

HOW WILL I KNOW ONE WHEN I SEE ONE?

Ephesians 4:1-6

One of MY favorite stories: (Robert Mager)

Once upon a time in the land of Fuzz, King Aling called in his cousin Ding and commanded, "Go ye out into all of Fuzzland and find me the goodest of men, whom I shall reward for his goodness."

"**But how will I know one when I see one?**" asked the Fuzzy. "Why," he will be *sincere*," scoffed the king, and whacked off a leg for his impertinence. So, the Fuzzy limped out to find a good man. But soon he returned, confused and empty-handed.

"**But how will I know one when I see one?**" he asked again. "Why, he will be *dedicated*," grumbled the king, and whacked off another leg for his impertinence. So the Fuzzy hobbled away to look for the goodest of men. Again he returned, confused and empty-handed.

"**But how will I know one when I see one?**" he pleaded. "Why, he will have *internalized his growing awareness*," fumed the king, and whacked off another leg for his impertinence. So the Fuzzy, now on his last leg, hopped out to continue his search.

In time, he returned with the most sincere & dedicated Fuzzy in all of Fuzzland, and stood him before the king. "Why this man won't do!," roared the king. "He's much too thin to suit me." Whereupon, he whacked off the last leg of the Fuzzy, who fell to the floor with a squishy thump.

Moral of this fable: **if you can't tell one when you see one, you may wind up without a leg to stand on.**

Like the Fuzzy, we have to ask: "**How will I know one when I see one?**"

Paul received word of division between Jews and Gentiles.

He responds by explaining God's program for the church in this age

If God has eliminated basis for distinctions, we should live in a way that reflects what God has done.

1st 1/2 of Eph., Paul tells us what a great job God has done in our lives.

2nd 1/2 presents logical implications of doctrine

Tells us: "**How will I know one when I see one?**"

Jesus told us the answer in **John 13:35**: *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another*"

Paul addresses same issue in Ephesians.

He tells us how God desires His people to live in the present age. If God has made us one, we will demonstrate that by our love for one another — by living in a way that demonstrates our unity.

WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD GOD'S WORK MAKE IN OUR LIVES?

Literary device: 5 X repeats: "*therefore walk*"

Each recurrence points to logical implication of Paul's doctrinal premise.

HOW WE OUGHT TO WALK IN LIGHT OF ALL GOD HAS DONE IN OUR LIFE:

1. 4:1 Walk in unity 4:1-16 "*I therefore, a prisoner*

for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called"

— central implication from which others flow!

2. 4:17 Don't walk like Gentiles (pagans) 4:17-32 "*...You must no longer walk as*

the Gentiles do”

3. 5:1-2 Walk in love 5:1-2 “**Therefore**, be imitators of God as beloved children; ²and **walk** in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us”

4. 5:7-8 Walk in holiness 5:3-14 “**Therefore**, do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Walk** as children of light.”

5. 5:15 Don’t walk as fools, but as wise 5:15-6:9 “Look carefully **then** how you **walk**, not as unwise but as wise.”

WALK IN UNITY 4:1-16

1st implication of what God has provided

Walk in a way that is worthy of the calling with which we were called.

What is that calling? Subject of previous 3 ch.

We’ve been called out of our old situation – out of pagan lifestyle, alienated from God and His people – and called into body of Christ

God has taken down barriers & made us 1 in Christ. We’re part of family: co-members, co-heirs, co-participants *together* with *all* the saints.

Therefore we ought to act like it! – to “*walk worthy*” of that calling! We should act like one people – without distinctions or barriers.

UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST 4:1-6

By God's design, church *has* unity. It is one.

EXHORTATION TO A WORTHY WALK 4:1 *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of calling to which you’ve been called,*

We’ve been called out of our old situation; called into body of Christ!

ATTITUDE THAT ACCOMPANIES A WORTHY WALK 4:2-3 “*with all humility & gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*”

Attitudes are different than pagan world

On both sides, Paul's concept of unity is bracketed by the calling of God.

Attitude is appropriate in light of God's calling when we were *still* sinful pagans.

1 “Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called”

Attitude is appropriate because we all received same calling. **4** “*you were called to the*

one hope that belongs to your call.”

What is this attitude?

* **Be humble** — “*with all humility*”

Humility was never a virtue in Greek world

What was respected was “a great-souled” man— proud, self-sufficient man, who could handle any situation; didn’t need anybody (= “*macho*” man!!!)

Among God’s people, humility is supreme virtue.

