



## **STUDY 2**

# UNITED WITH CHRIST

## Walk Worthy

That is what the apostle Paul urges us to do. To live in a manner worthy, of equal weight, to our heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1; Phil. 3:14). In this the second of our 3-part study series '**United with Christ**' we will explore what it means to do just that.

### OBSERVE

Read **Ephesians 4:1-3** and:

- underline *THEREFORE*.
- circle the phrase *WALK IN A MANNER WORTHY*.
- put a box around the phrase *EAGER TO MAINTAIN*.

<sup>1</sup> I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,  
<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,  
<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

*Ephesians 4:1-3*

### DISCUSS

*WALK* – STRONGS 4043 (peripateo) – figuratively to live, to deport oneself  
*WORTHY* – STRONGS 514 (axios) – befitting, having the weight of another thing of like value - worth as much.

4:1 – What does the *therefore* in this verse point back to?

4:1 – In light of that truth - what are we, the saints, to do?

4:2-3 – What is the *character* and *conduct* of those who walk worthy of their calling?

In **Ephesians 1-3** the apostle Paul reminds us of who we now are and have in Christ, and it is as we rest in that truth, by faith, that the Spirit empowers us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.

### OUR CALLING

If we are to live in a manner worthy, of equal weight, to our calling then we must begin with the question – *what is our calling?*

## OBSERVE

Read **Ephesians 2:1-7** and:

- underline every reference to *YOU / WE / US*.
- circle the phrase *BUT GOD*.

<sup>1</sup> And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

<sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

<sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,

<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

<sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.

*Ephesians 2:1-7*

## DISCUSS

2:1-3 – What was our *former condition* and *way of life* before God called us?

2:4-7 – What happened when God called us? And why did He do so?

Read **Ephesians 1:3**:

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

*Ephesians 1:3*

1:3 – What do we now have as those who are in Christ?

For more on this check out **study one**, were we studied in greater detail the spiritual blessings we now have in Christ.

## OBSERVE

Read **Romans 8:28-30** and:

- underline every reference to *THOSE*.
- circle every reference to *CALLED*.

<sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

<sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

<sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

*Romans 8:28-30*

## **DISCUSS**

8:28 – What is true for those *called* according to God’s purpose?

8:29 – What is the *good purpose* that God is working all things together for?

8:30 – How certain is our future glorification – fully conformed to the image of God’s Son, Jesus Christ? Why?

***How should such a certain (glorious) future impact how we live now?***

## **OBSERVE**

Read **2 Peter 1:3-4** and:

- underline every reference to the phrase *GRANTED TO US*.
- circle every reference to *CALLED*.

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,  
<sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

*2 Peter 1:3-4*

*KNOWLEDGE* - STRONGS 1922 (epignosis) - precise & correct knowledge.

*PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE* - not becoming little gods but partaking of the divine nature i.e., empowered by the Holy Spirit to live like Christ, as those called to His own glory and excellence.

## **DISCUSS**

1:3-4 – What has been granted to us through knowing Jesus who called us to His own glory and excellence? Why?

**Batteries not included.** Three words that remind us of how useless and ineffective a device will be without the necessary power to function. However, when it comes to living in a manner worthy of our calling God has not left us on our own. Rather, as those called by God to His own glory and excellence, He has given us everything we need to do so. That to each of us He has given us His precious and magnificent promises that as we renew our minds in the truth of them, resting in them by faith, we become partakers of the divine nature - empowered by the Spirit to live in a manner worthy of our calling.

## **ASSURANCE OF OUR CALLING**

So far, we've seen how great and glorious our calling is. However, one nagging question may remain – *am I called?* And this is no academic question - because it is the assurance of our calling that leads to greater thankfulness to God, gives us joy and peace in life's storms, and empowers us to live godly lives. And something we are to diligently pursue (2 Peter 1:10-11).

When it comes to the question of assurance the letter of 1st John is a wonderful place to start – written for that very purpose (1 John 5:13). Let's look at a few verses in this letter that help us to 'test' ourselves as to whether we have been called by God and know Him:

### **OBSERVE**

Read **1 John 2:3-4 & 3:10:**

<sup>3</sup> And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.

<sup>4</sup> Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,

<sup>10</sup> By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practise righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

*1 John 2:3-4 & 3:10*

### **DISCUSS**

2:3-4 – How can we know that we know God?

3:10 – How is it evident who the children of God are?

From these verses we see that the lives of those who know God and are called by Him are ones of obedience and love. Such obedience and love will not be perfect (1 John 2:1-2) but is evidence of God's grace at work in us by which we can assure our hearts that we belong to Him.

