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A New Life Standard

Capitol Commission Bible Study

TUESDAYS @ 12 NOON in 328 CLOB (& ZOOM)
(IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

Members' Bible Fellowship

WEDNESDAYS @ 7:00AM in 403 CAP
(IN-PERSON ONLY AND MEMBERS ONLY)

The Capitol Commission Bible Study is open to the entire Capitol community, and is held **weekly every Tuesday** during the legislative session. We have an in-person Bible study (with social distancing) in 328 CLOB (Senate Committee Room) *and* also use Zoom. The Members' Only Bible Fellowship is held every **Wednesday** (unless not a legislative day) from **7:00-7:50am in 403 CAP**.

I pray that this study will be encouraging to you. The sole intent of the ministry of Capitol Commission is to serve you, as a resource for pastoral attention, counsel, and prayer. **The present Bible study is just one aspect of that desire to serve.**

— Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission Bible Study

is

Tuesday, 16 February 2021

Ephesians 4:1-16 – “A New Life Standard”

Have you thought to help a “struggling” butterfly emerge from the narrow hole in its cocoon? If you have ever been tempted to cut open that narrow hole, it is a zoological fact that you would do more harm than good to the magnificent creature. The all-wise God designed the struggle in order for the body fluid to be spread to the butterfly’s wings so they can develop perfectly. What would it be like to experience such an amazing and drastic transformation?

Ephesians 4 reveals the metamorphosis that occurs in the believer’s life through the extraordinary inner work of the Holy Spirit. The Bible emphasizes a new life standard, which produces unity and diversity among God’s people and is manifested by transformational characteristics for the believer. God’s purpose for this unity and diversity is to strengthen one another.

THE BASIS FOR UNITY AND DIVERSITY

(*Eph 4:1-6*) “Therefore” indicates that verse 1 is the pivot upon which the doctrinal truth of Ephesians 1:3—3:21 develops into the application of 4:2—6:16. The majority of the teaching in all six chapters of Ephesians can be regarded as both doctrinal and practical. Doctrine is certainly practical (Matt 28:18-20; Rom 12:1-2; Gal 5:1; Eph 4:1; Phil 2:1; Col 3:1; 1 Thess 4:1; 1 Tim 4:6, 16; Tit 1:9; 2:10); indeed, correct living (orthopraxis) is derived from correct doctrine (orthodoxy). The practical application of 4:2—6:16, however, presupposes the doctrinal truth of 1:3—3:21.

Paul mentioned his imprisonment again (Eph 4:1; cf. 3:1) and that he was “the prisoner of the Lord.” The Apostle believed the Lord had placed him in the prison, not the Jews or the Romans. The truth that Paul recognized is important because when we feel overwhelmed in some problem, we should be mindful that God can use the situation. He must have a purpose for the difficulty, and our goal is to discern what it is (based upon his Word). The importance of thinking in this manner is to direct attention from self and others (and what they may or may not have done) to the purpose of the Lord whose will in the circumstance should be primary. Nevertheless, you and I are always responsible for our actions and thus cannot ignore our responses.

WE SHOULD VIEW OUR CIRCUMSTANCES AS DIRECTLY RELATED TO GOD’S ETERNAL PURPOSES. . . WITH THIS PERSPECTIVE, THERE CAN BE SOMEWHAT OF AN ADVENTURE IN THE MIDST OF LIFE’S ISSUES.

We should view our circumstances as directly related to God’s eternal purposes. The focus, therefore, should be upon God and how He is working through the problem. All the issues of life are essentially with the Lord and not anyone else. Such a perspective is not gibberish, but is the manner in which Paul (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) introduced the practical section of his epistle. With this perspective, there can be somewhat of an adventure in the midst of life’s issues.

If Paul, as a prisoner, could “walk in a manner worthy of [God’s] calling (4:1), with all the deprivation, humility, and



Capitol Commission Bible Study
Tuesday (16th of February) @ 12 Noon - 12:45pm, 328 CLOB (& Zoom)
Member's Bible Fellowship
Wednesday (17th of February) @ 7:00am - 7:50am, 403 CAP
(ministry sponsorship by Georgia EMC)



Enhancing Trust

suffering that such an experience would have been for him, those to whom he wrote certainly can heed his exhortation. The biblical term, “walk,” means “lifestyle” (i.e. conduct); it involves Christian living. **A worthy walk means to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and is heeding the new standard of living** that is discussed in verses 1-6. A worthy walk begins with four dynamics that should be characteristic of a believer’s experience. The calling of God for those who are united in Christ is for us to live “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love” (v. 2).

