

PAUL ... and his advice about walking
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(EPHESIANS 4-6)

Many Bible students regard the epistle to the Ephesians as the most profound of the Pauline letters. The apostle had been a pastor in this famous city of Asia, and during his ministry had introduced his people to the vital doctrines of Christianity. It was to be expected, therefore, that his letter would continue this tuition. Chapters 1-3 embody the revelation of Christian doctrine. The key-word is know. Chapters 4-6 present Christian responsibility. The key-word is walk. The purpose of this brief study is to reveal Paul's ideas concerning the characteristics of the Christian walk. It is commonly believed that policemen are known by their feet ! It is an absolute certainty that Christians are known by theirs.

Christians Should Walk Worthily

" I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called " (Ephes. 4: 1). This is the first requirement of all who profess faith in Christ. The Gospel of Christ supersedes all other teaching, and presents the incomparable beauties of grace. Outcasts become the children of God, and hope is brought within reach of every human being. The Gospel brings a new dignity to men and women ; and fully conscious of this high and holy calling, every Christian should adorn the doctrines preached. His walk must be worthy of his Master.

Christians Should Walk Differently

" This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk . . ." (4: 17). Conversion means the renunciation of former ideologies. Man becomes a follower of Christ, because he has reached the place where he believes that Christ alone leads to reality. If a man were completely satisfied with his former way of living, he would not become a Christian. His regeneration brings him into a new society of friends, where the new ideas are commonly shared. When a man continues to walk in paths which he has already denounced, either his confession of faith was hypocritical, or he has slipped again into the ways of sin.

Christians Should Walk Affectionately

" Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children ; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us . . ." (5:1, 2). As Christ loved, so we must love. This rare plant cannot thrive where bitterness, fault-finding, and carnal criticism sour the soil. When discord ruins the Church, when enmity separates brethren, the entire purpose of the Lord is frustrated. John once asked a very important question. " He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen!" (I John 4:20).

Christians Should Walk Intelligently

" For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light " (Ephes. 5: 8). It is very disconcerting to see an athlete floundering in a bog. Avoiding obvious difficulties, the runner strains every nerve in the supreme effort to reach the winning post. It is wiser to lose a minute avoiding trouble than it is to waste an hour overcoming it. Light means illumination, and illumination means guidance. Finality, purpose, decision, are characteristics of

PAUL ... and his advice about walking the Christian pilgrimage. Tramps may wander indecisively, but Christians walk!

Christians Should Walk Circumspectly

" See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise " (5: 15). A deliberate walk is not, of necessity, a hurried walk. The Christian pilgrimage is a matter of direction, not speed! Sometimes it pays to make haste slowly! Imagine a cat hurrying over the broken glass on the top of a garden wall! Recognizing the dangers abounding in all directions, the wise animal slowly puts a foot here, another there, and proceeds with extreme care. Christians should learn this lesson.

Christians Should Walk Courageously

" Put on the whole armour of God ... having on the breast-plate of righteousness ; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace ; Above all taking the shield of faith ... the helmet of salvation ... the sword of the Spirit . . ." (6: 11-17). Success in Christian warfare largely depends upon stability in the Christian walk. Great knowledge of the doctrines of Christ is negatived unless those identical truths are demonstrated in daily experience. Some people stand on their heads, but God made us to stand on our feet. The Christian walk is the foundation of all spiritual realities.

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