesh was hurt! Somebody made you feel worthless, insignificant, or not acceptable. Your feelings are working fine. It's your flesh that is having bad feelings. It hurts too much because it's not working correctly. It is caring too much about

someone else's verdict (maybe your own), and not enough about God's verdict of you. So it grabs attention like any physically broken body part.

- ii. You don't go around talking about how great your toes feel, yet you can't get through the day without feeling ignored, or feeling snubbed, or feeling mistreated, or looking down on yourself. "There's something wrong with your identity, your ego, because it's never completely at rest. It always wants to be noticed.
- c. Our unity and peace together are dependent upon humbling the flesh and basing our goodness in the sheer grace of God's choice of us (calling; "chosen and beloved" in Col 3:12).
  - i. Humility leads to unity. We are all in the same body of Christ, with the same Holy Spirit, with one calling, equally share in all spiritual blessings, we have the same Lord, the same dependence upon Him, the same baptism, the same God, the same Father, and it's all about Him (vss. 3-6).
    - 1. There is nothing within any of us that makes us better, or more important, or more significant, or more acceptable to God because we are all saved completely by His grace!!!
    - 2. There is no weakness of any of us in Christ that makes us worse, or less important, or less valuable, or less significant, or less acceptable to God, either!!
    - 3. We *have been called* (passive) by God with an irresistible calling of God. He has done all the work, so we have nothing to boast in and nothing to be envious of.
      - a. 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Christ Himself is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption

### 3. Humility leads to Gentleness and Patience

- a. GENTLENESS: "Using one's strength to meet another at their point of weakness for their benefit"
  - i. "speaking softly, meekly" rather than harshly or loudly
  - ii. Gentleness leads to repentance
    - 1. Wrath and Harsh Truth aims merely to reveal sin
    - 2. Humble Gentle Truth aims for redemptive of sin
    - 3. Compassion as opposed to cold indifference
      - a. Galatians 6:1 – even when we are confronting a brother of their sin we do so in gentleness and for their benefit
      - b. Meeting face to face with another sinner, and remembering your own weaknesses at the same time you endeavor to see them overcome theirs
      - c. *Humble Compassion* toward the struggling and the weak
  - iii. Power under the control of love, NOT WEAKNESS or ineptitude or powerlessness
- b. PATIENCE: "Long-anger" – a state of emotional calm in the face of provocation or misfortune w/o complaint or irritation
  - i. The inner power to bear injury without losing composure (meltdown)
    - 1. Mercury is an "impatient" metal compared to others

2. Patience is the inner ability to not let injury and sin against us control our response, make us lose our inner poise, or take our eyes off of Christ's grace toward us and our love for others, leading us to do what is wrong.
- ii. Patience doesn't avoid conflict or stop short of speaking the truth, but it doesn't *enjoy* conflict or use the truth to tear others down in an effort to puff oneself up.
  1. It doesn't do vengeance, but it does call for repentance
  2. It is slow to become angry, and even when anger is present does not lose its composure
- iii. Patience is profoundly Christ-centered and other-focused, with an unimaginable amount of hope in the power of Christ to change oneself and to change others
- c. The flesh busies itself trying to make itself feel important by (1) comparing and (2) defending.
  - i. We lack gentleness because our flesh is comparing itself with preference to another. We look down on them and treat them as lower than us, even puffing ourselves up if we help them (Galatians 6:1, 14-15).
    1. C.S. Lewis: "Pride is something that is essentially competitive. Pride gets no pleasure in having something, only in having more of it than the next person. You may think you're proud of being successful, intelligent, good-looking, but you really aren't. You're only proud of being more successful, more intelligent, more good-looking than other people and when you are in the presence of other people who are much more successful, intelligent, or good-looking than you, you lose all pleasure in what you had. Because you never really had pleasure in it, you were proud of it. Pride is the pleasure of having more of it than the next person. Pride is the pleasure of being more than the next person."
    2. It's not about being right! It's about desiring the growth in grace of the other person, not merely showing someone his/her error so as to correct their behavior.
      - a. Test: Gossip, Boasting, Demeaning Talk, Critical spirit, talking about your success in the midst of another's success
    3. Being gospel-gentle rejoices in other people's successes because you have pleasure in the success itself, not merely *your* role in the success.
    4. Humility, based upon the sheer grace of God in calling us out in Christ, leads us to be gentle toward the weak, for God was gentle toward us.
  - ii. We lack patience because our flesh has been hurt and we must defend it. We don't "bear with each other" because we must defend our verdict of righteous, good, acceptable.
    1. We are presumptuous and assume that we are good, not merely good but that we are better, that we are more important than another. That we are right and we're going to let the person who has sinned against us, or provoked us, know that we are right!
      - a. Test: Irritability, Complaining, Gossip, Critical Spirit, Expecting people to make retribution for their sin against you (unforgiveness), etc.
    2. We're still trying to present evidence to everyone (including ourselves) to defend that ultimate verdict that we are good, acceptable, honorable because we have performed according to law.
    3. The humility of the Gospel (I am a sinner saved by God's gracious choice and calling alone) is because God has done ALL the work in my salvation. I merely received! Therefore, I can be patient toward others because has been so graciously patient toward me (see Matthew 18:21-35)

