

Walk of the New Man 03

by Rick Bovey

Rick Bovey's sermon encourages believers to walk worthy of their calling while fostering unity and recognizing diversity within the body of Christ.

Duration: 30:23

Scripture: Psalm 96:1, Psalm 100:1, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 4:7, Ephesians 4:12-13

Topics: "New Man"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker breaks down the passage into three parts. He begins by discussing the growth stages of children and relates it to the spiritual growth of believers. He then mentions the upcoming arrival of a minister and expresses excitement about it. The speaker goes on to explain that the sermon will focus on Ephesians chapters 4, 5, and part of chapter 6. He emphasizes the importance of unity, diversity, and edification in the body of Christ, and how believers should reflect the character of Jesus.

Transcript

Exciting time for our family to be here. My wife and children are here and I know Lou and Margaret Clarkson are very glad to see that because the times I've had up at Central Gospel Chapel in the last couple years that I've never been able to take my wife or children except for one son this summer and they say, you sure you're married? Yeah, I really am married and so I make sure that Lou had opportunity to meet my wife. I'm not sure Margaret's met my wife yet and I know where she is now.

She left again. But anyway, we're very glad to be here and I also appreciate the fact that some of you are roughing it here this week and you're actually living in those cabins. And I know there is a spiritual principle that when the person who is ministering the Word of God ought to set an example for people that are going through things like that and so I don't know what they did to me.

But we are staying in this place called The Inn over there and it's air-conditioned, got our own private shower with hot and cold running water and no chemical facilities whatsoever and two double beds and my daughter's there with us and if anybody needs a place for a nap, it goes cheap. There's only one question I have about this room. I checked in there, they said, now who's paying for this room? And I said, uh, I don't know.

They said, does McDowell pay for this? I don't know. I'll check with them later on. So if anybody wants room 146, it might be available to them.

But let me tell you something else about this camp that is very special. I can remember back when I first was dating my wife and she told me about an experience that she had. I found out that some things about her that I really had to deal with.

That when she was about 12 years old, she came to Mid-South. And I won't tell you how old she is, but that's about 26 years ago, five or four. And she was here with her mother and brother and sister and some terrible things happened.

She met a guy by the name of George McKay, who is the son of one of the men here, and they went out someplace here. You were 16. Okay.

2016. And she was kissed for the very first time here at Mid-South Bible Conference. So I've always wanted to find out what this place was like.

I've been checking up on the counselors over here because I got two of my boys over there and in the lab. You watched them. And second thing about it was that somehow through the process of things, my wife's brother got in a little bit of trouble, who then in turn got his mother in trouble, who then in turn got them all kicked out of camp.

I don't know exactly how that worked. I think it was Hal Green's fault actually. So you see that we bring a long heritage here back to Mid-South Bible Conference.

And so our experience here, we're looking forward to it. And I do have two boys here and I have two daughters. They're over there.

They're making up the 72 on the other side of the lake. And I just found out I'm looking at there's three lakes. I'm not sure which side of what lake they're on the other side of, but they're here in Mid-South.

And by the way, I don't mind going in the nurseries. My wife puts me there regularly, putting our children to sleep, so I don't mind. So I'm not worried about any curfews.

But we're excited to be here. I'd like you to turn with me in your Bibles, please. We're going to be going through kind of a series.

And what I would really, I really want to do this week is to encourage you in the faith and to encourage you in the Word of God so that by the grace of God, when we go home next Saturday morning, that we will have been built up in the faith. Now, if I don't do that, Ernest Woodhouse will. So I'm looking forward to it.

And the reason I accept invitations like this to come to conferences is I hope that you're willing to endure me so I can have the privilege of listening to the other speaker with you. And I look forward to hearing our brother Woodhouse. And I've never met the man, but we've had some saints in our assembly that's been under his ministry.

And I'm looking forward to it. And I really am praying that he does make it in tonight at 8 o'clock. It's going to be a long week for Eddie Schwartz and John Thielen and Lou Clarkson and Hal Green and Dan Green.

