

# Walking in Ephesians I

## The Positive Walking Imperatives

Throughout the text of Ephesians the Apostle Paul gives several passages that imply how the believer should be walking. This lesson is about the **positive** or strong imperatives towards righteousness rather than **negative** or strong imperatives against sin [the next lesson]. We'll be looking at the following specific passages:

- Ephesians 2:10 - Walk in Good Works
- Ephesians 4:1 - Walk in a Manner Worthy of Your Calling
- Ephesians 5:2 - Walk in Love
- Ephesians 5:8 - Walk as Children of the Light

### Walkie-Talkie (AKA Vocabulary)

The word translated as "walk" in English comes from the Greek word περιπατέω which means 'to walk about'. Of more relevant interest was the Hebrew use of walking to mean to live or to conduct ones self. The Greek tense is imperfect second person singular. Imperfect means incomplete, second person means that a person is being told to walk, and singular means it is to an individual rather than a group.

## 2:10 - Walk in Good Works

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Since we are **His workmanship** we recognize God the Father's master-craftsmanship in our lives and don't spend time doubting the quality of our position or the potential for our condition because of His perfection. Furthermore our being **created in Christ Jesus** carries a weighty significance because that creation was through the process of being identified with Him. The source of our life is now Christ because of our new federal head. The craftsmanship was unto the purpose of **good works**. It is significant to note that the Greek word ἀγαθός describes the quality of the works and signifies profitability and usefulness<sup>1</sup>. Of course we're not saved by works, but instead the opposite true, because we're saved by grace we respond with grace and in submission to the Holy Spirit's direction (from the Father) He produces good works through us as we abide.

As far as the works being **prepared beforehand** the Greek προετοιμάζω is not only indicative of God's eternal nature and knowing about things ahead of time, but also that God set things in place to make the events probable because of His orchestration. Of course the end result is that Paul still appeals to our need to abide by using the Greek word αὐτοῖς which implies a personal involvement [definite subject] along with word

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<sup>1</sup> Zodhiates, Spiros. "The Complete Word Study Dictionary." Iowa Falls: World Bible Publishers, 1992. 62.

walk [περιπατήσωμεν]. Paul reminds us that we're called to **walk in them** as a positive affirmation of the result of our intended purpose as Christ's creation.

### Questions for Meditation/Discussion

What elements of this passage give us peace as believers surrounded by a world based on merit?

What elements of this passage challenge us to set our minds on things above?

What elements of this passage tell us about God's nature?

What elements of this passage tell us about our new nature?

## 4:1 - Walk in a Manner Worthy of Your Calling

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

Paul, **the prisoner of the Lord, implores** the believers in Ephesus (and by proxy us). The Greek word παρακαλέω means to call along side, exhort, or instruct. This exceeds merely thinking optimistically, but instead carries a direct implication on our call to walk according to our calling: this should not be viewed as optional, something a Greek listener or someone of a more western mindset would consider. The **walking** comes with a qualitative word paired with it: a **manner worthy** [ἀξιως]. The walking needs to be perceived by God as worthy of the calling. **the calling with which you have been called** is an invitation that you have been given unto a new name (AKA the Father's name in 3:15). The invitation is *unto* a new life *from* a new life source due to identification and the outcome will be shown as you walk about in this world. The heavenly position should be reflected in our earthly condition.

### Questions for Meditation/Discussion

What elements of this passage should bring a sense of legalism or guilt?

What elements of this passage should cause us to be lackadaisical about our walk?

What is our calling to?

What does having a name imply about our position or our condition?

## 5:2 - Walk in Love

and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Paul calls the believer to be imitators of God in verse 1 since we are children of the Father, and since we're of a new Godly type we are to walk in the same benevolent ἀγάπη **love** as our Father and **Christ Jesus**. Not just a benevolent giving love, but a sacrificial love that **gives itself up** on behalf of another. This sacrificial love recognizes that the result of that **sacrifice** pleases **God as a fragrant aroma**. The Hebrew understanding of this concept would have been that a fragrant aroma pleased God.

Sacrifices for sin were offered up on the altar and their aroma was stated to please God (see also: Exodus 29:18,25; Leviticus 1:9,13,17<sup>2</sup>; 2 Corinthians 2:15; Philippians 4:18).

## 5:8 - Walk as Children of Light

for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

As Paul continues to draw practical application from the doctrine of the earlier parts of the book of Ephesians 5:8 starts by reminding us of the **former** nature of **darkness** rather than the new nature that we have, **Light, in the Lord**. It is useful to take a moment to consider the Biblical context for being a light. Light at that time was not like our modern powerful lights which can make whole stadiums and rooms brightly light, but instead would have generally reflected over a smaller area and many homes would have had one or two lamps in a single room. Light would have been valuable and not just taken for granted, and it would have cost time and been maintained. Furthermore the example we're to compare our lights to is Christ. His light of course being perfect, eminently bright and lasting for eternity. Christ is the Son of the Father, who is described as light as well (1 John 1:5), and we, too are to **walk as children of Light**. Since we carry the name of the Father and are intimately tied in with all three parts of the Godhead, it would be logical for the believer to be representing that very character and light instead of our former father's darkness.

What does it mean to be a child of the Father of Light?

Does the relationship of children & parent carry with it a responsibility in Hebrew culture? If so, what is it?

How does the Hebrew culture contrast with the Roman/Greek culture?

## Conclusion

The positive aspects of walking in Ephesians give us pause to consider our own lives. We are called to step beyond Romans 6:1-3 where we walk in sin (though there is grace for each sin) and instead walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). Our identification bring about a new life, a new walk, and a new opportunity to reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ (Romans 6:11).

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<sup>2</sup> Leviticus, because it prescribes many of the priestly duties, contains many references to the smoke of the altar being a soothing aroma to God.