

**Trail Guide**  
**Week of July 6, 2020**  
**Ordinary Time**

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” I remember being asked that question as a child and as a youth (and at times, as an adult). At different ages and stages, I had different answers but one concept remained constant – I did expect to grow up. And, it was apparent that the person asking the question fully expected that I would grow to adulthood.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesian churches, he fully expected them to “grow up”, to reach maturity, to become fully formed and transformed in Christ. The first step in this process involved having right beliefs about God, about salvation, about grace, about reconciliation, about God’s will and purpose for humankind in Christ (chapters 1-3). His concern shifts now to the second step in the process of becoming mature, grown up, and fully formed in Christ: right behavior.

As we move into the second half of Ephesians, listen carefully for what Paul is telling the church about how they are to live and function together. Lay aside your understanding of the institutional church today in order to hear more deeply God’s word through Paul. As you consider the instructions, injunctions, and the imperatives he shares, listen and look past the words to the change that this brings in the heart and the mind, as well as in the behavior. Keep in mind that God’s will is for each of us to be fully reconciled to God first, and then to one another, as we learn to live out the beliefs that God would have us embrace in our hearts.

Mon, 7/6 – [Ephesians 4:1](#) – Our calling to be in Christ has definite implications and application. “live a life worthy of the calling you have received” is the theme for the next three chapters. Before going further, write you’re your thought about what this means to you.

Tues, 7/7 – [Ephesians 4:2-6](#) – What are the implications and applications of living worthy of one’s calling in Christ?

Wed, 7/8 – [Ephesians 4:7-13](#) – What gift(s) or serving opportunities have you been given? How has the exercise of your gift helped to build up, or “grow”, others in their faith? How has your faith grown?

Thur, 7/9 – [Ephesians 4:14-16](#) – To understand “speaking the truth in love” we must dig deeper than the surface of our own feelings and ask, what does Paul mean by “the truth”? And what does it really mean to speak to another “in love”? “Love” here is from the Greek word for love (there are five!) that signifies seeking the best for the other.

Fri, 7/10 – [Ephesians 4:17-24](#) – In what ways have you been “invited,” or convicted, by the Holy Spirit to “put away” certain beliefs or behaviors? What does it mean to “clothe yourself with the new self” – what is the comparison to which God would have us aspire?

Sat, 7/11 – [Ephesians 4:25-32](#) – Paul now highlights some of the “former way of life” in case the Ephesians (or we) have difficulty identifying what needs to change. Look at the list Paul identifies – speaking truth, dealing with anger, sharing, stealing, what we say to others, bitterness, wrath, slander, malice, forgiveness. Do any of these hit home for you?

[Pray for God to “break through”](#) in our worship and in our lives, to bring new life, new hope, new opportunities to witness, welcome, grow and serve!