

Sermon Supplement

Ephesians 4:1-16 – *Bearing with One Another in Love*

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** As a consequence of God's great plan of salvation, Paul calls believers to walk in a manner worthy of their calling as one new person by reflecting God's spiritual unity. This unity is accomplished through Christ's victorious gifts, which he gives to build up His body, the church. The resulting unity is an essential and natural fruit of the faith that believers profess, but it must also be maintained by building one another up in love.
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

KEY WORDS/THEMES

1. **Unity** – a state of oneness or of being in harmony and accord, exemplified in the oneness of the Trinity.
2. **Gifts** – closely connected to the idea of grace, that which is given or transferred freely by one person to another; Christ himself being the giver of good gifts in Ephesians 4.
3. **Equip** – associated with the medical term for setting a broken bone, to make something right, to prepare someone through training and discipline; in Eph. 4, for the work of ministry.
4. **Maturity** – associated with the idea of 'fullness' – absolute wholeness, the fullness of God; the goal of the discipling ministry of the church, that people might become mature, attaining to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (4:13)."

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

1. The Worthy Walk Leading to Unity (vv. 1-6)
 - a. Exhortation to walk worthily (v. 1)
 - b. Description of the worthy walk (vv. 2-3)
 - c. The basis for the worthy walk: the unity of each member of the Trinity (vv. 4-6)
2. Diversity in Unity that Leads to Maturity (vv. 7-16)
 - a. Christ's gifts are the key (v. 7-10)
 - b. A diversity of gifts (v. 11)
 - c. The purpose of the gifts: maturity (vv. 12-16)

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

Christ himself, the good news of the gospel – his life, death, and resurrection, is the key to the achievement of unity within the body.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- Walking worthy of your calling is characterized by humility, gentleness, and patience (v. 2a) – how is that going in your relationships?
- What image(s) come to mind when you read 'bearing with one another in love' (v. 2b) in regards to ethnic and racial unity?
- What has mutual forbearance looked like in these conversations, particularly with someone with a different perspective or skin color?

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Pray for 'the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' within your family, your group, and our church.
- Pray that you would faithfully use the gifts that you have been given.
- Pray that the body of Christ at Chapel Hill Bible Church would build itself up in love.
- Pray that we would be able to speak the truth in love to one another with the goal of becoming like Christ.