And the only thing I regret about this conference is I've not had a chance to see that skit last year that Matt and Dan and Rod and Eddie Jr. put on. You remember it? How many of you saw it? Oh, I would have loved it. Did anybody videotape that? Well, Ephesians chapter four, what we're going to be doing is we're going to be studying through Ephesians chapter four, five and up to verse nine of chapter six, Lord willing.

And so what we'd like to do is study the first 16 verses of Ephesians chapter four this evening. Let's read this together. I'll read it.

You listen together with me. I knew I said that wrong. I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all who is above all and through all and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore, he saith, when he ascended up on high, he let captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.

Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is ahead even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, make an increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." And if you read verse 16 very quickly, it'll get you so jumbled up, you'll just have a hard time keeping along with verse 16.

And obviously in trying to deal with this passage in the word of God, we're not going to be able to deal with the whole thing. But I like to break it down into three composite parts and visualize it this way. Now we have five children.

I've had the experience of watching each of these five children in various stages of growth. I've got one son who's one month and three days away from getting his driver's license, he thinks. No, he probably, well, I don't know, there's that family crisis coming up here, I can tell.

But anyway, in watching all of my children growing up, you watch that they start off in a stage where they're a baby. They cry for food, they cry because they want to go sleep, they cry because they want to be held, and various things like that. But it's one body, it's there, and that's all there is to it.

And there's not much coordination, there's not much function, the hand flops around, and every once in a while they find a thumb and it actually pokes in. But there's not much coordination in the effort. But as the child grows and he begins maturing a little bit, he finds out that there are different parts to his body.

That this hand, you know, you sit there and watch him playing with his hand, you see that there's different things, and he'll grab his hands and they start learning different things, and they'll grab the foot and they'll lift up the foot and start sucking on the big toe. Of course, the older you get, the harder that becomes, right? And so then they start learning how to coordinate those efforts, that they can start doing things together. They can get that hand and grab that bottle or whatever they're going to get, and they can use that hand.

And as they grow and develop this one body that's got different parts to it, and as it coordinates, it's able to do more and more and more things. It becomes more effective in what's going to happen. And this is the illustration that the Apostle Paul is using here in Ephesians chapter 4, that there's one body that has diversity, and this diversity is meant for edification, for strengthening.

Now, he starts off this passage, you notice, in verse 1 with a therefore. And of course, whenever you see a therefore, I'm sure you've heard it, you ask what it's there for. And it's a conclusion, it's inferences that are being drawn from the first three chapters.

And I wish we could spend the time in the first three chapters. I know one man, in speaking through the book of Ephesians, spent five years on the first three chapters of the book of Ephesians. There's a host of deep, doctrinal, rich material in those first three chapters.

But the first three chapters can be boiled down to two words, in Christ, talking about our position, who we are, that you've gotten saved, you've believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, and the Spirit of God has joined you to that body, and all these rich things that we have because of that. Now, those three chapters are basically relating our position in Christ and all these various things. Then he comes up to chapter 4, and he says, therefore, therefore, on the basis of that, I want this to happen as a conclusion, as an outgrowth of all this.

So it says, I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you. And you kind of get the idea of the Apostle Paul, and he's writing this letter a little bit toward the end of his life. Maybe he might live another 10, 12 years after this.

And he's writing to this church in Ephesus, in Asia Minor, and he writes them, and he's begging them. Have you ever gotten to a place where you see somebody who's in a particular stage of growth? It might be your children. It might be a younger believer in the Lord.

And you get to a place, and you just come up to them, and with maybe tears in your eyes, and with great urgency in your voice, you say, I beg of you. And that's the idea behind what the Apostle Paul is saying. He's laid the doctrinal foundation, but it's not just to be something in their mind.

It's not just to be something that they can bat around between their ears and have absolutely no effect in their life. He says, as a result of that, I beg of you to walk worthy of the Lord. And this walk worthy of the Lord, he says, this word worthy is the same kind of thing that you might ask, that you might come up to one of these green hats out at the canteen, and you ask, what is it worth? And they say, it is worth to us \$350.