However, for a variety of reasons such assurance can waver. And this is an important reminder of our primary dependence upon the Holy Spirit to assure our hearts of God's calling. And it is this very thing that the apostle Paul prays for the church in Ephesus:

## **OBSERVE**

Read **Ephesians 1:18a** :

<sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling,

*Ephesians 1:18a*

*HOPE* - STRONGS 1680 (elpis) – to anticipate (usually with pleasure), expectation or confidence.

## **DISCUSS**

1:18 – What does Paul pray that the Spirit will enlighten us to know?

Only the Holy Spirit can enlighten our hearts to know the hope of God's calling – to not only know and treasure the things hoped for but to have the hope, the confident expectation, that we have been called to those things.

## **WALK WORTHY**

Let's be real - we will at times frustrate and fail one another. As the old saying goes – “To live above, with saints we love, that will be glory. To live below, with the saints we know, that's quite a different story!” However, let's explore now the *attitude* and *actions* of those who walk worthy of their calling.

## **HUMILITY**

### **OBSERVE**

Read **Philippians 2:3-4**:

<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

<sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

*Philippians 2:3-4*

### **DISCUSS**

2:3-4 – What is the *attitude* and *action* of the humble person?

## **OBSERVE**

Read **Philippians 2:5-8**:

- <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,  
<sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.  
<sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

*Philippians 2:5-8*

## **DISCUSS**

2:6-8 – How was Jesus the perfect and ultimate example of humility?

2:5 – What same mind (attitude) are we to have towards one another?

***Whose good is the Holy Spirit directing you to humbly serve?***

## **GENTLENESS**

## **OBSERVE**

Read **Matthew 12:20a** (speaking of the *gentleness* of Jesus):

- <sup>20</sup> a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smouldering wick he will not quench,

*Matthew 12:20a*

## **DISCUSS**

12:20a – What beautiful picture are we given of how Jesus deals with our weaknesses and failures?

**BRUISED REED** - ‘...those brought to see their sin, which bruises most of all...’

**SMOULDERING WICK** - ‘[those in whom] there is but a little measure of grace, and that little mixed with much corruption...’ – Richard Sibbes.

**GENTLENESS** –the word gentleness / meekness in the Bible carries the meaning of strength under control – one example of which is not responding harshly to others’ failures, but instead encouraging and helping them to grow in Christlikeness through speaking the truth in love and living in accordance with it ourselves (Eph. 4:15-16).

**Who are you being challenged to respond with gentleness to?**

## **FORBEARANCE & FORGIVENESS**

### **OBSERVE**

Read **Colossians 3:12-14** and:

- underline every reference to *PUT ON*

<sup>12</sup> Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,

<sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

<sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

*Colossians 3:12-14*

### **DISCUSS**

3:12 – Who are we?

3:12,14 – What are we to ‘put on’ as such?

3:13 – What does this look like in action?

3:13 – Why are we to forgive each other?

### **OBSERVE**

Read **Colossians 2:13-14**:

<sup>13</sup> And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

<sup>14</sup> by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

*Colossians 2:13-14*



## **DISCUSS**

2:13-14 – What has God forgiven us? How?

***How does resting in God's forgiveness of us (cancelling our unpayable debt to Him), empower us to forgive our debtors (Matthew 6:12,14-15)?  
Is there anyone you need to forgive?***

## **LOVE & HOLINESS**

The apostle Paul reminds that as those called by God, we are to live differently than the culture around us. To live lives of holiness and love that witness to the world that we are Christ's disciples and belong to Him (1 Peter 2:11-12, John 13:35).

Read **Ephesians 5:1-2** and:

- underline the phrase *IMITATORS OF GOD*.
- circle the phrase *WALK IN LOVE*.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

<sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

*Ephesians 5:1-2*

## **DISCUSS**

5:1 – What are we to be as God's beloved children?

5:2 – What does such imitation of God look like?

## **OBSERVE**

Read **1 John 4:7-12** and:

- underline every reference to *LOVE* (including synonyms).
- circle the phrase *MADE MANIFEST*.
- put a box around the phrase *PERFECTED IN US*.

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

<sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

<sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

<sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

<sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

*1 John 4:7-12*

**LOVE OF GOD** – the word **agape** in the Bible used to refer to the love of God carries the meaning of a love that sacrificially pursues the greatest good of another without expectation of anything in return and unmerited by the one upon whom it is bestowed (Romans 5:6-8).

## **DISCUSS**

4:7-8 – What does our love for one another show? Why?

4:9-10 – How was the love of God made manifest among us? Why?

4:11-12 – How is the love of God perfected (accomplish its goal) in us?

## **OBSERVE**

Read **1 Corinthians 13:4-8a**:

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant

<sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

<sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

<sup>7</sup> Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

<sup>8</sup> Love never ends.