The walk of a believer is not merely with the Lord; it is also a walk with other Christians. Paul entreats believers to maintain unity among one another with eagerness, as an expression of God’s calling. The four dynamics of verse 2 are vital because they “preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (v. 3). Christians are already united “in one body to God through the cross” (2:16), and they must preserve that unity through continual maturity. **The Holy Spirit promotes peace and is hence grieved by disorder among God’s people.**

A NEW LIFE STANDARD	
<i>Biblical Dynamic</i>	<i>Contrary Attitude</i>
humility	arrogance, pride
gentleness	brusqueness, pettiness
patience	selfishness, perturbation
tolerance	bigotry, fanaticism

Verses 4-6 indicate how to preserve peace. There are seven elements that are the basis for unity among believers: (1) one body (the universal church); (2) one Spirit (one means of revelation); (3) one hope (expectation of resurrection); (4) one Lord (Jesus Christ); (5) one faith (cf. Jude 3); (6) one baptism (cf. 1 Cor 12:13); and, (7) one God and Father (the Jewish heritage, and exclusive worship). Scripture is emphasizing a unity of faith and life (cf. John 13:35; 17:21), which is essential for God’s people to enjoy the wealth of relationships among each other. **God established peace for humanity through the cross, and believers are exhorted to preserve that unity in peace.**

THE PRESERVATION OF UNITY AND DIVERSITY

(4:7-16) Having described the basis for unity, the Bible next explains how to preserve it. **The preservation of unity — even though the church is a diverse society — will continue when believers are growing and maturing in the Lord.** One source for differences among believers is the disproportionate measure of grace from God who graciously bestows gifts to believers. The proportions of grace are the benefit of Christ’s spoils “when He

ascended on high, [and] He led captive a host of captives” (Eph 4:7-8).

Jesus ascended to the throne of His Father, after which He gave gifts to his followers through the Holy Spirit who He sent on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Jesus came to earth to become a man, and as the God-man, He ascended to the throne of his Father, from which He fills the entire universe with his rule (Eph 4:9-10; cf. Col 1:18). Whether the gift is one or more, they are all to be used for the glory of God.

There are four primary gifts that are mentioned in verse 11: (1) apostles (lit. “sent ones”; technically, the term refers to the Twelve who were eyewitnesses of the resurrection); (2) prophets (those specially gifted to speak revelation from God or sometimes to expound God’s Word); (3) evangelists (church planters and traveling missionaries); and, (4) pastors-teachers (shepherds of local congregations). **The gifts have been given “for the equipping of the saints for the work to service, to the building up of the body of Christ”** (Eph 4:12).

God’s concern is for his people to become mature so that we are not “tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine” (v. 14). **Scripture alone establishes and matures one’s faith, so that the believer can live the Christian life securely.** When the gifts are used, it should bring believers from infancy to maturity (vv. 13-15). Maturity is becoming like Christ (4:15).

The entire body is united with “each individual part” and this promotes the welfare “of the body for the building up of itself in love” (v. 16; e.g. 1 Cor 16:15-24). If we are children of God (Eph 1:3—3:21), then we are to act as one; it is for this reason that we have the practical application of chapters 4—6. **The new life standard for believers is to exhibit an ethical and moral lifestyle that reflects the values of Christ Jesus.**

Thank you for the privilege in providing you with the Capitol Commission Bible study. If we can serve you in any manner, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Scripture calls the church to pray for the salvation of our leaders, resulting in them having knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:1-4). As churches are faithful in prayer and proclaiming the gospel of God’s grace, our society and government *will be impacted*. Capitol Commission is committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ and promoting the mandate to pray for those in the capitol communities throughout the United States and the world.

Romans 10-14-15 affirms, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent. . . ?” Please notice the reverse progression. If we desire anyone, including our government leaders, to (5) *call* upon the Lord and to seek Him and his Word for life decisions, they must prior to that (4) *believe* in Him, which means they must previously have (3) *heard* the Word of God, which means prior to that someone needs to (2) *preach* to them, which requires that others have first (1) *sent* someone.

Capitol Commission is committed to the second part: *preaching* (proclaiming) the good news of salvation, yet this cannot occur without someone doing the first part: *sending*. All funding and prayer for this work comes from people who want the light of the gospel of God’s grace brought into our State Capitol. As you do #1 and we do #2, we can rejoice together as the Lord accomplishes in the Capitol what only He can produce in someone: #3, #4, and #5. **What an exciting co-mission! Please join us in this ministry!**

this week’s Capitol outreach sponsored by:



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NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDY:
Tuesday, 23rd of February @ 12 Noon in 328 CLOB (& Zoom)