

Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your time together to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Central Bible Truth

Believers are commanded to walk in a manner worthy of their calling in Christ

Create Interest

Maybe you've seen the movie – *Saving Private Ryan*. It's set during World War 2. And it's primarily focused around a special Army detail, led by a Captain John Miller. Miller and his eight men are tasked with finding Private James Ryan, whose three brothers have already been killed in action. The enormity of this family tragedy compels US Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, to order an immediate search for the remaining Ryan, behind the lines in Normandy, in hopes of delivering Ryan from harms way and returning him home to his already-devastated mother, back in Iowa.

Sadly, Captain Miller is killed while finding Private Ryan. And in one of the most heart-wrenching scenes imaginable, the movie concludes with a powerful tribute – fast-forwarding years ahead – to the now-old Private Ryan speaking to the headstone of Captain Miller amidst the thousands of honored, military-dead at the Normandy American Cemetery. Ryan says –

My family is with me today. They wanted to come with me. To be honest with you, I wasn't sure how I'd feel coming back here. Every day I think about what you said to me that day on the bridge. I tried to live my life the best that I could. I hope that was enough. I hope that, at least in your eyes, I've earned what all of you have done for me.

How would you feel about your life – as if you were this young private – after something like this? How might you have thought about your life, from your rescue, going forward?

Transition

As we continue to unpack what it means to Grow Up in Christ, today, each of us should find, like Private Ryan, fresh motivation to live a life worthy of a calling that is much greater than ourselves...a calling worth our very deepest attention and commitment. We may never have an experience like Private Ryan but we'll quickly see today that believers in Christ are commanded to live in a manner worthy of their lives in Christ.



But how do I know if I'm living in a *manner worthy*? Like everything else – it'll come down to taking an honest look at our choices.

In Ephesians 4, we'll be able to test ourselves, based on our response to **three choices** presented to us, by the Apostle Paul. So, head there now....

The Study

Read Ephesians 4:1-3, 11-16

In vs. 1-3, there are *two* choices we are to make, to walk in a manner worthy. Let's focus in on these –

Choice #1 – We can choose or not, to demonstrate humility, gentleness and patience in tolerance with fellow believers. Easier said than done, right?

Let's discuss some ways to cultivate these relational qualities in our lives? How can we do that – when it comes to: humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance – say, in the context of our connections in this Life Group, just for a start?

Challenging as these can be, clearly, walking in a manner worthy of our calling in Christ, calls for some gracious relating!

Why do you think this issue is such a big deal to God – the quality of our relationships, in the church?

Choice #2 A Second Choice believers can make or not, demonstrating the walk worthy, is found in verse 3 – *being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.*

What can we do to make sure unity is being preserved in the body of Christ? Structurally? Relationally? Any scriptures that come to mind to support this?

One of the things we can do that will be a big help toward preserving unity in the bond of peace, is directly connected to the third choice we can make or not, when it comes to walking in a manner worthy of our calling in Christ.

Choice #3 We can choose or not to engage in God's ordained equipping process.

Let's re-read vv. 11-16. Let's consider *how* we're to **engage in the equipping process**, based on the verses in this passage:

A. V.11 – First, respond to the leadership of those in these God-appointed roles

One way I can preserve unity is by respecting those in God-called leadership roles in the church.



What does this look like, practically? If a Staff Member appeals to me to serve, should I consider that God's leading – a step of maturity, I'm to embrace? Where's the balance when it comes to say, a leader's doctrinal or moral integrity, and our responding to his / her leadership?

The implication here may be that – all things being sound – we are to respond openly to these leaders, who are so gifted in the church. That might mean if these leaders appeal to us to weigh in, kick in, respond to the aid of the body, we should take it seriously.

B. V.12a – Next way to engage in the equipping process? Acknowledge your call to service

Otherwise, you're saying the work of these gifted, leaders in the church, is not true for you. However, these leaders are *mandated* to *equip* you for service. *What happens with that – should you or I refuse to acknowledge our respective callings to serve?*

C. VV.12-13 – We engage in the equipping process when we decide to *value, growing up*. That means I'm proactive about my spiritual growth.

D. VV. 14-16 – We should value safety, soundness. Failing to engage in opps for equipping, may mean I'm saying that I don't value safeguarding myself - or those He's entrusted into my care - against false teaching and deceit.

Failing to embrace the equipping process may mean that I'm saying that maturity, unity, the building up of the body of Christ, protection from being led astray – really don't matter to me. Yikes....

Application While there are some challenging implications in these passages today, this passage offers plenty of room for encouraging applications. Here a few –

1. In which of the worthy-of-your-calling qualities are you needing real growth – humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance?
2. Is there a choice you need to make that will help *preserve unity* in the church – maybe in a relationship with another believer or decision related to your Life Group?
3. How can we personally acknowledge our call to service? Tips:
 - Discuss serving, via your Life Group, with your Life Group Leader
 - Approach your Connections or other pastors about an area of service in which you might have interest or sense God's leading. Don't put this one off.
 - Take the personal assessments on our church website (warrenbaptist.org) to help you find a meaningful place of service – both, the spiritual gifts assessment *and* PIE assessments (passion, interest, experience.) Simply follow: What We Do tab + Serve On Campus. The assessments sit at the bottom of that page. (Teacher – check out these links: <https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts.cgi?id=359001> and <http://www.jotformpro.com/form/31764967157972>)

If Time: Pray Together Pray through Romans 12:3