As a boy, George Washington wrote in his exercise book, “Play not the Peacock.” When

elected commander in chief of the U.S. Army, he stated, "I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with."

Whitefield was a hard-nosed Calvinist; John Wesley was a died-in-the-wool Wesleyan. They differed on eternal security, sinless perfection, and predestination. When Whitefield died, John Wesley was asked whether he expected to see Whitefield in heaven. Wesley replied, "No, I do not. George Whitefield will be so close to the throne of God that I don't expect I'll get close enough to catch a glimpse of him."

* **Be gentle** — "*with gentleness*" (meekness) — what marked Moses & Jesus

We think blessed are the strong, the shrewd, those who stand up for their rights, who refuse to be taken advantage of. We put high value on self-assertion. A "strong" person is one who not only does what he wills but also bends others to do his will. Biblical concept of meekness is different. "*Meekness*" describes a well-trained animal. Wild, unruly animals are worthless; when trained they become meek—teachable & quiet. **Meekness is strength under God's control**; gentleness is true power.

* **Be patient** — "*long-suffering*" (patience, with offensive people)

* **Put up with one another in love**

* **Strive** (stretch out, exert effort) **to maintain the unity of the Spirit**

God has called people who are different, to work together, under control of His Spirit, to accomplish His will and glorify Him.

Casey Stengel: "It's easy to get good players. Gettin' em to play together, that's the hard part."

That's why this is called the unity *of the Spirit*.

GOD produces HIS unity in us.

HE gives peace in midst of broad diversity.

None of these qualities comes naturally to humans — even *Christians*!

Paul urges us to act like part of the family.

CAUSE FOR A WORTHY WALK 4:4-6 ⁴*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—* ⁵*one Lord, one faith, one baptism,* ⁶*one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

Misunderstandings about what unity is.

[Don't fill in notes for a minute—I want to speak to issue not included in your notes!]

Many talk about unity of all people—we *all have one Father, therefore all are one!*

Christian unity isn't a spineless unity, that doesn't care what you believe!

This passage talks about BASIS for our unity—it's all about WHAT we believe! It's not true that "any old faith will do!" All roads don't lead to the same God!

True unity is based on the fact that we have ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE God!

We *aren't* one with everybody! But the body of Christ IS one *in HIM!*

Paul directs attention to *cause* of this walk, as well as defining the *nature* of true unity.

Points to things true Christian unity is *NOT*!

Unity is not uniformity—it's not sameness! Not everybody looking alike, doing same things.

Unity is not agreeing about everything

Unity does not require that you be together (in same place)

Unity does not require you know each other.

True unity IS based on fact that: We ARE one!

One body

One Spirit

One hope

One Lord

One faith

One baptism

One God and Father, Who is over all, through all and in all.

We are One! Share 7 common characteristics

Unity's based on fact we share common roots.

Unity's based on fact we share common purpose

Unity isn't limited to our church; it's shared with God's entire church
{around the world!}

We ARE one in Christ!

Our gathering together for celebration on Sunday morning is an acknowledgement of our *oneness*—

—there may be many things we don't agree on.

—but we have common roots & common purpose.

We share one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all who is over all of us, who works through us all, & in us all!

We are one in Christ!

We are family. We ought to act like it!

We ought to be teaching and modeling how to live as God's family!

My sister and I are very different.

She participates in different activities; enjoys different things.

But when all is said and done, we have the same father; we have respect & love for one another.

After all, **WE'RE FAMILY!**

That's the way it is in God's family!

It doesn't matter what we were like before Christ came into our life

It doesn't matter how long we've been a Christian

It doesn't matter what color our skin may be!

...what language we speak!

...what social class we belong to!

...how many decrees we have after our name!

...how much money we make!

... how old we are! ... what kind of music we like! or how we prefer to worship!

We're going to spend eternity together!

We'd better learn to enjoy one another!

We are one in Christ! Therefore we ought to act like one:

...in humility – not self-centered desire to have our way

... with gentleness – ... with patience

... putting up with people who are hard to get along with

...striving energetically to maintain unity & peace.

We are one in Christ! We ought to act like it!

Kent Hughes: Spoke to a young man so starved for love that he has his hair cut once a week just to be touched by another human hand in a non-threatening way!

When's the last time we spoke to someone who comes to church, just so they could be touched by someone else in a non-threatening way?!! ***Something's wrong when people have to pay a barber to get what the church is suppose to give free!***

=> We are one in the Bond of Love