

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN -

THE WALK AND SERVICE OF A BELIEVER

In chapter one we studied the most wonderful story ever heard . . . the story of how GOD provided redemption in CHRIST.

In chapter two we learned that believers are a living organism . . . the church is made up of born again persons, members of the most wonderful body ever known.

In chapter three we learned further that we are the building of GOD . . . yea, we are the temple of The HOLY SPIRIT. All believers are built together into one holy temple, the habitation of GOD.

In our present chapter, Paul begins to outline the walk and the service of the believer.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3).

Notice Paul reminds them again that he is a prisoner of the Lord. He is not in prison for wrong doing . . . he is in prison for the sake of the Gospel.

The Christian walk and service are not according to man made rules or standards. It does not mean that we are supposed to sign a pledge that we will not go here or there, nor do this or that. We are to walk worthy of the name "Christian." In us JESUS must find His earthly walk. He lives in our bodies, He walks in our bodies - and we are the Bible the world reads. We present the only CHRIST the world will ever know. If the world does not see JESUS in us, then we are not walking worthy of the CHRIST who lives within us. In Bible language He ". . . dwells in us and walks in us" (see II Corinthians 6:16).

We believers are the Body of CHRIST. We represent Him in this earth; by our actions we express to others what CHRIST is. They measure CHRIST by the way we walk. We prove to others by the way we walk that we have had a change of heart, and that we are a new creature. When the Israelites journeyed in the Old Testament era, the tabernacle (which was carried by the Levites) actually walked in their midst. In the same manner, JESUS says to us and of us, **"Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them"** (II Corinthians 6:16).

In their daily walk, believers are to express both the life (of the body), and the presence of righteousness in our daily living. We are new creations in CHRIST - but we are more than that: We possess divine nature. We are to produce righteous living, a righteous walk. The fruit we bear outwardly testifies what we possess inwardly. As spiritually minded believers, we are to be imitators of CHRIST.

The gift of GOD - His only begotten Son - makes us one with CHRIST. We are born into the family of GOD, we become a member of the body of CHRIST. The graces produced in our life by the presence and the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, manifest newness of life in our daily walk. Because we are sons of GOD, and because we are the temple of the HOLY SPIRIT, we should bring glory and honor to GOD. We certainly should be an example of grace. We should be an Epistle read of men.

It seems to me that Paul was saying to the believers at Ephesus, "I am a prisoner, I am in bonds for the Gospel's sake; but you believers are free. Your responsibility is greater than mine. You must not use your freedom to satisfy your own desires and pleasures, but you must walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you have been called."

Although Paul was sitting in a dungeon, his testimony to the guards was a true testimony; but the Ephesian believers had a much greater opportunity to witness than Paul had. You and I are read of men, whether you know it or not. They watch us, they listen to us when we talk. They check the places we go, the things we do, the company we keep, the songs we sing. As representatives of the Lord JESUS in a wicked world, we should be very careful as to what we do and how we walk.

In Paul's letters to the believers, he refers to our calling as the "**high calling**" (Philippians 3:14). Also a "**holy calling**" (II Timothy 1:9) and a "**heavenly calling**" (Hebrews 3:1). We are to walk in a way that will be worthy of our high, holy, heavenly calling. We are to walk "**with all lowliness and meekness.**" We are to walk with "**longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**" To walk in this path of righteousness can be accomplished only by and through full surrender to the HOLY SPIRIT.

We are to endeavor to "**keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**" We are admonished, "**grieve not the Holy Spirit,**" "**quench not the Spirit,**" and "**be filled with the Spirit.**" Believers should spend much time searching the Scriptures, and thereby learn the truth concerning the ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT in and through us during this dispensation of the grace of GOD.

Verses 4-6: "**There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.**"

In connection with these verses, please read John chapter seventeen in its entirety. Study it carefully, and hear the cry of the Lord JESUS as He begs for oneness in the body - the church. Surely it must grieve the great heart of GOD and of the Lord JESUS CHRIST when He looks down upon His people and sees the existing division and strife among Christians.

The term "religious bigots" has come into prominence in recent months. The reason? Some spiritually minded ministers and Christians have dared take a stand against error. And because we cry long and earnestly that there is only one way to enter Heaven's glory; because we declare that Christianity is the one - and only - religion that is right, many of us have been branded "bigots."

We are informed by the enemies of the Cross that every man has a right to his religion just as much as we have a right to what we believe; but I want to say emphatically, dogmatically, without apology and without hesitation that no man has any right to a religion other than that purchased by JESUS by the shedding of His own Blood on the Cross. The one true religion is Christianity - pure religion, which becomes part of man's very life by embracing the finished work of JESUS - His death on the Cross, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension and His return to this earth when the time is ripe.

