

## *Walking Differently*

*“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind” (Eph. 4:17).*

It is possible that they saw other features such as the back of my head, my body shape, or some of my odd characteristics, but several people have told me over the years that they knew it was me by the way I walked. I have really never watched myself walk so I can't really tell you what it is that gives me away. Maybe it is my slow steps, or maybe it is the little limp that came out of my athletic days.

Some children so admire their fathers or mothers that they mimic them in their actions. Others are so impressed by successful individuals they are prone to imitate them. They not only move like they move, and talk like they talk, but they also walk like they walk. Why, even if a member of the bird family walks like a duck, it is labeled a duck. The way one walks seems to reveal how one lives.

This is also true in the spiritual world. We are known by the way we walk from day to day. Apparently, we are to walk like saints (see Eph. 4:12), like spiritual adults (see 4:13, 14), like members of Christ's body (see 4:15, 16). The admonition set forth in the above text, however, is that we are not to walk “as other Gentiles walk.” Several distinctions are made in the context, three of which we will consider at this time.

*We are to walk differently than those who are spiritually ignorant!* Three statements in two verses magnify the attributes of this pitiful condition. First, pointing to “minds that are void of truth,” we are told of “the vanity of their mind” (4:17). Furthermore, we read that they have their “understanding darkened” (4:18) or are “deprived of light.” The word “ignorance” further indicates that we are not to walk like those with a lack of knowledge.

*We are to walk differently than those who are spiritually inanimate!* One phrase, “being alienated from the life of God,” reminds us of the lifelessness of sinners apart from Christ. Without the Savior, the poor unregenerate is estranged or shut out from divine life. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12). If we have life in Christ, then, our walk is to be energized by that life.

*We are to walk differently than those who are spiritually insensitive!* The last line of verse 18 speaks of “the blindness” or the “hardness of their heart.” The words “past feeling” in the next verse also refer to being “hardened” (4:19), a hardness which leads to “lasciviousness” and “uncleanness,” or unbridled impurity. In our spiritual walk, may God grant that we would not be calloused and cold, but sensitive to divine realities.