And you take a look at your wallet, and you have to decide whether or not it is worth \$350 to you to buy that hat. So what we're saying is that there's an agreement made between the seller and the buyer that there's an exchange of something that we say is of equal value. You say the hat's of certain value, and they say the money's of a certain value.

And if we're willing to exchange that, then that is a worthy sale. Now what he's saying here is, when he wants us to walk worthy, he's saying, based on all of these things that we are in Christ, that there is to be a corresponding lifestyle, a lifestyle that is worthy of being in Christ, that is of to be equal value. And he begs them to walk, to have a lifestyle that is worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

And then he goes on to say in verse 2, and we'll just take a look up through verse 3 and then do a little bit of jumping in this passage, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Now this word lowliness is used by the ancients when they're talking about the Nile River. And we're just up at Willowbrook Bible Camp a couple weeks ago, and they had a nice rain.

I guess that was a Wednesday night or a Thursday night, something like that. And ordinarily the Willowbrook Bible Camp River is the kind of thing you can walk through and may not get all of your shoes wet. It's not very much.

But we had this big rain, and all of a sudden it came all the way up when Islas Banks came over, washed out half the campfire, came up and took away about four out of six rows in the campfire circle. And it really went up. But as soon as that river went back up, you know, it was puffed up.

It was lifted up. It started settling back down, and it got back into this lowly riverbed. And that's what this word lowliness means.

Lowliness is like running low through the river. The Nile River might be low, and it's running lowly. It's not something that a person comes up and does like Uriah Heep and David Copperfield, where it says, I'm a humble, humble person, and going around and spreading their lowliness.

But it's a person who in the body of Christ recognizes who they are and who the Lord Jesus Christ is. Now, the basis for oneness within the body of Christ and the experience of that oneness that we have in Christ, first of all, is to recognize who Jesus is, and then secondly, to recognize who we are, and then see that there's a big difference between those two. That the Lord Jesus Christ, being the King of kings and Lord of lords, very God of very God, as the Creed says, and we see ourselves even as the Apostle Paul, as he started off in one of his epistles, he starts off calling himself the least of all the apostles.

But you know, the apostles were the top group. And a little bit later on in the Apostle Paul's experience, he called himself the least of all the saints. But least of saints are the in-group, and the sinners are the out-group.

But then later on in the Apostle Paul's life, when he's writing to Timothy, he called himself the chief of sinners. So that there was a developing loneliness within the mind of the Apostle Paul. When we recognize who we are in relationship to the Lord, then that has an effect on how we relate to other people, doesn't it? We can't come around and say, hey, you know, I'm number one.

You know, I coached a basketball team. And what these kids always wanted to be able to do is to have the winning bucket inside that basket, and they'd be able to wave that finger up there like that. We're number one! You know, do the Muhammad Ali thing.

We're the greatest! But there's no place for that in the body of Christ. There's withal lowliness, and with meekness, and that is like Moses. And this is a person who does not assume personal rights.

Long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, and then notice verse three. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. You know, one of the things that when doing some studies on the cult, if you know a number of the cults started, what happened is that the person who was responsible for starting those cults saw the division within the body of Christ.

They took a look and they see, you know, you all heard that, just brethren. We got an IRS agent who goes to our chapel, and I understand that we're something like number six or number seven. Now, or Baptist, and not just one kind of Baptist.

You can be Southern, or General, or General Conference, or General American, regular Baptist. I found another one on the way here, Orthodox Baptist. I've never seen one of those before, or Presbyterian, or Methodist.

And you see all these divisions within the body of Christ, and if people see that and say, wow, look at that. I've spoken at a Jewish forum, and they take a look at the body of Christ, and they say, well look at all of these branches of Christianity. You know, how is it that there's one body in Christ? And they see this becomes a source of discouragement to them.

And you know, I really grieve over that. I really do. I grieve over the fact that this oneness that we have in our position in Christ is not something that we demonstrate by our practice.

That our practice is not worthy of our position. It ought to be. And he's saying here that we're to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit.