Any man who tries to get to Heaven through any other Gospel, by any other way, the same is a thief and a robber (John 10:1). The dirtiest gang of thieves this side of hell is the gang of religious thieves who strip the Word of GOD and demote JESUS to the level of ordinary men, to prove their religious points and to keep their congregation.

According to the verses we have just read, *there is one body* . . . there is only one True Church. There are saved people in many denominations; there are born again people in many local assemblies - but all born again people belong to the one true church - the Body of CHRIST - ONE body. All born again people are members of that body, and when one member suffers, the body suffers.

There is one SPIRIT . . . ONLY one SPIRIT. That is the reason we are admonished in the first Epistle of John to try the spirits and be sure the spirit we follow is the Spirit of JESUS and not the spirit of the enemy. You cannot believe every spirit. Many evil spirits are in the world today. You must try the spirits - and any spirit that denies the virgin birth, the Blood atonement, the verbal inspiration of the Bible, the reality of sin and damnation - you mark it and mark it well, that spirit is not the HOLY SPIRIT! On the contrary, it is the spirit of the devil!

You be sure you are following the right SPIRIT. Everything having to do with our entrance into the Pearly White City is singular - never plural. One body, one SPIRIT, we are called in one hope of our calling. Every believer should have a single eye, and that eye should be on JESUS at all times, under all circumstances. Whatever we do, whatever we are, we should have one motive in mind: To glorify the Lord JESUS who left glory and came to earth's sorrow that we might enter glory through His shed Blood. GOD saves us for CHRIST's sake (Ephesians 4:32), and let me remind you that it is only for CHRIST's sake that GOD forgives the sinner!

There is one Lord. There are many false Christs - but only one Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST . . . just one. We are warned that in the last days there will be many false Christs - and they are here. Many gigantic religious movements are headed by a man or a woman who claims everything the SON of GOD ever claimed - except the virgin birth. (And I am sure that before the Rapture there will be those who will claim to have been born of a virgin.) Cults are spreading like wildfire. It is a sign of the end.

There is one Lord, one faith. You may say, "Preacher, my religion is as good as yours if I am

sincere in what I believe."

According to the Bible, you are wrong if you say that. If your religion is the Christian religion of salvation by faith in the Blood of JESUS CHRIST, your religion is right. If your religion is anything short of the Blood of JESUS CHRIST and His finished work, you are following a way that will lead you to hell. "**There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death**" (Proverbs 16:25).

Regardless of how sincere you may be, your sincerity will never get you inside the Pearly Gates. Faith in the Blood of JESUS CHRIST will - one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism! And my precious friend, that is not a baptism in a church baptistry . . . it is the baptism of the HOLY GHOST. Each and every one who belongs to the one body has been baptized by the one SPIRIT, called with the one true calling which is by the HOLY GHOST.

We have received the one Lord because we have been drawn to Him by the HOLY GHOST (John 6:44). We are sons of GOD because we have exercised the one true faith - faith in the finished work of the one Lord; and we are baptized by the HOLY GHOST into the body of JESUS CHRIST the split second we believe (I Corinthians 12:13).

Water baptism never saved anyone, and never will save anyone. Yes, it is true that JESUS was baptized. All believers should be baptized. I have been baptized . . . but the one baptism that brings us into the oneness of the Body of CHRIST is not water baptism, but the baptism of the HOLY GHOST which occurs when we exercise faith in the finished work of the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

One GOD and Father of all. Please notice: GOD and Father go together . . . one GOD and Father of all. No punctuation separates GOD and Father . . . they are one and the same. Our GOD is a jealous GOD (Exodus 20:5).

The Lord JESUS commands, " . . . **Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in Heaven**" (Matthew 23:9). So you see, dearly beloved, we are to refer to no man in a spiritual sense as our father. We have One GOD, One Father . . . and He is GOD and Father of all who are born again.

There is perfect unity in the Godhead, perfect oneness in the Trinity. In our triune GOD there is no schism. GOD the Father, GOD the SON, GOD the HOLY SPIRIT, are one in providing, planning, and in the working of our salvation.

We should demonstrate in our daily living the unity that is demonstrated in the Trinity. It grieves the heart of GOD when brethren fail to dwell together in perfect harmony and unity. There should be no division among Bible believing Christians, and if the HOLY SPIRIT has His way there will be no division.

~ end of chapter 16 ~

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