THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
"A WALK WORTHY"
(EPHESIANS 4:1-3)
APRIL 15, 2007

INTRODUCTION

We've all heard the expression, "Attitude is everything." While some may not agree completely with this slogan to its fullest extent, we can all agree that our attitudes significantly impact who we are, how we react to circumstances and how we treat others. In regards to our attitudes toward fellow believers in the body of Christ, we must let the truths of God's Word shape how we think and act. The proper attitude we should have toward fellow believers is what Paul begins to address in chapter four of Ephesians. Paul tells us to, "*walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called*." God has chosen us to be Christ's representatives here on earth. In these verses at the beginning of chapter four, Paul challenges us to live lives worthy of the calling we have received – this amazing privilege and gift of being called Christ's very own. This calling includes being "*humble, gentle, patient and understanding*." People all around you are constantly watching you. Do they see Christ reflected in how you act, think and speak? Do your attitudes and actions convey that you are His representative? As we embark on this study concerning the proper attitudes we should have, examine your own heart to see if you are truly living in a manner worthy of the calling you have received.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. Ephesians 4:1 begins with the transitional word, "therefore." This word indicates that what is to follow applies to what has previously been stated in the first three chapters. What are the main points from the first three chapters that Paul is referring to in using the word "therefore" in verse one?

2. From what you learned in chapters 1-3, what do you think Paul wants us to remember about the "calling" we have received?

3. In Ephesians 4:2, what are the some of the characteristics of a life which is worthy of the calling? How do these virtues and qualities help you to foster unity in the body of Christ? What can occur when these characteristics are not present or practiced within the body?

4. What does it mean to be "united in Spirit?" (verse 3) What can believers do to keep themselves "united in Spirit?"

OUR WALK WITH GOD

1. What are some of the reasons most believers struggle in their daily lives to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling you have received?" What are some practical ways you can help and encourage the members of your small group to overcome these struggles and begin living our lives in a manner worthy of the calling?

2. In Ephesians 4:2 Paul lists some of the characteristics of a person who is living a life worthy of the calling. Paul emphasizes this person should be humble, gentle, patient and bear with one another in love. In what ways do these characteristics and virtues often conflict with how the world tells us we should live our daily lives? What would our individual lives and the church really reflect if we truly lived our lives in the manner in which Paul is exhorting us to? How can we encourage and support one another to begin living in this manner?

3. Paul says in Ephesians 4:3 we should be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Why is this unity in the body of Christ so important? What are some practical ways we can support and encourage unity as believers?

GOING DEEPER

Read Proverbs 3:5-6; Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 9:23, 14:33; Galatians 5:22-26; Philippians 2:3-5, 3:7-14; Colossians 3:1-17, 4:2-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. What do these verses reveal to you concerning how to live a life worthy of the calling which you have received?

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"It is to the extent that we grasp the truth of the doctrine that the desire to be holy is created within us. If I really believe that while I was 'dead in trespasses and sin' God quickened me, sent His Son into the world to die for me and for my sins that I might be saved from hell, and might be saved for heaven – if I really believe that, I must say 'Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.' It is logic, and it demands my soul, my life, my all. I cannot resist such logic – I must! And so we work through all the great doctrines which the Apostle had been laying before us in the first three chapters, and we remember that we are 'no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and the household of God.' If I believe that truth as I live my life in this world, I realize that I have no right to live to myself. 'Therefore'! It is undeniable logic, an inevitable deduction. It is because I believe the doctrine and I want to be holy and I want to be more and more sanctified. 'Be ye holy for I am holy,' says the Lord (1Peter 1:16).

Thus we see the importance of this word *therefore* and the importance of not picking and choosing portions of Scripture, not consulting our feelings only, but being led by the Word of God, that we may ever be 'to the praise of the glory of His grace."

SUGGESTED SMALL GROUP STUDY FORMAT
"A WALK WORTHY" (EPHESIANS 4:1-3)
WEEK ELEVEN – APRIL 15, 2007

CONNECT …….30 MINUTES

Time of Fellowship

Opening Prayer

Icebreaker Question:

When was a time you were a part of a team or group that was really "together?" What contributed to that spirit of unity?

MEMORY VERSE (Memorize and say aloud in your group) ……5 MINUTES

Ephesians 4:1, "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS …….35 MINUTES

PRAYER AND PERSONAL SHARING ……. 30 MINUTES

1. Ask the Lord to reveal to you areas in your life where you are not "living in a manner worthy of the calling you have received." Ask your small group to hold you accountable to take steps to change these areas of struggle in your life.

2. Continue to pray for our church and the direction the Lord is leading us in the future. Pray for our leaders to be humble men who seek God's will for our church. That our congregation would offer up their lives as "living sacrifices to the Lord" and be his light to this community and beyond.

3. Pray for the personal needs of one another in your group.