You get the idea there? That the oneness of the Spirit of God in a local assembly, or within the body of believers, is something that requires work from the believers. It's not just something just because we show up at Mid-South Bible Conference that it automatically happens. You know, it's going to be a chemical reaction, and we're going to have harmony.

He says no, that's not the way it happens. That there is to be an endeavoring. It's a hard work where oneness of the Spirit is produced.

Now, the Spirit of God is illustrated in the baptism of Jesus by a dove. Now, I don't know much about doves, but this much I know. That if you get close to a dove, and you come up and you clap your hands, what's the dove going to do? It's gone, right? I mean, if you're out quail hunting, which is related to doves, you don't go squashing the bugs, right? You go through it quietly, because loud noises, loud clatter, arguments, discussion, and all the different things, what's going to happen to those birds that you're hunting? They're going to take off.

They're going to leave, and you're not going to see it. And I think that's kind of maybe an illustration that we have here, that the unity of the Spirit is something that we work hard to keep, to protect, to guard. And if we don't, then we're going to find out that the oneness of the Holy Spirit is going to be something that leads very readily, very rapidly.

So, he's encouraging, he's begging them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And then he talks about the sevenfold unity. One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all.

But then he goes on to talk and say, okay, now there's one body. Like, we're born into this body. But then he goes on to say there's diversity in this body.

This body is different. Now, you take a look out here, and our brother Hurley Dixon here, and I've never heard our brother sing before. Now, there's two verses in the Bible.

One says we sing a new song unto the Lord. And the other one is we make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Some people have been gifted by God to sing a new song.

That's not my gift. Some of us make a joyful noise unto the Lord. And those of you who can sing new songs, would you sing louder, please? I'll try not to drown anybody out with a joyful noise.

But there's diversity within the body. Just take a look at all the people out here. Man, there's a tremendous variety of people out here.

And that is part of the body. And he talks about that. That every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

There's diversity. There's differences within this body. And he talks about these various gifts.

But what I'd like to go on is to the very end here, beginning at verse 12, that this one body which has diversity, and this diversity, by the way, that there is no importance laid on one part of that body in relationship to the other. But now let's take a look, beginning at verse 12, that this unity which exists in diversity is to produce what? The perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. That this is to produce perfection.

That it is to produce a perfecting of the body. Now, it's so easy, isn't it? Now, I am not a fan, by the way, of these positive preaching type preachers. They're always talking positive.

And they won't talk about sin. They won't talk about depravity. They won't talk about judgment.

They won't talk about the holiness of God and things like that. Yet, you know, there is a reality that within the body of Christ that, in a sense, understand the terminology in which I'm thinking. That to become a member of our club, what do you have to do? You have to admit that you're totally depraved.

You're lost. You're going to hell. And there's absolutely no hope in your life.

And that's what you've got to admit. You've got to admit that you're a sinner to become part of the body of Christ. Now that you've become a part of the body of Christ, what do we do so often? We keep reminding people how depraved, how sinful, how bad, how wicked they are in their behavior.

And yet, what we need so desperately in the body of Christ is the building up, the perfecting, the edifying in the body, the strengthening of it. Rather than coming, you know, it's very easy for people to go out to Ruby Mountain out in Colorado Springs, west of Colorado Springs. And you go out there, and you get your hammer and your little chisel, and you work on it, and you chip away at it.

And you try to look for these little garnet stones. But the only way to that mountain, everybody goes to that mountain. And what do they try to do? They take their hammer, they take their chisel, and they chip away at it, trying to get the garnet stones, get the precious jewels out of it.

And I think that's what we so desperately don't need within the body of Christ. What we need, not is the chipping away, but the building up of one another for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Now, one other statement I'd like you to take a look at is in verse 15.

But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things which is ahead, even Christ. Now, what we're going to be looking at as we develop this theme through the book of Ephesians is that this one body, which exists in diversity, is going to produce maturity in the body. It is going to produce Christlikeness.

