

Rom. 14:19
So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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OUR LIFE; A WORTHY WALK by Jim Stauffer

As children of God (**1 John 3:1; Galatians 3:26**), we are taught to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, Who has called us *...out of darkness into His marvelous light* (**1 Pet. 2:9**).

Paul describes this worthy walk on a couple of occasions. He tells the Ephesian brethren, they are to, *...walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...* (**Ephesians 4:1**). He follows that with the modifiers that define what worthy is. They are to walk in humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance, all being done in love.

The child of God is in possession of the most powerful and yet most gracious message ever received of mankind. He has been offered and has received pardon from his sins and stands justified before God because of his faith in Christ and his obedience to that message (**Romans 3:24-26; Hebrews 5:8,9**). He now looks forward to the promise of being in heaven with God for all eternity (**1 Peter 1:3-4**).

There is then a tendency to feel pleased, even proud of his special relationship with the God of heaven and then possibly arrogant toward those who have not yet received that message. However, that message is designed to lead one to humility, to cause one to be gentle toward others, even patient and tolerant as they come to understand the message of the gospel. By the statement of the apostle in this text, we can know we have failed to receive the message if we are not walking a worthy walk as he describes it.

Again, he uses this phrase in **Colossians 1:10-12**, *...so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in*

Light." Notice how different words paint the very same picture. We are to *...walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.*

He tells us this worthy walk will please Him by bearing fruit in good works, increasing in knowledge of God, strengthened by His glorious might, becoming steadfast and patient, being thankful to God Who has qualified us to share this message of inheritance with others.

This message and all the wonderful things it has done for us is to be shared with others. We are to do so with humility. We are to be patient and steadfast in our approach. And we are to be thankful for the very opportunity with which we are blessed, the opportunity to share this message with others.

Yes, we begin by obeying the commands of the Lord out of love for Him, the One Who died for us (**John 14:15**). But the growth that is to take place in the life of the child of God (**2 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 5:12-14**) is to lead us to a level of maturity that enables us to walk this worthy walk.

Are we walking the worthy walk? Or are we have we become complacent and uncaring about the souls of others?

ZEPHANIAH THE SON OF CUSHI

"The word of the Lord" came to Zephaniah. The phrase, *"The word of the Lord"* is common to the prophets of God (**Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1**); we naturally expect these prophets, God's spokesmen, to be the recipients and messengers of God's word and not a diluted, false message. Their connection to Jehovah was established early in Old Testament history. When God made His covenant with Israel, He told Moses; *"Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the*

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LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians” (Exodus 6:6). Now, hundreds of years later, God is still speaking His words to His servants the prophets (Zechariah 1:6). Zephaniah 1:1 identifies the prophet’s ancestry which stretches back four generations. His father Cushi (Jeremiah 36:14) and Hezekiah, the fourteenth king of Judah (there are others named “Hezekiah”), along with Judah’s current king, Josiah, places the prophet in good stead regarding faithfulness to Jehovah (2 Kings 18-22). Josiah’s reign, 640-609BC, places Zephaniah’s prophecy in the latter part of the seventh century.

Josiah’s reign started at an early age, continuing until his premature death at age thirty-nine (2 Kings 22:1). Judah’s moral decay was fueled by idolatry and by the refusal of God’s own people to heed God’s offer of repentance. Josiah’s reforms did good; his discovery of the book of the Law (2 Kings 22:8), and his efforts to ward off invasions from Assyria and Egypt, brought a brief reprieve from the dangers of resisting Jehovah. Soon, the Babylonians invaded the land, bringing a barrenness to God’s people.

Zephaniah says that God’s judgment is coming. None would be exempt. *“All things”* (1:2) will be subject to God’s anger; He would not abide with His creation forever. Not only would Judah face judgment, but the Lord also promised to *“cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the names of the idolatrous priests along with the priests”* (1:4). Even with Josiah’s initial successes in reform, the remnant of Baal still plagued the land. Is it difficult to get rid of all the lingering stench of idolatry? God’s people had divided hearts. *“And those who bow down on the housetops to the host of heaven, and those who bow down and swear to the Lord and yet swear by Milcom, and those who have turned back from following the Lord, and those who have not sought the Lord or inquired of Him”* (1:5-6). **First Kings 11:5** says: *“For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites.”*

Zephaniah’s message says: When you mix the worship of idols with the worship of God, judgment will come.

“Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near, for the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests” (1:7). The day of the Lord must come. Jehovah is just and righteous. As sovereign over His universe, He must act in accordance with His nature. The sacrifice of judgment on God’s enemies will be the accepted sacrifice before the Lord. And why would God’s people then be surprised? They refused to consult God; they would not listen to Him. The only proper response to the Lord is total commitment.

