

August 2, 2026

Sermon: “Are You a Member of a Healthy Church?”

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Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-10

Memory Verse: Romans 10:9

Introduction

A. Every Christian needs to be a faithful member of a local church.

B. But how do you choose a local church? What are you looking for when you look for a church home?

C. The Bible reveals certain biblical and theological non-negotiables that characterize a sound, healthy church.

D. In Ephesians 4 the apostle Paul writes that we must establish clearly and transparently how we live as repenting sinners and what we believe as confessing disciples of Jesus.

E. Big Idea: Every Christian should be a faithful member of a healthy local church.

F. I want to help you answer the question “Are you a member of a healthy local church?”

I. A Healthy Church Will Expect You to Live in a Manner Worthy of Our Calling (4:1-3)

A. Chapters 1-3 focus on the doctrinal foundation of Christianity while chapters 4-6 shift to practical application based on the doctrinal foundation.

B. The “therefore” of Ephesians 4:1 marks the transition from positional to practical truth, from doctrine to duty, principle to practice.

C. Right practice must always be based upon right principle. It is impossible to have a Christian lifestyle without knowing the realities of the life that Christ has provided.

D. Right doctrine is essential to right living. It is impossible to live a faithful Christian life without knowing biblical doctrine.

E. A healthy church will expect you to live in a manner worthy of our calling to be followers of Christ.

F. “Walk” refers to daily conduct. No one ever meets Jesus and stays the same.

G. Paul describes five expectations of Christians:

(1) “Humility”—a proper estimate of self; to think or judge with lowliness; a recognition of our creaturely dependence on God.

(2) “Gentleness”—strength under the control of God; gentleness toward others and submission to God.

(3) “Patience”—to have a long fuse; long-tempered; endure annoyances and challenges over a period of time.

(4) “Bearing with one another in love”—to bear with other believers in their weaknesses and failures; put up with one another in a sacrificially loving way.

(5) “Being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”—the unity exists as a spiritual reality; it is our responsibility to keep it intact; strive to protect the unity of the Spirit.

H. A healthy church will expect you to live in a manner worthy of our calling to be followers of Christ.

II. A Healthy Church Will Equip You to Believe Steadfastly in the Fundamentals of the Faith (4:4-6)

A. Theology matters. What we believe matters. It always has and always will. What we believe determines how we behave.

B. The word “one” appears seven times in verses 4-6. “These seven ‘ones’ constitute the foundation on which the Spirit affects a true oneness among the redeemed” (Curtis Vaughan).

C. The basis of our outward oneness is our inner oneness.

D. “One body”—the universal church (1:23; 2:16); one living organism.

E. “One Spirit”—one Holy Spirit who energizes and gives life to that body (1 Corinthians 12:13).

F. “One hope”—to be like Him and with Him; to share ultimately in the glory of God. (Romans 5:2; 1 John 3:2)

G. “One Lord”—Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9)

H. “One faith”—“Those truths explicitly concerning the saving work of the incarnate Lord” (Tom Nettles). “The faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude 3).

I. “One baptism”—water baptism that reflects the completed work of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, and the spiritual participation in that by faith. “Baptism was extremely important in the early church, not as a means of salvation or special blessing but as a testimony of identity with and unity in Jesus Christ” (John MacArthur).

J. “One God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all”—God the Father is sovereign, immanent, and intimate with His people.

K. Doctrine is important for the life of the church. We must establish and make clear what we believe because what we believe will affect how we behave.

L. We have a church covenant that every member is required to affirm and a church confession that every member is required to believe.

M. Confessing a statement of faith means absolutely nothing if you don’t believe it and live by it.

N. A healthy church will equip you to believe steadfastly in the fundamentals of the faith and to live in a manner worthy of our calling to be followers of Christ.

III. A Healthy Church Will Encourage You to Rejoice Confidently in Christ’s Victory (4:7-10)

A. Every Christian has been given “grace.” In 4:7 it is not saving grace or sanctifying grace, but serving grace.

B. Christ graciously and sovereignly distributes gifts to every member of His body.

C. Spiritual gifts are not natural talents. You receive a spiritual gift when the Holy Spirit enables you to do something. It's a supernatural gift from God.

D. Christ makes the choice, not you.

E. 4:8-10. The imagery is that of a military conqueror leading captives in triumph and bringing spoils to distribute to his followers.

F. In the original context of Psalm 68, it is God who is envisioned as the conqueror, but Paul saw a messianic significance in the words.

G. Thinking of the victory that was achieved at the cross, he applied the passage to the ascended Christ.

H. Christ, then, is represented as a conqueror enriched by His victory and giving gifts to His people.

I. We gather together on the Lord's Day to be encouraged to rejoice confidently in Christ's victory.

Conclusion

A. How are we doing as a church? Are we healthy?

B. Have we clearly communicated what we believe and how we should live for the glory of God?

C. Do we encourage you to rejoice confidently in Christ's victory?

D. The Gospel Definition