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8a*

## **DISCUSS**

13:4-8: What do we learn from these verses about *agape* love?

How is love the *crowning virtue* that leads to and directs the others - humility, gentleness, patience, etc (see also Colossians 3:14)?

**God is love.** Not a wimpy love that overlooks our sin but one that sends His Son into the world to be the wrath-bearing substitute (propitiation) for them. Jesus, the Son of God, who in His great love for us laid down His life so that we might live through Him. And it is as we love one another that the same love of Christ is perfected, accomplishes its goal, in us, and the unity of the Spirit maintained.

## **OBSERVE**

Read **Ephesians 5:3-4:**

<sup>3</sup> But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

<sup>4</sup> Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

*Ephesians 5:3-4*

## **DISCUSS**

5:3-4 – What is *improper* and *out of place* among saints?

## **OBSERVE**

Read **Ephesians 5:5-7:**

<sup>5</sup> For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

<sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore do not become partners with them;

*Ephesians 5:5-7*

## **DISCUSS**

5:5-6 – What warning are we given about those who *habitually* practice such things (v3-4)?

5:7 – In light of all this – what are we as saints to do?

In **Ephesians 5:3-7** the apostle Paul shines a spotlight on the full range of sexual sin so prevalent at Ephesus, and in our culture today, warning that those who habitually practice such things have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God, exhorting us as saints to live differently, to be who we are in Christ.

However, if we're honest sexual sin is not just a problem outside the Church but within. The big distinction is that saints should be those who will not continue indefinitely in such a way of life due to the work of the Spirit within them, with whom they have been sealed for the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30), and as such will not lose their salvation.

So, these verses are a challenge to take seriously as saints the warning that the apostle Paul gives us and to continually ask ourselves the question – ***are we walking worthy in all areas of our life?***

In addition, there is also the challenge as to how we respond to one another when we fall into sin, sexual or otherwise. Here are a few questions to examine our own hearts on this and with these we conclude our study:

***Do we respond with humility and gentleness, with a view to restoration (Galatians 6:1)?***

***Do our words impart grace - pointing them to Jesus in whom there is freedom from and forgiveness for every sin (Eph 4:29; 1:7-8)?***

***Do we bear with them in love – patiently helping them to grow in Christ likeness (Eph. 4:2-3; 15-16)?***

These are challenging questions but ones we must honestly face and change in the light of, as the Spirit directs, if we are to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. However, those able to do so because of the immeasurably great power of God at work in us. To Him be all the glory now and forever. Amen.

## About this study...

This resource has been designed to allow you to jump into God's Word and study it closely. It requires no preparation, and provides you with a structure to study a passage, with questions to help you think and reflect on it.

This study gives you a small insight into the world of inductive Bible study through three key parts:

**Observe** - *What does the text say?*

**Understand** - *What does the text mean?*

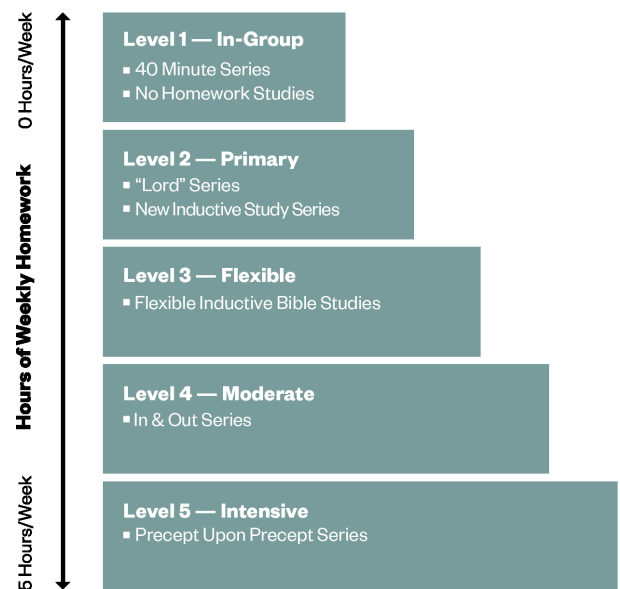
**Apply** - *What does this mean for me?*

By using this approach, we can study the Bible in a way that allows us to know God deeply, and to live differently.

## About Precept Ireland...

Precept was founded in 1970 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and now works in 160 countries, and has Bible study material translated in over 70 languages. In 2001 Precept was established in Ireland, and has grown through it's mission to engage people in relationship with God through knowing His Word. Precept Ireland seeks to resource and train Bible study leaders to help students like you discover God's truth for yourself and be transformed by it. With more than 250 unique titles ranging from zero to five hours of weekly homework, Precept has a Bible study that meets you where you are.

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