Yet we say: Well, that was a long time ago. Times have changed. We are good Christians. While we are not perfect, we make a nice show of serving God. Do we? *“But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds”* (Romans 2:5-6).

Randy Harshbarger

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

by Sean Cavender

When we read of the teachings, miracles, and life of Jesus the Christ, we cannot help but to be impressed with who He is as the divine Son of God. While Jesus was on the earth and living among men, He revealed the Father to mankind. God is full of grace and truth (John 1:14). The Son of God came here to do everything the Father had commanded; Jesus did not come by His own initiative and authority (John 5:19). However forceful the teachings of Christ were, and as amazing His miracles impressed people, yet people rejected Him. They denied His bold claims to be eternal in nature, and to be equal with the Father. Even today, many reject the notion that Jesus of Nazareth was divine. They claim He was a good man, but not God. Let’s consider what the Bible teaches and how the Deity of Jesus is defended in Scripture.

The apostle John begins His record of the gospel account with a defense of Jesus’ Deity. The apostle recognizes the importance of this very subject because he wrote of how Jesus would be rejected (John 1:11). However, for those who would be willing to accept and believe in Jesus, they may become the children of God (John 1:12-13). Thus, this subject is a matter of eternal salvation.

Pre-Existence Before Time (John 1:1a, 2)

The Word, the same Word which became flesh, existed at the beginning of time. *“In the beginning was the Word...”* The Word was in existence in nature, in function, and in person. Jesus claimed this pre-existence even in His teachings. In one of His many confrontations with the Jews about His ministry, He said that father Abraham looked forward to the day in which Christ would come to fulfill the promise (John 8:56). Abraham had been dead for over 1500 years by the point of Christ’s ministry. The Jews asked Jesus how He had seen Abraham, and His reply: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am,”* (John 8:58). *“I*

AM" is a reference to the name of God by which Moses was to identify the Lord unto the Egyptians in freeing the Israelites. This was an audacious claim of Christ to claim existence before the day of Abraham.

Fellowship With God (John 1:1b)

The Word which became flesh had also dwelt with God. The Word had been in close communion with the Father, seeing God as no other had ever done before (**John 1:18**). Christ, in His heavenly state, was in the bosom of the Father - a place of closeness and intimacy. Jesus had dwelt with God and shared a unique relationship with the Father, being able to see God in His full power and majesty. By implication, we see there are at least two distinct persons, i.e., rational individualities that make up two persons in the Godhead. These two persons in the Godhead are unified and are one in purpose (**John 10:30**). Their unity is fellowship with one another.

The Word's Divine Nature (John 1:1c)

The Word was God. We noted that the Word was distinct from God the Father, but the Word is God. The Father and the Son are not two different gods, but they are both partakers of the one divine nature, i.e., the state of being God. Jesus said, "*I and the Father are one,*" (**John 10:30**). Jesus also claimed that God was His Father, claiming to have the same nature as God and equal with God (**John 5:17,18**).

The Word's Divine Power (John 1:3)

The Word was instrumental in the creation of the heavens and the earth. Jesus Christ possessed the power of God which was evidenced during His time on earth by the miracles He performed. The miracles that He performed substantiated His claims to be God, and proved Himself to those who heard Him. The purpose of those miracles were to instill belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (**John 20:31**). By believing in Jesus, the Son of God, then we may have eternal life (**John 3:16**). It was for this purpose that John wrote this gospel (**John 20:30, 31**). The miracles and acts of our Lord Jesus point to the need to believe in Jesus and His Deity.

The Right to Choose

In **Deuteronomy 30** we have a passage of scripture which guarantees man's right to choose for himself concerning his conduct and his destiny. It says: "*See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments,*

that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them." In essence He is saying, "I give you the right to choose life or death. In case you need help with the choice here's a hint: Choose life! But it's your choice."

What does this mean and how can I apply it in my life? Well, young people as we all recall, are very big on making their own choices and decisions. In Western culture almost everyone is so. We highly value our personal freedom to choose for ourselves. We insist on our God-given moral right to choose but we often fail to understand that the moral right to choose is no guarantee that all options are equally morally right. The thief had the option to not steal, but chose to steal. The immoral had the option to practice morality, but did not do so.

Our country is now making a choice about our direction. Whatever direction we choose is our choice but we need not think that God will not bring upon us the consequences of our choice as a nation. Just as He warned ancient Israel and then left them free to make their choice, He will do so with us. Let us choose wisely!

Cleveland Reddinger

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**Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563,
Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ.**

**We believe in worshiping and serving the
Lord as He has instructed in His word.**

Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

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Down



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10