

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 4:1-3

Lesson #14

First Steps

10/29/2017

What does it take to make a church?



Financing



Facilities



Constitution



Leadership



Numbers



What does it take to make a church?

**There may be
something else
that is far more
important.**



Ephesians 4

“1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

3

**When addressing the church
note Paul's first concerns.**

Not orthodoxy but orthopraxy

Not organizational but relational

Not mission but community

**Not outward vision
but inward integrity**

**Not uniformity
but synergism**



Ephesians

**Our wealth in Christ
ch. 1-3**

**Our walk in Christ
ch. 4-6**

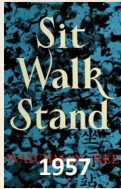
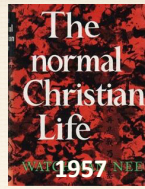
**We are transitioning to
the application section
of Ephesians**



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Watchman Nee
1903-1972
Started the "local church"
movement in China. Spent
the last 20 years of his life
in prison for his faith.



Ephesians

Identity

"sit"
(2:6)

Ch. 1-3

Our Position
before God

In Action

"walk"
(4:1)

"stand"
(6:11)

Ch. 4-6

Our Performance
before the world

Our Posture
before Satan

6

Ephesians 4

"I, **therefore**, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,"

- "**Therefore**" points us back to ch.1-3. There is a rationale for Christian conduct.

Ephesians 1-3

Exposition	Intercession for insight	Exposition	Intercession for insight
1:3-14	1:15-23	2:1-3:13	3:14-21

Before we talk & walk we need to listen & see. 7

Ephesians 4

"I, **therefore**, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,"

- "**Therefore**" points us back to ch.1-3. There is a rationale for Christian conduct.
- It is NOT:
 - What is popular or expedient
 - What will gain God's love or acceptances
 BUT BECAUSE of what God has done for us.

The way we live is a function of what God has done for us in Christ.

8

Ephesians 4

"I, **therefore**, the prisoner of the Lord, **entreat** you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,"

- The Greek word translated "**entreat**" means to "**come alongside**".
- Paul steps down from his pulpit, gets off his knees, (ch.1-3) and says "**Now here are the implications of what I am teaching and for what I am praying.**"

Insight will instruct our lives, especially our relationships.

9

Ephesians 4

"I, **therefore**, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the **calling** with which you have been called,"

- The Christian life starts NOT WITH US but with:
 - God's work in Christ
 - Our insight concerning this work
 - Our new identity "in Christ"

The way we live is a function of who we see ourselves to be.

10

Ephesians 4

"**2** with all **humility** and **gentleness**, with **patience**, showing **forbearance** to one another in **love**, **3** being **diligent** to **preserve the unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

- Vs.2-16 address Christian UNITY.
- This is perhaps more important to God than it is to many in His household.
- Household rules for the Body of Christ.
 - ✓ Humility.
 - ✓ Gentleness with patience & forbearance.
 - ✓ Diligence in preserving peace.

11

Ephesians 4

“2 with all **humility**”

- “**Humility**” (lowly minded) is a term that was not a virtue in the ancient world. It was to describe the lower slave class.

Colossians 3

“12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of **compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness** and **patience**; 13 **bearing** with one another, and **forgiving** each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 And beyond all these things put on **love**, which is the perfect bond of **unity**. 15 And let the **peace** of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

12

Romans 12

“1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual (rational) service of worship.”

- “**Present**” is an act of volition and faith which is viewed as “**reasonable**” but contrary to “**this world’s**” instincts.



Vladimir Lenin

“Capitalists are no more capable of self-sacrifice than a man is capable of lifting himself up by his own bootstraps.”

13

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Self-preservation is a basic law of nature; **self-sacrifice** is a basic call of every Christian.

14

- Our walk starts with the way we **view ourselves** (our rights, preferences, style, etc.)

Philippians 2

“3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 **Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus**, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but **emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death**, even death on a cross.”

- and extends to the degree of **self sacrifice** we are willing to make.

15

Ephesians 4

“... and **gentleness**, with **patience** (long suffering), showing **forbearance** to one another in **love**,

- These words tell us what “humility” **should look like**.
 - ✓ It should be gentle, **not contentious or demanding**.
 - ✓ It should be willing to patiently wait especially when it involves **self sacrifice**.
 - ✓ It should forebear with things that at times **may seem to us immature, foolish, and meaningless**.

16

Ephesians 4

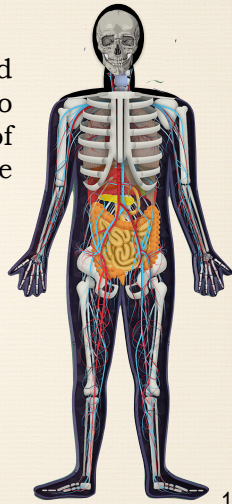
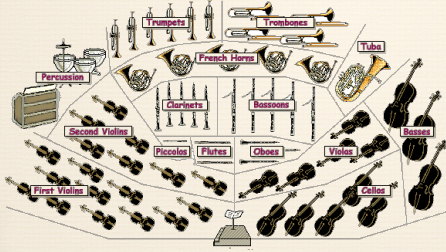
“3 being **diligent to preserve the unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

- The “**unity**” that is to be preserved is “**of the Spirit**” not political, economic, racial, class, educational, or developmental.
 - ✓ It requires “**diligence**” because it will be counter intuitive to the world.
 - ✓ It is to be “**preserved**” because it is the normal Christian life when the Spirit is in control.
- The “**unity**” is not uniformity but rather like the different parts of one body.

17

Matthew 25:40

“And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’”



18



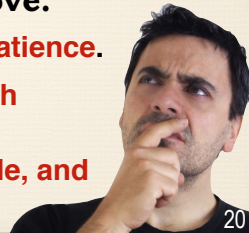
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Yes but!

- Are there not times when we must separate from ideas, doctrines, and practices that are not Godly? **YES!**
but only after we have committed ourselves to the importance of unity.

“with **patience**, showing **forbearance** to one another in **love**.”

- ✓ Too many of us have **little patience**.
- ✓ Too many of us **forebear with too little**.
- ✓ Too many of us **love our style, and preference** more than unity.



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Test your Patience, Forbearance, Love index

- Do you define your preferences as “God’s will for the church” **or do you see unity as involving patience and forbearance?**
- Do you view taste differences as a hindrance to your worship, growth, & enthusiasm for the church **or an opportunity to learn from and serve the preferences of others?**
- Are you looking to grow within your comfort zone **or expecting to grow through being stretched?**
- Are you feeling disrespected & ignored **or are you disrespecting and ignoring others?**



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MAT 11:29

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.



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