It is going to produce perfection. It is going to be an edified body. So what happens here is, now, if you take a course in physical therapy or take a course in physical education, that you don't start off children by teaching them how to golf, do you? If you want to teach a child a sport is you give them a nice great big beach ball, right? And a nice soft beach ball or a soft blow-up ball, and you throw that to the child and the child, and they grab it like this, and it hits their hands, it's flying off there.

You pick up that beach ball and you throw it back to them again. And pretty soon, I was having fun the other day with my little three-year-old. She had a little wiffle ball, a little bit harder than a beach ball.

I got back about six feet and I threw it to her, and of course I made her put her arms like this, and right there in her arms, and it hits her arms and she gets it. And she's so happy when she's able to grab that ball. But now I'm getting to a place where I've got some boys, I can get up that ball, I can take that, I can throw it as hard as I can and throw it to them, and man, they catch that ball and tag the guy out at third or whatever they want to do, and they throw it back to me and I've got a duck.

Because they have gone to a place where they have outfitted. By the way, I do want to be on a softball team. I do want to, might be backstop, but I want to be on a team.

But, you know, there is a development that is, as there is growth in this body, as the body is maturing, it becomes more able to accomplish more things, that this body is stronger, and this body has got more coordination, this body has got more skill and more development within it. And so what is happening here, as this one body is being built up, there is a development, and that development is making us more like the Lord Jesus Christ, because He says, unto a perfect man, that you may grow up into, or unto Him. Now that word perfect is the same word that is used back by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount.

He says, Be ye therefore perfect as your Heavenly Father, or as your Father in Heaven is perfect. It's a standard of maturity. It's a goal by which we are to measure ourselves.

And so we see that the goal is, yes, maybe we started off as young believers. Maybe we started off as infants. But as this body develops, what happens? It begins reflecting the maturity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As this one body, with all of the functions of it, functioning together and the diversity of it, what it produces is a perfect man. Now there is a place where this perfect man is an individual, but that's not what Paul is talking about here in the book of Ephesians. The book of Ephesians doesn't so much look at the individual as the individual in relationship to a group.

That there is a place where we as individuals, like in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, are to be perfect or mature, as he talks about in chapter 2 verse 6 of 1 Corinthians. But there's a place where these believers come together and, as a group of believers, reflect the perfection of God Himself. There is a maturity.

There's an edification within that body. And the perfecting of the saints unto this perfect man, unto the stature of the fullness of Christ, the growing up into him in all things, that the standard by which he is wanting us to be is a standard of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Now, having said all that, and given that as a goal here in the first 16 verses of the book of Ephesians, what he's going to go on to do from there is,

he's going to begin discussing specific areas and how we are to relate to that.

In fact, if we look at the end of chapter 4, we're going to see, and what I'd like you to study for tomorrow, if you have a little bit of time to read, is read chapters 4 verses 17 down through verse 24. He's going to talk about some principles on which this is to go. But he goes on and he talks about how we're to do this with our tongue, how we're to do this within our family, how we're to do this in the job market, this principle of unity, diversity, and edification, that this stature of the fullness of Christ, that we might all, individually but as a group, reflect the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that's my goal, is that as we leave Mid-South Bible Conference, that the Spirit of God will have done a work in our lives so that the ranger, the campers down there in their tents, or whatever, might see something that is being accomplished. We are, I assume, all believers. All believers? Maybe not.

And if that's not true, we trust that that would change by the end of this week. But believers that are all different, and all different, together ministering to produce Christ-likeness in our group. Christ-likeness as individuals, but Christ-likeness that when people, as the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14, when an unbeliever would come in and see the working of the Spirit of God in their midst, they would fall down and say, God is in you of a truth.

Let's close in prayer. Father, thank you for this opportunity that we have of being here this week. I know some people have driven a long way to be here today, and they're tired.

I pray, Father, that you would give them a good night's rest tonight. But Father, we look forward to having Jesus Christ be reflected in our midst, that he would be glorified, that he would be honored. And Father, I pray that we would encourage one another in our growth, that this oneness that we have in position will be one in our practice, and that though different, we will seek to edify one another to be more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we pray this in his name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9692.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/rick-bovey/walk-of-the-new-man-03/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net