

One key characteristic of a Christ follower's life should be a walk of love—what does it look like?

Paul's Prayer in Eph. 3:16-19, 20-21 is foundational to everything he says in chapters 4-6!

So far we have seen in Eph. 4, four characteristics of how Christ followers are to live.

- 1 Eph. 4:1-6, WALK of HUMILITY, living in unity by trusting Christ to live His life in/through us.
- 2 Eph. 4:7-16, WALK of MINISTRY, living in community so Jesus can mature & equip for ministry
- 3 Eph. 4:17-24, WALK of UNIQUENESS, living in the reality of being joined in Jesus' death/resurrection
- 4 Eph. 4:25-32, WALK of GRACE, living in harmony with one another by giving grace and mercy.

5 WALK OF LOVE in the midst of moral filth & rejection of the true God...

1. Imitate God as His kids!

Ephesians 5:1-2 *Therefore, be imitators (mimic) of God, as beloved children—you are God's beloved child*

What did God do to make YOU his beloved child?

*God LOVES: Paul earlier described God's love in 2:4-9...

- 1 Mercy God's love for you is unmerited, unearned—you are unworthy! **Eph. 2:4**
Treat people better than they deserve: **Mercy:** persecuted Christians **2 Tim 2:8-10**
- 2 Beneficially; God's love for you is for your good—to save you, changes you **Eph. 2:5**
Treat people for their benefit—salvation: "mom's love" ETERNITY? Gospel/beliefs **Rom. 1:16**
- 3 Supernaturally God's love for you is not natural/human but divine—needed! **Eph. 2:6-9**
Treat people with Christ's love: up close & personal! **SPIRIT-ENABLED:** Sp fill **2 Cor 5:14-15**

2. Love as Jesus loves

And walk in love as Jesus gave himself for us, Jesus choose to give Himself for others!

Jesus loves...

- 1) Incarnationally: He became man. **Phil. 2:6-7**
Love people Incarnationally: get into their skin, their life, their stuff and love them from that point!
- 2) Humbly-Obedience: He humbly obeyed the Father's will... **Phil. 2:8a**
Love people as God-directs: Spirit prompts, not as you think but as the Lord leads!
- 3) Sacrificially: He gave His all. **Phil. 2:8b**
Love people sacrificially: Involves risk, cost... **A CHOICE IS REQUIRED!**

Jesus motive: a fragrant offering/sacrifice to God. Jesus loved others in a God-exaltingly way!

Observations from India

1. **Persecution is often a choice: result of opening your mouth for Christ** Niyar, Christian killed near
2 Tim 1:8-10 *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,*
Persecution purifies and propagates the growth of Jesus' Church.
Acts 8:1-5 *And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria... Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word."*
2. **The Gospel truly is God's power to transform a sinner's life.** Anand,
Rom. 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*
1 Cor 1:18 *For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*
3. **Daily worship of & feeding on Christ is essential for our spiritual life.** Worship/Devo's: 2x/day
Matt. 28:20 *...teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you... must know before obey!*
1 Pet. 2:2 *As newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation.*
4. **Effective evangelism is both a process (friendship-building) & an event.** Anil—Restaurant
Matt. 4:19 *'Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.'* Fishing is a process that leads to an end.
5. **The struggles that people experience are basically the same.** Pastors-Ruben: 2 yrs 60
1 Cor 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.'*
6. **The training of leaders is essential because lay leaders are key.** David
2 Tim 2:1-2 *'You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.'*
7. **Living a simple lifestyle helps keep eternity in perspective.** Pastor Samuel's home
Matt 6:19-23 *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!*
Matt 6:33 *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall not come*
8. **The power of disappointment--failed expectation is HUGE.** Pastor Samuel
We usually guard/protect ourselves from disappointment=failed expectations
-Circumstances -Accomplishments -People
9. **Everyone needs continual encouragement.** Mithun, Ravi,
1 Thess 5:14 *..admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all."*
2 Tim 1:16 *May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains,*
10. **Everyone is important and needed in Christ's body (every gift/skill).** Topa cook

The N.T. assumes that all Christ followers will experience a degree of persecution for following Christ.

Matt 5:10-12 10 "Blessed are those who are **persecuted for righteousness' sake**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when **others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account**. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Jn 15:18-21 "If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because **you are not of the world**, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you: '**A servant is not greater than his master.**' **If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept My word, they will also keep yours.

2 Tim 3:10-12 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra — which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. **12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted**

Phil 1:29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,"

Acts 14:21-22 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and **saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."**

2 Cor 4:7-12 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. 8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. 11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Col 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church.

Acts 4:23-31 When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, 25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' — 27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 7:54-60 Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. 55 But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." 57 But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. 58 Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

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Imitate God! What is God like? How is God? How does He treat people?

God treats us (sinners)...

1 **Mercy** God's love for you is unmerited, unearned—you are unworthy! Eph. 2:4

Treat people better than they deserve: people –see need **MERCY:** persec Chri 2 Tim 2:8-10

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3 **Supernaturally** God's love for you is not natural/human but divine—needed! Eph. 2:6-9

Treat people in God's strength & for His glory! **SPIRIT-ENABLED:** 2 Cor 5:14-15

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