

Live Like the Doctrine We Preach

Ephesians 4.1–6

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Prelude:

I. This now begins what some would call the Practical section.

- A. Chapters 1–3 laid the doctrinal groundwork.
- B. Chapters 4–6 show us how to put the doctrine into practice.
 - 1. Eugene Peterson put it like this:

“We are at a transition point in Ephesians, moving from an exuberant exploration of who God is and the way he works to a detailed account of who we are and the way we work.”

– *Practice Resurrection*, p. 166

II. What was the doctrinal groundwork?

- A. Spiritual blessings are in Christ in the heavenly places (1.3–23).
- B. Gentiles have been saved by grace through faith (2.1–13).
- C. God brings all people together in the church (2.14–3.20).

III. How do we live that doctrine?

Persuasion:

I. A Prisoner Urged Them

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord...

- A. Why did Paul throw in there that he was a prisoner of the Lord?
 - 1. Look at what he is about to urge them to do.
 - 2. He would urge them to practice the unity among themselves
 - a) for which Jesus had died, and
 - b) for which Paul was in prison.
 - (1) Paul was often persecuted for preaching to Gentiles.

(2) So they needed to know that he practiced what he preached.

B. The Lord had already sacrificed much and Paul had too.

1. Therefore, he was not asking them to do anything that he had not done.
2. Truly, he had been preaching these things and that is how he became a prisoner.

II. Walk Worthy of Your Calling

...beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called...

A. Paul could have commanded, but

1. he wrote to them with a spirit that was congruous to what he had taught.
2. Therefore, he pleaded with them.

B. Does it not make sense to walk worthy of the calling with which we were called?

1. Into what has the Lord called us?
2. How can we say we believe what Paul taught in the first half of the letter, but then not live it?
 - a) Notice Titus 1.16.
 - b) If we do not live according to our calling, we will quickly deny our message.
 - (1) Hypocrisy turns people off.
 - (2) Doesn't our nation need to see us living 1.3–3.21 right now?

III. Qualities that Make Our Walk Worthy

2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

A. Think of how Jesus lived and died to bring the world together in his body?

1. Was he not lowly?
2. Was he not gentle?

3. Was he not longsuffering?
4. Did he not bear with humanity in love?
 - a) Yes, to all the questions and
 - b) see what he accomplished.

B. Why do we need these qualities when striving for unity?

1. Unity implies that previously there was disunity.
2. Many reasons may exist for that previous disunity, or it might simply be that one group did not like the other group.
 - a) Then they both enter Christ and enter the church.
 - b) Sometimes problems between the two groups might arise,
 - (1) threatening the unity of the Spirit.
 - (2) See Acts 6.
3. How do you want people working with you to bring you together with someone or a group that you had once considered an enemy?
 - a) I think you would open your heart to someone who has
 - b) all lowliness and gentleness, longsuffering, and can bear with others in love.
 - (1) Problems are going to arise, but
 - (2) when you have people with these characteristics working on the problem,
 - (a) conflicts will be resolved.
 - (b)

C. We then endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1. The world has conflict and trouble among their various tribes.
2. The world really needs to see us living this message.
 - a) We are so quick to divide, denying the message.
 - b) Let us work without ceasing for unity.

IV. The Unity of the Spirit

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.

A. Why do you think Paul noted “one body” first?

1. That has been the point of his letter thus far.

B. All of these “ones,” are in harmony with what he had been teaching.

1. There is only one of each of those things,

2. that is only one for humanity.

a) There is not a separate body for each of the different people groups.

b) There is another Spirit for one group and another Spirit for another one.