

10/26/26

There was a worship song we used to sing… 🎶 Give me one pure and holy passion. Give me one magnificent obsession. Give me one glorious ambition for my life, to know and follow hard after You 🎶 I'm always challenged by the songs we sing in worship. Do I truly believe what I sing? Do I genuinely live out these words? I pray that more and more, you and I will find the blessing of living out the words we sing to the Lord.

Blessings,
Jonna

Ephesians 4:1-10

In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul called us to walk in a way that pleases the Lord more and more. What pleases the Lord? Our holiness. The more we genuinely walk with the Lord, the more holy we become. The more holy we become, the sweeter our relationships with the Lord and with each other become. In 1 Thessalonians, Paul talked about our holiness in sexual purity. In Ephesians 4, He also talked about our holiness (our worthy walk) as it relates to ALL our relationships as believers.

The pursuit of holiness is never an isolated, individual pursuit. It always impacts how we treat others. The question I have to keep asking myself is, "Do I make pleasing the Lord and pursuing holiness according to His plan my intentional and active pursuit?" As I look at Ephesians 4:1-10, Father, will You please expose my heart, root out what doesn't please You, and make me more like Jesus? Before I even start, I know that pleasing You is NOT always the first thing on my mind. I want that to change, O Lord.

Vs. 1 ~ Paul says such similar words here that he said in 1 Thessalonians 4, "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called…" He said "I URGE you" in both letters. It means, "I'm encouraging you as one of you to live in such a way that if the evidence were brought against you in a court of law, it would prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that you belong to Jesus… that He's your Lord and

Master." Paul was so unshakable in this call on his life that he was literally writing from prison because the evidence of his life proved that his loyalty was absolutely and immovably set on Jesus Christ no matter the cost.

What IS a manner worthy of my calling? What DOES please God? What IS a pure and holy passion?

Vs. 2-3 ~ "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."

It starts out… with ALL… All, the entirety of, in every manner… Yikes. I can tell already that I'm going to be found as one falling short. O Lord, I praise You for the grace and mercy that promises You'll help me get there from one degree of glory to the next… from more to more. But I also see that Paul is urging ME to walk this way. The blame is not on You if I'm not walking worthy. The blame is on me for pursuing a different passion than Yours.

Wherever I walk, I make a path. As I walk that path it gets deeper and deeper, more obvious… like walking through the grass. The more I walk the same path in the grass, the more the grass wears away and the path becomes evident. Father, please help me to walk the path that leads to You and Your steadfast love and faithfulness.

- *In ALL, every manner of… humility. Arrogance and shame are counter to humility because both arrogance and shame put the focus on me. Humility cares for others. True humility toward You will necessarily mean that I have humility toward others regardless of how they treat me. I see this with Jesus. He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death on a cross while I was still His enemy. He disregarded the shame. It was His joy to humble Himself so that I might have life. O Lord, I want to walk as Jesus walked. Please dislodge ALL, every manner of, arrogance and shame from my heart and replace them with genuine humility. I am very aware that arrogance will keep me from that pursuit. I don't think I realized just how much shame also keeps me from that goal. There is no need for me to be ashamed because Jesus took my shame. Please help me to grasp that!!! Sadly, I see both arrogance and shame trying to lure me from a worthy walk. Help me to stand firm in You.*

- *In ALL, every manner of… gentleness. This is a gentle strength that can only grow as the Holy Spirit has free rein to transform my heart. Gentleness will show itself in my words, my actions, and my attitudes… OR what will be exposed is harshness. Authentic gentleness can only grow as humility grows. Sometimes being harsh feels powerful. But it's a destructive power, a dividing power. Gentleness takes real strength. Jesus described His heart as gentle and humble. He said that His gentleness and humility bring rest to my soul. Proverbs 15:4 says, "A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but*

perverseness (viscousness) in it breaks the spirit." Father, I know I have had many harsh words in my lifetime. I wish I could take them all back!!! I've spoken harsh words to You and I've spoken harsh words to others, and I've never walked away glad that I did. Please "set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!" (Psalm 141:3)

- *With patience… macro suffering. When I think of the patience You've had with me, I'm overwhelmed. How many times have I blatantly ignored what pleases You and even accused You of being in the wrong and not caring… and yet You have so mercifully and patiently and gently cared for my soul like a Gentle, Great Shepherd. I KNOW that I will not have patience without the Holy Spirit growing this fruit in my life. Patience is not delayed frustration. True patience never gives up because I put my hope and trust in You. O Lord, so many times I find that I'm not patiently waiting for You, but impatiently waiting for You to change my circumstances. Please change my heart so that it is not divided between what You want and what I want. Please change my wants to be aligned with Yours. But help me not to wait until that happens before I pursue walking in a way that pleases You. Help me to walk in faith, trusting that You'll get me there.*

