

DAY 1: June 2, 2025, Monday (Love and Obey)

Ephesians 4:1-3, *“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*

Colossians 3:12-13, *“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 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.”*

The two passages above were written to churches in the respective towns of Ephesus and Colosse. It applies to us today in our Christian walk and in our churches.

Before we can walk worthily, we need to understand what is this calling. Reading further in Ephesians 4, we find out that the calling is being built up as the body of Christ **in love**. Love is the manner, the key, to the which the body will “grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love” (Eph. 4:16).

The calling is to love others in **humility** and **bearing with one another**. These are the two common factors we want to focus on. These are the crux of how we are to live as a new creation in Christ.

This seems very straightforward until we actually start living this out. In a perfect world, everyone treats each other with love, humility, equal and opposite care. We all know that doesn’t happen. But we are still expected to love everyone *“with all humility and gentleness, with patience.”* It leaves no room for exceptions. No room for our tempers to rise. No room for anything other than, well, the attitude and mind of Christ. That’s our calling.

Bearing with one another is a little different. It means “to put up with people.” You know those people that you’d rather not be around, that irritate you, and frustrate you? Bear with them, put up with those, is what this terms means. We are to look past all of these traits that get under our skin, their odd personalities, differences, whatever it is that bothers us. We are that person to someone too! We need to endure...in patience, gentleness, with humility.

How do we do that? Humility means lowliness. Philippians 2:3-4 helps us understand this, “Don’t do anything out of emptiness or vainglory or conceit but with humility of mind, treat other people as though they were as important,” but it goes on to say, not as important but “as though they were better than you, as though they have more importance.”

The person that gets ‘under your skin’, why do you have to deal with them in humility? Because there is a sense they are inferior to you. It’s true. So many times we prejudge a person so that whatever comes out of their mouth doesn’t even matter. We aren’t giving them a chance. “If we are going to bear with them, the first step is humility.”

Chip Ingram puts it perfectly. “See them and treat them as people of equal or superior value than yourself...Now, think of your difficult person...See them, first, and then treat them as people of equal or superior value.”

- Our message on Thursday night will be about Jonah and how he disobeyed God. He did not love the people of Nineveh. When God told him to go to Nineveh, Jonah went in the opposite direction. Hence, Jonah and the big fish. Jonah 4:1-3 really shows us Jonah’s attitude. He is angry at God for being compassionate and loving the people of Nineveh. Jonah wanted them destroyed and he also asked God to kill him.
- Not obeying God, not loving others, brings destruction. Read Jonah chapter 1. Look for God’s instructions to Jonah and how he responded to God.
- In contrast, read Philippians 2:3-8. This passage shows us the attitude of Christ.
 - ⇒ First read: read for understanding
 - ⇒ Second read: read through in thankfulness and worship
 - ⇒ Third read: read through as a prayer, praying for the attitude of Christ in humility putting others above ourselves, having a servant’s heart as Christ, and being obedient to God and what he has called you to do, and laying down any idols at the foot of the cross.

MEMORY VERSE: John 13:34-35, “I give you a new command:...You must love each other as I have loved you. All people will know you are my disciples if you love each other.”