



Title: Ephesians - The Mature Church.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-16

Date: 02262023

Bible Version: NKJV

BOTTOM LINE: God has called the local church to be a picture of unity.

A dis-unified body of believers is not effective against the enemy.

A Picture of A Worthy Walk With The Lord (Vs. 1-3)

We have not been called to create or manufacture unity, we have been called to KEEP the unity of the Spirit.

Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called - Paul calls us to walk worthy of our calling.

When we really understand how much God did for us, we will naturally want to serve and obey Him out of gratitude. - David Guzik

Lowliness - Another way to think of this is to think of it as humility. Humility in its most Simplest form means to put Christ first, others second and yourself last.

And gentleness- Gentleness is not weakness. It has been described as power under control.

With long-suffering- This means to have a long temper. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can endure great lengths of discomfort.

Bearing with one another in love - The idea is to have self-control, restraint, and tolerance . When you do life with anyone besides yourself this is needed.

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit - Paul was calling us to be eager to maintain unity of the Spirit. In our Christian lives, we must constantly be endeavoring to maintain unity.

In the bond of peace - When we have peace with God, then we can experience peace between others.

As followers of Christ, we have to be a picture of the destination to a watching world.

A Picture of Church Unity (Vs. 4-6)

One Body - This is the one body that every believer belongs to.

The fact that a person is a member of the one body does not excuse him from belonging to a local body, for it is there that he exercises his spiritual gifts and helps others to grow. - Warren Wiersbe

One Spirit - Every believer has this in common. We each have the same Holy Spirit that indwells us.

One hope of your calling - We all share the same hope in Jesus Christ.

One Lord, - As Christians we have one Lord. That Lord is Jesus Christ.

one faith, - There is only one way to experience Salvation. It is by placing your faith, hope and trust in Jesus Christ.

one baptism - Paul was speaking of water baptism. This is the visible work of God in all believers (Jew or Gentile).

One God and Father - There is one God and Father for both Jews and Gentiles.

Paul demonstrates that there are so many GREATER things that we can agree upon as opposed to disagree on.

The Gifts for Church Unity (Vs. 7-10)

Vs. 7

Grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift- The basis for us having any measurable gift is through the grace of God expressed in the gift of Jesus.

Vs. 8-10

After Jesus' victory on the cross, he descended and declared victory to the demons (1 Peter 3:19). Then like a conquering King He gave gifts to men.

To equip the church for unity and service, God graciously gives every believer a spiritual gift.- Tony Evans

Church Leadership and Their Purpose (Vs. 11-12)

He Himself gave some to be - Paul would now describe the gifts that God has given.

Apostles- These are special ambassadors of God's work. From an early church perspective, an apostle was someone who could give witness of the resurrection of Christ personally.

Prophets - This would be someone who proclaims the word of God. In Paul's time, Bibles did not exist so Prophets would share God's truth. Their focus was edification, encouragement and consolation (1 Cor. 14:3). In today's sense, they can speak predictively (but not always), and are subject to the discernment of church leadership.

Evangelist- Their purpose was to travel from place to place and preach the Gospel.

The apostles and prophets laid the foundation of the church, and the evangelist built on it by winning the lost to Christ. - Warren Wiersbe

Pastors and teachers- Pastor means shepherd. A pastor is a shepherd in the local church. It is his responsibility to feed and lead the flock. His job is to lead and teach the flock. It should be noted that in Ancient Greek these two words describe one office, but with two descriptive titles.

The Word of God is the local church's protection and provision, and no amount of entertainment, good fellowship, or other religious substitutes can take its place. -Warren Wiersbe

For the equipping of the saints- The idea here comes from mending of nets (used in fishing). The aforementioned gifts are used to help Christians grow.

How does the believer discover and develop his gifts? By fellowshiping with other Christians in the local assembly. Gifts are not toys to play with. They are tools to build with. - Warren Wiersbe

The Purpose of Equipping the Saints (Vs. 13-16)

Vs. 13-14

That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro - The point of the gifts is to help believers reach maturity so that they are not blown and tossed around by every wind of doctrine.

Vs. 15

Speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him - If we want to know the truth on a matter, we need to know what God says about it. Truth must be spoken with love.

The point of doing life with other believers is to grow in our faith. That requires the truth of God's word delivered by a loving person.

Vs. 16

From whom the whole body, joined and knit together - The body can only function like a body when all the parts are connected.

God saved and equipped you for the work of the ministry, the work of service. Why? To build up the body. - Tony Evans

The Christian life is compared to a walk because it starts with one step of faith, involves progress, and demands balance and strength. If we do not learn to walk, we will never be able to run (Heb. 12:1-2) or stand in the battle (Eph. 6:1). - Warren Wiersbe

Ways You Can Grow In The Local Church.

1. Do life with others who care more about you than to let you counter God's Word.
2. Discover your gift and use it.
3. Realize that what you bring to the team is needed and what you get from the team is needed.
4. Get off the sideline and into the game.
5. Dig into the Word of God if you want to continue to see life change.

Churches are not built up and strengthened through man-made programs, entertainment, recreation, or drives. The church is a body that must have spiritual food; this food is the Word of God. - Warren Wiersbe



30 Guide

DO.

BOTTOM LINE: God has called the local church to be a picture of unity.



DIG DEEPER

1. What does this study reveal to you about God?
2. What does this study reveal to you about yourself?
3. Based on this, what changes do you need to make?
4. What is your prayer for today?



DISCUSS.

1. In what ways do you see the church today practicing unity?
2. Do you have a part in the unity and maturity of the church?
3. What are some ways you can apply this scripture to your daily life?



DO.

Anytime you read God's word you have to put things into perspective. You also have to realize that the terms, not words, have meanings. As a group re-read the scriptures that was studied. Try the Amplified Version and compare that to the NJKV, NIV, ESV, or NASB. Pick a few words and have a group member look that word up on blueletterbible.com or with their app.