## How do we get this humble gentleness and patience?

Every day we are living our lives in a courtroom, trying to win a verdict, with everything that we think, feel, or do either being admitted for the prosecution or the defense. The common worldview is that you must attain the standard of good in order to be somebody. Some days you feel like you're winning the trial and some days you feel like you're losing the trial and are buffeted by fears and tossed about with the anxious awaiting of the verdict. Paul has found the secret: The trial is over for him. He is out of the courtroom, the ultimate verdict is in: made innocent in Christ. Only the opinion of the Lord counts. How is this possible? We are out of the courtroom because Jesus Christ went into the courtroom. He became the substitute in our place and accepted the verdict of guilty which we have earned for ourselves and gave us His evidence for innocence. He bore the verdict that we deserved and gave us His. So now, for the believer in Jesus Christ, His verdict of innocent applies to us and it comes before our performance (Romans 8:1). We perform knowing the verdict is in already. We can now work without fear and with humility. You see, it is only the Gospel of *sheer and complete grace* that brings true humility. It is the Gospel that sets us free from our overly sensitive voracious egos and gives us peace with God and with each other. Now when God looks at you he sees one who is infinitely valuable and lovely, just as He sees Jesus. How can you worry about being snubbed now? How can you worry about how you're treated now? How can you not trust Jesus enough to obey His Word even when it hurts? He has died for you out of His sheer love! Where is the power of losing face? It is gone. Where is the flesh's foundation for tearing down others? It has been cast out by perfect love, His perfect love. Jesus makes us humbly bold.

Humble because our value, worth, and significance is based upon Christ's sacrifice and His grace, not upon what we have done or who we are (There is no room for boasting, except in Christ.)

Bold because we have nothing to fear from losing reputation or glory in anyone's eyes (I'm a son of God), losing our lives (I am a citizen of Heaven), or losing God's love or His verdict (My redemption is not based upon my weak performance. I am acceptable to Him, justified completely based upon Jesus Christ's merit and sacrifice).

Let us see that we walk in-line with the truth of the Gospel to which we have been called. Make it a point to closely examine the severity and the depth of the sin within you, your will to self-power and self-righteousness, to trust *your* feelings and *your own* wisdom rather than the revealed Word of God. Let the HS work His magic of conviction and the reminder of His radical sovereign grace within your heart. This is what repentance means, from confession to utter dependent obedience. We do not deserve anymore blessing than Satan Himself. God set His love upon you because He chose to. AND HE DID!! Let this truth humiliate your flesh and embolden your spirit to peace and joy b/c Jesus has reconciled you by His atoning death on the Cross!

We are called by grace, saved by grace, adopted by grace, loved by grace, made heirs by grace, and glorified by grace. Walk like ones who don't deserve the verdict, yet have been declared righteous, adopted by God, and given these wondrous riches in Jesus through faith. Walk in bold humility. Walk with Jesus, love Him, see Him, worship Him, and boast in Him and His love to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to purify your hearts and the desires that well up within you, transforming your affections and trust until Jesus becomes so overwhelmingly large to your heart's eyes that you will give all of your idols away for one more day in His presence. Take heart as you struggle with your ego knowing this: He is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think according to the power of His Holy Spirit working within us. And to Him be the glory in our lives, in our relationships, in our church, in Jesus Christ forever and ever. This is the truth!