

To Get There, We Must Go Together

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FBFirst

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Good morning, everyone. Thank you for being here today. My name is Josh Wood and I'm the Campus Pastor out at our Central Nassau Campus. It is my honor to be with you all today. Whether you're joining us here on our Island Campus, online, or out at our Central Nassau Campus, it is great to have you! Speaking of Central Nassau, why don't we welcome them and thank them for being with us today! The title of today's message is "To Get There, We Must Go Together." It's drawn from Ephesians chapter 4, verses 1 through 16, where the Apostle Paul paints an awesome picture of the church as a unified body, journeying together toward maturity in Christ. But before we unpack that, I want to just set the tone with this, Look at Ephesians 4:1-6: "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 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. 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."

We will all live either as a slave to sin or a prisoner to christ! So you get to choose! Do you want to be a slave or a prisoner? Do you want to be a slave to sin or a prisoner of Jesus Christ? Satan's biggest deception is to convince you that being a slave to sin is more attractive than it is to be a prisoner of Jesus.

Being a slave means you have no choice! Anyone who has ever been a slave to sin knows what I'm talking about. You feel like you don't have a choice. You're going to do whatever that sin is again and again. You're going to sleep with them again, You're going to get drunk again, You're going to relapse again, You're going to go to that website again, being a slave to sin means you have no choice, but!

Being a prisoner of Christ means that you allow Jesus to make the choice for you! You say, I'm going to do whatever He tells me to do, I'm going to believe whatever he says, I'm going to spend my time, treasure, and talents however He tells me to spend them

There is a huge difference here. Do ya'll get it? And Satan's job is to make you rather want to be his slave than Jesus' prisoner. He'll make you rich. He'll make you powerful. He'll make you famous!

He tried this with Jesus, remember? He took him to the highest mountain and said I'll give you all of this! But it would be a counterfeit blessing! Satan has dominion over this earth and he has the ability to bless you with what he has, but its a counterfeit.

Think about it. Who do you think controls the internet? Mark Zuckerberg? Wrong! Who do you think controls the airwaves? I'm not saying Taylor Swift is demonic, but the forces behind her? Don't be deceived there is a force behind her.

In the USA who kicked off pride month? I'm telling you there is an orchestrated effort of networks of demons that want to proliferate these agendas...and its working in our world and its working in our homes.

Yeah, but Pastor Josh I have a friend who is LGBTQ and they are really nice! I'm not saying they aren't nice, I'm saying they have been swept up in a culture created by Satan to defeat Jesus. Look back at the Garden of Eden. Satan wanted to attack the family from the very beginning. Satan wanted to drive a wedge between the first husband and the first wife. When that didn't work, he had the first son kill the second son! Then all throughout history we see his attacks on families and babies (Esau/Jacob, Moses, King Saul/David, Jesus himself, and yes even in modern times we have things like abortion, Black lives matter, LGBTQ). They masquerade as life saving, but they are attacks on Jesus bringing God's Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven!

Abortion says its about women's rights, while they kill babies

BLM says its about saving lives, while their own values state that they want to dismantle the traditional (biblical) structure of the family

LGBTQ quite literally encourages people to engage in acts that are proven to have a higher percentage of creating more disease and way less babies!

Yet God told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and fill the world with babies within the context of a biblical marriage.

The bible says that children are like arrows and we should fill our quivers, Lord willing. Amen?

Charlie Kirk was often criticized for telling young people to get married and have babies, but this is exactly what God told them to do in the Garden of Eden.

By the way, I forgot one. **Progressivism** says they want everyone to have a voice, yet when the one guy who was doing more than anyone in the world was killed for bringing a voice to others, they celebrate it.

Friends, this message today is not about making us all feel good about what we're doing. It's to make you choose who will you serve in your life? Will you be a slave to sin or will you be a prisoner of Christ?

The Bible makes it clear that we're all serving something. In Romans 6:16-18, it says: "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness." Paul isn't mincing words here. If we're not careful, sin becomes our boss—think of it like an addictive app on your phone that you can't put down, leading to wasted time, broken relationships, and ultimately, spiritual death. But when we choose Christ, we become His "prisoners," not in chains of oppression, but in a voluntary surrender that brings true freedom. Paul himself models this in Ephesians, calling himself "**a prisoner for the Lord.**" It's like deciding to join a team where the coach knows exactly how to bring out your best, versus going solo and crashing and burning.

