

SERMON FOR DISCUSSION: Live a life worthy of the Lord

Ephesians 4 v1

"I beseech you, that you WALK WORTHY of the vocation wherewith you are called" (BCP)

"I urge you, LIVE A LIFE WORTHY of the calling you have received" (NIV)

St Paul tells the Christians at Ephesus to "WALK WORTHY"

There are many ways that we, unaided, can travel and make progress:

We can crawl, meander, jog, skip, run, leap and walk.

But of them all, "walk" suggests long term purpose.

- If you run you will tire quickly,
- if you meander you will never get anywhere.

So 'walk' is good. Its healthy, its purposeful, its sustainable.
So it's a good metaphor for the Christian life.

Modern translations, instead of "walk worthy of your calling" say "live a life worthy of your calling".

So Ephesians 4 v1, in either translation, is AN EXCELLENT MOTTO.

It poses the challenging questions:

- Where are you going?
- How are you living?
- Does your life give any honour to God?

St Paul asks this in Ephesians 4 v1 **AFTER** he has taken THREE CHAPTERS telling the Ephesians the great jewels of the Christian faith.

Namely that, in Christ, we are:

BLESSED, CHOSEN, PREDESTINED,
ADOPTED, ACCEPTED, REDEEMED,
FORGIVEN, FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(2)

And this is the KEY.

We can't possibly live the Christian life whole-heartedly until FIRST we FULLY GRASP just what Jesus has done for us.

Until we are utterly amazed at what Faith secures for us.

It should astound us that God:
accepts me, redeems me, forgives me, fills me with his Spirit.

We should be laughing that we are chosen, predestined, blessed.

It should make us PINCH ourselves.
Can these things really be true?

YES THEY ARE!

They are true for all who truly believe in Christ.

BLESSED, CHOSEN, PREDESTINED,
ADOPTED, ACCEPTED, REDEEMED,
FORGIVEN, FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THEN THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE RESPONSE.

Supposing you had some terrible disease and a great Surgeon came up with a new operation and you recovered completely.

If he said to you that every week for a year you must visit a different hospital and tell them about the operation you had, would you do it?

Of course you would.
You would do it out of gratitude.

Well, Jesus has saved us from judgement and eternal death.
He has saved us for eternity.
He has done far more than any Surgeon can ever do.

SURELY THE LEAST WE CAN DO is
"Live a Life Worthy of our Calling"
- **That's what he asks of us.**

(3)

And what is such a life?

Chapter 4 spells it out as one that is:

- Humble
- Gentle
- Patient
- Loving
- Forgiving
- At Peace

THEN what we say *and* how we live WILL MATCH UP.
Our walk and our words must be in harmony.
THEN our lives are WORTHY.

OTHERWISE we will be a barrier to belief, otherwise we will be a stumbling block to others.
Our lives will be UN-worthy of the Lord.
We will be hypocrites. Our faith will be a false mask.
The world will see through us.

You see, St Paul was writing from PRISON.

He was NOT in a luxurious Palace, not driving a Rolls Royce Chariot and not wearing designer togas.
Instead, he was chained and in squalor BECAUSE he wouldn't compromise his faith.

If he had soft-pedalled his beliefs he could have avoided prison.
But he was determined to live a life worthy of his calling as an Apostle and be bold for his Lord.

St Pauls SETS us an example
And urges us TO BE examples of those live whole-heartedly for Jesus. Every day of the week.

Pray for grace, pray for the Holy Spirit, to so work in you that you are such a person. **BE an Ephesians 4 v1 Christian.**

Namely, a Christian who **LIVES A LIFE WORTHY** of your calling.

Preached by Martin Tanner in St Mary's
at 8.30am on Sunday 27th September 2015 (Trinity 17)