

Ephesians 4

**Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ
and
Instructions for Christian living**

REMINDER!

The outline of Ephesians

Chapters 1-3 - The Believers Position

Chapters 4-6 - The Believers Walk

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”

Ephesians 1:3

Chapter 1

We entered the Foyer and saw our Blessings in Christ

Chapter 2

We entered the Audience Chamber of the King and we met our King and found out about GRACE.

Chapter 3

We entered the Throne Room and got down on our knees to acknowledge our King

Paul spent three chapters spelling out in glorious detail all that God did for us, freely by His grace. Now he brings a call to live right, but only *after* explaining what God did for us.



And so we enter
The Jewel Room

From here onward we will
learn how to live a life
worthy of our calling as
FOLLOWERS of God

The **Jewel Room** is a place where we will find the “**Gems**” needed to live a righteous life as followers of Jesus.

A “Gem” is a precious stone that brings wealth to the owner.

So what GEMS has Paul got for us?
What “wealth” will we find here?
Is it material or spiritual wealth?
Do these “Gems” belong to us?



Ephesians 4 (New International Version)

Ephesians 4:1-6

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

¹ As a prisoner for the Lord, **then**, I urge you to **live a life worthy of the calling you have received.**

² Be **completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.**

³ **Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.**

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;

⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

When we really understand how much God did for us, we will naturally want to serve and obey Him out of gratitude.

1. Understanding *who we are* is the foundation of this worthy walk.
2. The idea is clear. We don't walk worthy *so that* God will love us, but *because* He does love us. It is motivated out of gratitude, not out of a desire to earn merit.
3. "Every believer is God's first-born; and so higher than the kings of the earth" Psalm 89:27.
Our character must therefore show our calling and not dishonour the life of Jesus.

Our Character?

Be completely humble and gentle;

Be patient, **bearing with one another** in love.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Longsuffering – “bearing with one another”

“*Chrysostom*” defined **longsuffering** as the spirit that has power to take revenge, but never does.

It is characteristic of a **forgiving, generous heart.**

You can only have this if you are a **FOLLOWER.**

And if you are a **FOLLOWER** then this is what shows in your life.



Why must we keep - **keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace?**

It does not say, “To endeavour to maintain the unity of evil, the unity of superstition, or the unity of spiritual dictatorship.”

It does not say, “Endeavouring to keep up your ecclesiastical arrangements for centralization.”

It does not say, “Endeavouring to keep the uniformity of the Spirit.”

Because we want the world to see that God is not divided on His plans for all.

And the church is a people that understand that:

There is **one body** and **one Spirit**, just as you were called to **one hope** when you were called;
one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

We have unity because of what we share in common.

AND the way God works unity is through spiritual gifts of leadership in the church.

This is a balanced approach.
NB! Balance is the Key to Life.



Ephesians 4:7-10

⁷ But to **each** one of us **grace has been given** as Christ apportioned it.

⁸ This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high,
he took many captives
and gave gifts to his people.” (Psalm 68:18)

⁹ (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

This speaks of our God who is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent
All Present
All Knowing
All Powerful

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the **apostles**, the **prophets**, the **evangelists**, the **pastors** and **teachers**,

¹² to **equip his people for works of service**, so that the **body of Christ may be built up**

¹³ until we all reach **unity in the faith** and in the **knowledge of the Son of God** and **become mature**, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Here comes the GEM – God wants **UNITY of the Spirit** to show that there is **one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism** and **one God**, so He puts in place leadership gifts to deliver this.



And leadership is **gifted** to **equip his people for works of service**, so that the **body of Christ may be built up**.

The Apostles

Are special ambassadors of God's work, though not in the same authoritative sense of the first century apostles.

They are **gifted** to provide a foundation for the church as described in Ephesians 2:20.

The Prophets

Are **gifted** Speak forth words from God in total consistency with the foundation of the Old and New Testaments. Sometimes they speak in a predictive sense, but not necessarily so, and they are always subject to the discernment and judgment of the church leadership.

The Evangelists

Are specifically **gifted** to preach the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.

The Pastors

Are **gifted** to shepherd the flock of God primarily (though not exclusively) through teaching the Word of God.

The Teachers

Teaching is an essential part of the pastoral ministry and it is the teachers that are **gifted** to expound the Word of God so that we all come to a **knowledge of the Son of God**.

This is known as the **Five-Fold** ministry that is put in place by God to build His church.

There are some opponents of this that believe that the office of Pastor and Teacher are evident in the same person thus it is a four-fold ministry.

Ephesians 4:14-16

¹⁴ Then we will **no longer be infants**, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by **every wind of teaching** and by **the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.**

¹⁵ Instead, **speaking the truth in love**, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, **as each part does its work.**

The **work of the leadership** is to **stir** in you the desire to **GROW UP** into Christ.

They do this through;

- Building a solid foundation (doctrine)
- Prophetically instructing and guiding (vision)
- Preaching the Gospel (the good news of salvation)
- Teaching us about Christ and Him crucified and what this means to us.
- Shepherding us – correcting us – loving us – advising us. (speaking the truth in love)

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

Instructions for Christian Living

Ephesians 4:17-19

¹⁷ So I tell you this, and **insist on it** in the Lord, that you must **no longer live** as the Gentiles do, in the **futility of their thinking**.

¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and **separated from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them due to the **hardening of their hearts**.

¹⁹ **Having lost all** sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

Ephesians 4:20-24

²⁰ That, however, is not the way of life you learned

²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.

²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to **put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;**

²³ to be made new in the **attitude of your minds;**

²⁴ and to put on the **new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.**



Here comes the character and attitude God wants to see in you.

Ephesians 4:24-28

²⁵ Therefore each of you must **put off falsehood** and **speak truthfully** to your neighbour, for we are all members of one body.

²⁶“**In your anger do not sin**”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,

²⁷ and **do not give the devil a foothold**.

²⁸Anyone who has been stealing must **steal no longer, but must work**, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have **something to share with those in need**.

Ephesians 4:29-32

²⁹ Do not let any **unwholesome talk** come out of your mouths, but **only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs**, that it may benefit those who listen.

³⁰ And do not **grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

³¹ Get rid of all **bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander**, along with every form of **malice**.

³² Be **kind and compassionate** to one another, **forgiving** each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.



How do we GRIEVE the Holy Spirit?

There are many ways to grieve the Holy Spirit. We can neglect holiness and grieve the *Holy* Spirit. We can think in purely materialistic terms and grieve the *Holy Spirit*. The Spirit exalts Jesus (John 15:26); when we fail to do the same, we grieve the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's grief is not of a petty, oversensitive nature. "He is grieved with us mainly for our own sakes, for he knows what misery sin will cost us; he reads our sorrows in our sins . . . He grieves over us because he sees how much chastisement we incur, and how much communion we lose." **Spurgeon**

So before we step into the **Worship Room** (or as Henrietta Mears calls it “**The Choir and Oratory Room**”) of Chapter 5, Paul has given us some encouragement to become **FOLLOWERS not Fans** of Jesus.

Now we need to go and SING the SONG of a FOLLOWER.

- There is no forgiveness without repentance.
- There is no salvation without surrender.
- There is no life without death.
- There is no believing without following.
- You cannot be a fan, you must be a FOLLOWER.



AMEN

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