

## **Thoughts on the Sunday School Lesson** *by Pastor Artee Williams*

Sunday, December 31, 2017

Subject: Faith To Unite/ United We Stand

Ephesian 4:1-16

### **I. Key Background Scriptures**

Psalms 133:1 John 17: 11, 20-23 Acts 4:31-32

### **II. Introduction**

Paul teaches in this passage of scripture the Lord's expectations for believers to conduct themselves in the manner of the new persons they have become in Jesus Christ.

The Lord expects His standards to become our standard, His purpose to become our purpose, His goals our goals, and His character to become our character. The Lord expects us to be conformed to the image of His Son-Romans 8:29.

In Ephesian chapters 1-3, Paul teaches the principles of Christianity. In chapters 4-6 Paul teaches the practical side of Christianity. Stated another way Paul transitions from doctrine to duty, from attitude to action. Paul teaches that knowledge of right principles leads to right practice/right living.

Paul concludes that when right principles become right practice believers can pursue diversity, unity, love and spiritual maturity while rejecting division.

The "Worthy Walk" is possible when believers practice the principles of Christianity.

### **III. Points to ponder**

1. To walk in a manner worthy of one's calling is to be everything God desires of them.

2. Walk refers to daily conduct, day by day living in a manner pleasing to God. It is the result of one's practical living corresponding to his spiritual position in Jesus Christ.
3. Paul described 6 attitudes which correspond to the worthy walk of believers: humility, gentleness, patience, forbearing, love and unity.
4. Paul identifies 7 ones as the cause or basis for oneness in the local church. Paul teaches that practical oneness is based on spiritual oneness, the center of which is the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son.
5. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift. God in His sovereign will bestows spiritual gifts on individual believers.
6. The proper use of spiritual gifts contributes to the ministry of a local church. Each believer's gift is measured out by God with distinct capabilities and purpose for the glory of God.
7. God provides gifted teachers and leaders to equip other Christians to become mature disciples and to work in ministry.
8. The Holy Spirit produces unity because there is only one Lord, one faith and one baptism.
9. In Ephesian 4:12-16 Paul teaches that it is God alone who produces church growth by equipping the saints, through ministry, and spiritual maturity.
10. A local church that is equipped, spiritually mature, reaches out in ministry, and love and utilizing spiritual gifts will walk worthy of its calling and God will cause it to grow.

#### **IV. Compelling challenge**

What are your spiritual gifts?

Are you using your spiritual gifts in the work of ministry?

Are you using your spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ?

Are you using your spiritual gifts for the glory of God?

Spirit-filled and Spirit-gifted believers embrace diversity, unity and love while rejecting division.

Spiritually mature Christians can make a difference in their congregations.

Are you willing to be the difference that makes a difference?