

Ephesians 4:1-16 study questions

We now begin the 2nd half of Ephesians where Paul moves from talking about the wonders of God and the Christian life to showing believers how to put these concepts into practice in their lives. Brilliantly, I believe, Paul starts by speaking about unity. If we are going to be successful in “living a life worthy of the calling [we] have received,” love and unity among the church is vital.

It may be hard for Christians today to grasp just how central this unity was to Paul’s vision for the church. We have grown accustomed to so many divisions within the worldwide church. Sometimes customs and practices among different churches has made it difficult for members of one church to recognize those from another as fellow Christians. Whatever position we take today, the one thing we can’t do is pretend this isn’t a central and vital issue.

Jesus, in His “high priestly prayer” (John 17), pleads to God the father “that all of them may be one.” For the church to be a mature, vibrant faith community, unity must permeate all that we do.

I am not His body. You are not His body. We – *together* – are His body. Every part of the body is necessary because each serves a function. No part is the whole, but every part is part of the whole. Our world desperately needs people who stick together and love one another. This is the church.

“[Jesus] is the head of the body, the church” (Colossians 1:18). “From [Christ] the whole body joined and held together by supporting ligaments, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:16).

Reflect on the following questions:

1. What does Paul mean when he urges the believers in Ephesus to live “worthy of the calling” they have received (verse 1)? How would you describe the life that God calls you to live?
2. What are some ways Christians can accept one another and “bear with one another in love?” How can you proactively help to maintain unity in our church?
3. In verse 7, Paul notes that followers of Jesus have been given a “special gift of grace” (sometimes called a “spiritual gift”). Have you identified your own gift of grace? If you have, how are you using it to serve the body of Christ? If you have not, what steps can you take to do so?
4. How do we avoid being “tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind” (verse 14)? In what areas do you still need to “grow up” as a member of the body of Christ? How can your group members help you mature?

5. Verse 15 talks about “speaking the truth in love.” Do you, by personality, tend to speak without love or love without truth? Is there a situation into which you need to speak truth, but lovingly?

6. Paul compares the church to a body. What part of the body are you? How are you, or how might you start, doing your part for your church?

7. Pastor Adrian described at least 4 ways in which we can all contribute: Story, strength, service, sacrifice. Which one of these comes easy to you and which one challenges you?