This choice sets the stage for our journey in Ephesians 4:1-16. Paul urges us to walk worthy of our calling, emphasizing unity not just as individuals, but as a community. Because to get to spiritual maturity—to "**get there**"—**we must go together**. No lone wolves in God's kingdom. Let's break this down into four main points, drawing from the text and some cross-references, with illustrations from everyday life to make it relatable.

1. We Must Have Personal Unity with Christ!

First things first: Unity starts personally, with each of us connected to Christ.

Paul lists seven "ones" here: one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. It's like the foundational DNA of our faith. This isn't some abstract theology; it's personal. You can't have unity in a group if individuals aren't first united to the head, which is Christ.

Cross-reference this with Jesus' own prayer in John 17:20-23: "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and

loved them even as you loved me." Jesus prays for this unity because it reflects the Trinity and convinces the world.

Illustration: Imagine a family road trip. If Mom and Dad aren't on the same page—arguing about directions or music—the kids in the back are miserable, and you never reach the destination happily. But when everyone's aligned, sharing the same goal, the journey is joyful. In your life, maybe it's your workplace team: If you're not personally committed to the company's vision, group projects fall apart. Personal unity with Christ is like plugging into the power source; without it, we're just flickering lights.

So, ask yourself: Am I walking worthy? Am I united to Christ daily through prayer, Scripture, and obedience? That's where unity begins.

2. We Must Get Low, So That Christ Can Lift Us Up!

Next, Paul gets practical about how this unity looks: humility. In Ephesians 4:2-3, he says "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." To go together, we must get low—humble ourselves—so Christ can lift us.

This echoes James 4:10: "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you." And look at Philippians 2:5-8: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." Christ modeled it: He got low, descending to earth, so God exalted Him.

Illustration: Think of a basketball team. The star player who hogs the ball might score points, but the team loses. But the player who passes, sets screens, and celebrates others' successes? That's humility, and it lifts the whole team to victory. In today's world, it's like social media influencers who boast about their "hustle" but burn out alone, versus those who collaborate, mentor, and build communities—they rise together. Or consider a marriage: If one spouse always has to be right, it crumbles. But when both "get low," serving each other, the relationship thrives.

Friends, pride divides; humility unites. To get there together, let's get low, bearing with one another in love.

3. We Must Find Our Role!

Once united and humble, we discover our unique roles. Ephesians 4:7-12: "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.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

Christ gives gifts—not for show, but to equip and build. Cross-reference 1 Corinthians 12:4-7: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." And Romans 12:4-6: "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them..."

Illustration: Picture a symphony orchestra. The violinist doesn't play the drums; the conductor doesn't blow the trumpet. Each finds their role, and together they create harmony. In real life, it's like a startup company: The coder builds the app, the marketer sells it, the CEO visions it. If the coder tries marketing, chaos ensues. Or think of a family dinner—Dad grills, Mom salads, kids set the table. When everyone finds their role, the meal is a success. In church, maybe you're gifted in teaching kids, hospitality, or tech—find it, use it for the body.

Don't envy others' gifts; celebrate yours. To go together, we each must find and fill our role.

4. We Must Grow Into Our Calling!

Finally, this all leads to growth. Ephesians 4:13-16: "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."

Growth isn't optional; it's the goal—maturity, stability, building in love. Cross-reference 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

Illustration: Consider a young athlete. They start clumsy, but through practice, coaching, and team play, they grow into a pro. In everyday terms, it's like starting a new job: At first, you're overwhelmed, but as you learn, collaborate, and take feedback, you excel. Or parenting—a baby grows into a toddler, then teen, learning responsibilities. If they stay immature, problems arise. In faith, we're like that: Don't stay spiritual infants, swayed by every TikTok trend or false teaching. Grow by speaking truth in love, contributing your part.

Together, as each grows, the body builds itself up.

In conclusion, friends, to get there—to maturity in Christ—we must go together. Start with that choice: slave to sin or prisoner of Christ? Then pursue personal unity, get low in humility, find your role, and grow into your calling. Let's commit to this today. Pray with me...

Closing Illustration and Altar Call