

Ephesians 4:1-16

Walking the Walk

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-16

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:1 "I...beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called"

Lesson Focus: Paul challenges the church to respond to all God has done for them and "walk the walk". As we are just beginning a New Year this text is the perfect challenge to the kids (and us) to grow as disciples and followers of Jesus in 2025.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd - 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd Grade: Grow with Jesus Plan Craft

Starter Activity: Christmas Gifts

Consider starting off the lesson by having some discussion on the Christmas gifts that the kids recently received.

Q: What was your favorite Christmas gift that you got? Why? (**Teachers:** Consider sharing a story of a favorite Christmas gift that you recently received or maybe when you were a kid) *

Talk about how it appears the kids received some really nice gifts over the Christmas season and you are happy for them. But then transition the discussion a little with another question:

Q: How do you **show** how much you really treasure that gift? A: By playing with it, using it, or keeping it close! *

For example, maybe you received a new pair of socks. While you might have been politely thankful for them, socks weren't something you were very excited to put to use. (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in a pair of socks and assess the kids interest!) *

This discussion should help us as we continue the book of Ephesians. The first half of this book (Eph. 1-3) was all about what believers received: the wonderful avalanche of God's grace. Hopefully, you remember some of these amazing blessings. * But the rest of this book is all about what we **do** with them. Will we treat them like socks or will we treasure them like that favorite Christmas gift?

Bible Study:

Ephesians 4:1a: Our passage begins with the word "Therefore". Every time you start reading the Bible with the word "therefore" you must ask, "What is it **THERE FOR?**" to understand the flow of thought. *

Paul is referring back to the first chapters of Ephesians which, again, is all about those blessings believers have received through faith and trust in Jesus Christ (like salvation!). Let's review the last few verses to catch his train of thought:

Ephesians 3:16-19: Wow! * This is a marvelous prayer that Paul prays for these (and all) believers. He prays that they would know how deeply loved they are by God! * Just like the gifts you received at Christmas were given because you were loved, God's avalanche of grace is an expression of His great love too!

Ephesians 3:20-21: Not only is God more powerful than we can ever imagine, He shares that power with us, His people, to bring Him glory and honor!

Ephesians 4:1b: Now with this in mind, we can continue and see that **because** we are loved, and **because** we have received God's grace, we are to walk worthy of it! This word "walk" is what the rest of this book is about. It's what you "do" with what God has given you (think back to what you did with that favorite Christmas gift!). *

Ephesians 4:2a: We are to walk humbly, gently, patiently. This is a challenge for all of us which is why we need God's power to help us pursue these qualities! Let's talk about these a little bit. (**Teachers:** Consider role-playing some of these situations)

Lowliness/Humility: Thinking of others more and of yourself less. *

- Q: Is always pushing to be first in line for something showing lowliness?

Gentleness: Using only the right amount of force or strength towards others.

- Q: Is picking on someone smaller than you showing gentleness?

Longsuffering/Patience: Controlling your temper when you are frustrated.

- Q: Is slamming a door because you are mad showing longsuffering?

Ephesians 4:2b-3: Notice that all of this speaks to how we treat others. We are to humbly, gently, and patiently bear with one another in love striving to make peace. This is a tall order, but this is God's way and it's also how God has treated us! *

Ephesians 4:4: This reminds us **WHY** we should pursue these qualities. Isn't it amazing that God would call us sinners into His own family and kingdom? And then He also provides His Holy Spirit to help us walk in His ways! God is **SO** good!

Ephesians 4:5-6: Remember Jesus is the **ONLY** way to be saved. He's the **ONLY** Lord and Savior and the **ONLY** way to the **ONE** true and living God!

Ephesians 4:7: Not only has God given all believers the same common gifts *, but He has also given different gifts to each believer personally! In other words, God gives every believer unique gifts for a special purpose which we will cover in a little bit.

Ephesians 4:8-10: This was only made possible by the victory of Jesus over sin and death. These verses picture Jesus as a triumphant King sharing His "trophies" with His followers. At Christmas we remember how God the Son came down or "descended" to earth and at Easter we remember His victorious death and resurrection where He shortly afterwards went back up or "ascended" to heaven to reign and rule forever!

Ephesians 4:11-12: Some people are particularly gifted by God to hold certain leadership roles in the church like pastor or teacher. But they are gifted for a reason: to empower believers to USE their gifts for the building up of the church! This is why God gives us these special gifts! *

If you are a believer, you might be wondering what your gifts are. Well, the way to discover them is to start serving others! Maybe you're a gifted evangelist. You won't know until you start sharing the gospel with others! When you are willing to step out and humbly, gently, and patiently serve others, you will learn what you do well! *

Ephesians 4:13: As we serve and love one another with our gifts we will all grow together to become more like Jesus! (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in a tape measure and measure the height of a few kids in class. Then mention how "growing up" as a Christian doesn't mean we get taller, but that we become more like Jesus) *

Ephesians 4:14-15: Imagine a boat being tossed about by the winds and waves of the sea. That is what we are like if we never "grow up" in our walk with God.

Ephesians 4:16: All throughout Paul has been referring to this "body of Christ".
Q: What is this referring to? A: Us! The church! It's not just a building, but God's people united and walking together in His ways. And notice that every believer has a part to play just like our bodies have different parts that all work together. *

Key Point: With us just beginning 2025, let's resolve to walk worthy of God's calling upon us this year not forgetting all that He has given us (remember how you responded to that favorite Christmas gift)! * Resolve to pursue humility, gentleness, and patience. If you are not a believer in Jesus, make 2025 the year where you repent of your sin, trust in Jesus, and receive all of these wonderful gifts. He's offering them to you now! This way we will all grow up together in love for Jesus and for one another!

Bring It Home

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

*Greetings! Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

First

Read Ephesians 4:1. What does it look like to “walk” in a way that is worthy of the Lord? Why should we bother?

Second

Read Ephesians 4:15. What does “growing up” as a Christian look like?

Parent Challenge

Read Ephesians 4:7. How has God gifted you and how are you using those gifts?

By His Grace,

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