

August 9, 2026

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

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Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-16

Memory Verse: Romans 10:10

Introduction

A. Last week we helped you answer the question “Are you a member of a HEALTHY CHURCH?” We studied three marks of healthy churches.

B. First, a healthy church will expect you to live in a manner worthy of our calling (4:1-3).

C. Paul listed five characteristics that should describe every Christian: humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love, and diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

D. Second, a healthy church will equip you to believe steadfastly on the fundamentals of the faith (4:4-6).

E. Paul presented seven fundamental truths we are to believe and experience: “one body,” “one Spirit,” “one hope,” “one Lord,” “one faith,” “one baptism,” and “one God and Father of all.”

F. Third, a healthy church will encourage you to rejoice confidently in Christ’s victory (4:7-10).

G. Today we want to help you answer the question “Are you a FAITHFUL MEMBER of a healthy church?”

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

I. Are You Being Equipped to Serve the Body of Christ? (4:11–12)

A. Christ gifted men to serve as apostles, as prophets, as evangelists, and as pastors and teachers. These gifted men were themselves the gifts of the ascended Christ to the whole body of Christ.

B. “Apostles” had to be chosen directly by Christ and have been witnesses of the resurrected Christ (Mark 3:13; Acts 1:21-22).

C. Paul was the last to meet these qualifications (1 Corinthians 15:8). It is not possible therefore, as some claim, for there to be apostles in the church today.

D. “Prophets” preached God’s revealed truth. “The apostles could not be everywhere, and local churches still needed a ministry of special revelation in the truths of the gospel and the ordering of the people of God under the new covenant. The prophets could preach new-covenant truth before the completion of the written revelation. That is now complete” (Tom Nettles).

E. “Evangelists” are called to preach the gospel. Evangelists are missionaries to the lost and traveling preachers endowed with clear perceptions of saving truth who possessed unusual power to communicate the gospel.

F. Apostles and prophets appear to have been confined to the first Christian generation. (Ephesians 2:20; 3:5)

G. “Pastors and teachers” constitute one office with a dual function. They are to shepherd the flock of God and to instruct them in divine truth.

H. Pastor-teachers are called by God to equip the saints for the work of service so that the body of Christ will be healthy and strong.

I. This is a major key in avoiding ministerial burnout, depression, and frustration. The church is not a bus where the pastor does all the driving and does his best to coax as many people as he can to get on the bus and take a seat. No! The church is a body and every member has a job, a function, a part to play.

J. “For the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” Pastor-teachers are to completely outfit Christians to serve the body of Christ. As pastors lead Christians from sin to obedience they equip them for the work of service.

K. We are to teach, train, and disciple you so you can faithfully serve the Lord and help build up the body of Christ. (Hebrews 13:20-21)

L. Are you being equipped to serve the body of Christ?

II. Are You Being Exhorted to Strive for Maturity in Christ? (4:13-16)

A. Exhortation emphasizes the pastoral application of the gospel and focuses on its concrete implications for everyday life. Exhortation is a call to action.

B. Are your pastors urging you to strive for maturity in Christ? Look at verse 13.

C. We are saved to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29).

D. We as pastor-teachers are to exhort you to pursue Christlikeness. We are to “attain to the unity of the faith, and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”

E. I am exhorting you today to strive for maturity in Christ. As members of Crawford Baptist Church, we need the unity of the faith, knowledge of Christ, and spiritual maturity.

F. If we are truly pursuing maturity in Christ, we will have a doctrinal stability that will keep us from theological error. (4:14) We will no longer be children at the mercy of error.

G. Knowing the truth of Scripture will protect us from “the trickery of men” and “craftiness in deceitful scheming.” There are so-called pastors who will cleverly manipulate error to make it look like truth.

H. If we are truly pursuing maturity in Christ, we will experience love and growth in the body. (4:15)

I. Sound teaching will be communicated with a loving spirit. We must always speak, deal, and act truthfully.

J. As we strive for maturity in Christ, we will “grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, that is Christ” (4:15b). We know we are growing spiritually in Christ when we yield to His lordship and obey His commandments. (John 14:15).

K. If we are truly pursuing maturity in Christ, we will see members of the body fulfilling their appointed function. (4:16)

L. This verse pictures the body of Christ (the church) as an “organism in which each member contributes to the growth of the whole by receiving and passing on the life drawn from Christ, the Head” (A. M. Hunter).

M. The life and strength of the head flow into the body, permeating its every part. Drawing from Christ, the body affects its own growth.

N. “Every joint” refers to each believer who is a member of the church.

O. God gifts believers so that they, having been empowered, may use their gifts for the benefit of others and the common good. The end result is that the body will grow, not just numerically but also in maturity.

P. All of this is “in love.” Love is always to be the spirit of the fellowship of believers. Love is the essential lifeblood of the church.

Q. Are you being exhorted to strive for maturity in Christ?

Conclusion

A. Key ideas in our passage:

- 1. God has a job for everyone to do. (4:12)**
- 2. God intends for the body to grow and mature. (4:12-13)**
- 3. God wants believers to be sound in the doctrines of the faith. (4:14)**
- 4. God wants us to speak to one another in love. (4:15)**
- 5. God wants us to serve one another in love. (4:16)**

B. Are you a FAITHFUL member of a healthy church?

C. Are you serving faithfully? Are you growing in Christlikeness?

D. The Gospel Definition