- *Bearing with one another in love… Other translations of this word give me insight. It means, "to hold up, to endure", and do this in love. Endure and hold up relationships with others sacrificially, affectionately, unconditionally. O Lord, I absolutely see that You do this with me. Jesus is the greatest example of that… holding me up for life while He was held up on a cross. And it didn't stop there. You continue to bear with me and endure with me in every aspect of my life, even in my failures. You are teaching me to do this with others, and I have been a grumpy disciple. I have argued about MY kingdom, MY rights, MY concerns. But I have no kingdom of my own. Being part of YOUR kingdom is the most satisfying and sweet place to be. Let me not be deceived into thinking anyone owes me anything. Help me to be so secure in Your love that I can love others even when they're not loving me. I love others because You loved me first. Let that be my motivation.*

- *Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Yikes. Am I eager? This word also means… diligent, making every effort. Make every effort to maintain… to keep, to guard, to watch over… the unity of the Spirit… the oneness, the US thinking instead of ME thinking… in the bond… closely joined together like ligaments… of peace… harmony between us. Unity, bond, and peace all have a joining together in harmony mindset in their definitions. O Lord, am I EAGER to watch over and guard my relationships with others so that we can be completely at peace with each other*

according to what the Spirit wants for us? Eager? As I see Jesus' example, I see that this is not a sin enabling unity where He ignored righteousness in order to keep others happy. And it also wasn't a fake peace that turned others away. It was a peace that always welcomed them and showed mercy and grace to anyone who wanted to walk with Him. Please teach me this eagerness, this pursuit of oneness in peace. In as much as it depends on me, please help me to be at peace with all people (Romans 12:18). Please expose my selfishness and free me from it. There's a lot there. Please help that to be less and less as my pursuit of unity of the Spirit becomes more and more.

Vs. 4-6 ~ "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

There is one body… the body of Christ, the church, believers. Who is the head of that body? Jesus.

There is one Spirit… He unites us in His oneness. He decides what unity looks like.

There is one hope that belongs to our call… One hope… eternity with Him. That hope belongs to our call. The call to holiness and salvation is a call to hope.

One Lord… Only one.

One faith… through Jesus Christ.

One baptism… This is not about water baptism, but what it symbolizes. I have been baptized with Christ in His death and raised to new life with Him.

One God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all… Only one Father. No one gets to the Father but by Jesus.

All this oneness is the motivation for me to pursue oneness in holiness. One. There are not many roads that lead to heaven. There's one… through Jesus. Jesus is the head. He is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the way to the Father. One. One way. The way. So, my job is to follow HIS way.

Why is His oneness so important for me to grasp in order to walk worthy? Because it's all under HIM. If I choose what I THINK a walk with God should look like, and the next person chooses what he thinks, and the next does, and so on… What are the chances we'll all choose the same thing? To not be under God's definition of unity is to pursue disunity… and then walking in a manner worthy of the Lord can't happen. Unity can't happen. How can such a oneness take place among broken people??? Vs. 7 tells me.

Vs. 7-10 ~ "But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)"

The word translated "but" is also translated "now." That makes more sense to me in context. The whole verse translated word for word is this, "Now to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ." What is the measure of Christ's gift of grace? It's big. Romans 5:2 says that I stand in grace. John 1:16 says I've received grace upon grace… grace that continues to flow like a river and always has more. Ephesians 1:7-8 says that He lavishes me with grace. That's a lot of grace. Grace is what the Holy Spirit uses to satisfy me and strengthen me so that I can walk worthy in holiness. It's the generosity of His love.

Therefore, because of God's gift of grace, Jesus ascended to heaven after descending to this earth to be the replacement payment for my sin. He took captivity captive. The domain of darkness could not hold Him, and because I belong to Him it could no longer hold me. And He gave gifts of righteousness, grace, redemption, mercy, and sanctification to all who call on Him in truth. He ascended to heaven and took His place on the throne… for a purpose… to fill all things… to fill us with all the fullness of God. This is why walking with Him and seeking to please Him makes so much sense. Why wouldn't I want to do that when He's done so much for me?

What makes sense? Seeking to please God by pursuing oneness with others as I honor Him. This is the heart of God, that we would be one with Him and one with each other. O Lord, I want to please You. Please make it so in me.