

The Source of Unity

Ephesians 4:1-6 - NCBC, August 7, 2022

Main Point: **God made us one so we would live as one.**

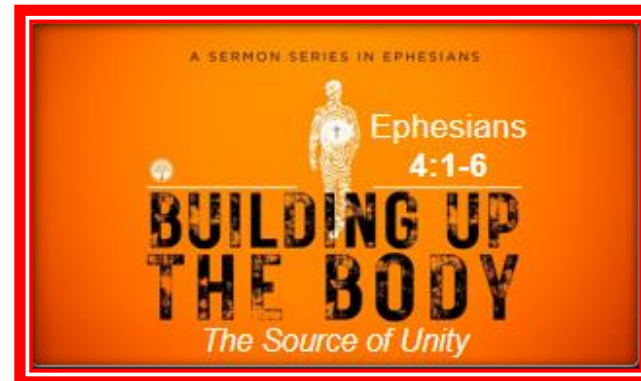
- Our unity is motivated by God's glory in the church (3:21-4:1)
 - "Glory" – Only God's exaltation overcomes self-exaltation
 - "Therefore" – What you believe determines how you behave
 - "Worthy Walk" – Daily living that evidences our gospel calling
 - "Calling" – Our glorious position by God's power (2 Thess. 1:11-12)
- Our unity is built through God's grace in our hearts (2-3)
 - Humility
 - Gentleness
 - Patience
 - Forbearing love
- Our unity rests on the grounds of our Triune God (4-6)
 - One Body
 - One Spirit
 - One Hope
 - One Lord
 - One Faith
 - One Baptism
 - One God and Father

Application: **Diligently work by God's grace to maintain unity in the Church.**

Opening Announcements:

- August's **Recommended Resource of the Month** is *When Sinners Say I Do: Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage* by Pastor Dave Harvey. A biblical view of marriage is essential for a God-pleasing life – no matter if you are presently married yourself – so please pick up your complimentary copy today!
- August is *Life Group Sign-up Month*... so please take time to consider which life group could be a good fit for you, and sign up today! Learn more at <https://mynCBC.org/connect/adults/life-groups/>.

<<How Firm a Foundation>>



Amen. God will never forsake the soul who is trusting in the grace of Jesus.

Please continue your worship of God now by opening your Bibles to **Ephesians chapter 4.**



If you do not have a Bible with you, simply raise your hand as our ushers come by, as we'd love to give you a Bible to use today or take home as a gift.

Before we read from **Ephesians 4**, I want to thank you for all the ways you joyfully served Jesus last month.



July was a very busy month of exhilarating ministry around here! Some of us served in the new 1Way Kidz ministry in downtown Mackinaw; some shared the gospel at one of our two Vacation Bible Schools. Some participated in Life Group leader training and After School Program staff training. Some helped hire Jared Baergen

as our new Outreach Director for Goodfield. Some traveled to San Francisco for a week of stretching evangelism and street ministry in the Tenderloin. Some served our community at Mack-A-Fest, and others helped us hold a public worship service in the park. Some started teaching and benefitting from a new cycle of Adult Discipleship Electives ... and all of this in addition to our normal Sunday morning children and adult worship gatherings!

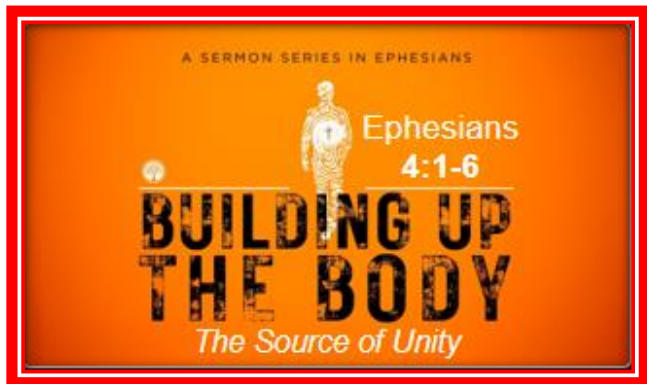
No one did *all* of this. But every member helped with a part of this...and that's how the church body works, right? We never expect every member to serve everywhere, but we do expect every member to serve somewhere...all for our greater joy and God's greater glory among us.

But admittedly, July 2022 was an exceptionally full month of ministry. And sometimes we can experience some let-down after an especially fruitful season of ministry. So how's your joy in Christ? How's your relationships with others? How's your fight for purity and your attitude of gratitude?

If you're extra tired, be sure to prioritize personal time to refresh your soul in the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word. Write out your prayers. Renew your mind with Gospel truths. Refresh your soul with grand visions of who God is, and all that God has done for you. Rejoice in all that God is doing in and through us – in spite of us – for the fame of His Name. And continue to pray that God's powerful grace will show us more of His love and keep us centered on His glory until He calls us home.



So church, thank you and Thanks Lord! for submitting to the work of God's Spirit within you! This is such a great time to be part of New Castle Bible Church!



Now let's turn our attention to **Ephesians chapter 4**, as we continue our series on *Building Up the Body* of the church.

If you're able, please stand in honor of the public reading of God's Word, as I read **Ephesians chapter 4, starting in verse 1**, from the ESV translation. As I read, listen carefully for what God is saying to you personally from this portion of Scripture:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

This is the reading of God's Word. Let's Pray.

There is a well-known legend about a Christian who suffers shipwreck and finds himself all alone on a deserted island. For several years, he survives on this island until one day, a passing fisherman discovers our stranded Christian and offers to return him to the mainland. The Christian is obviously overjoyed in his rescue but before they leave the island, the Christian asks the fisherman if he would like a quick tour of island where he's lived alone for so many years.

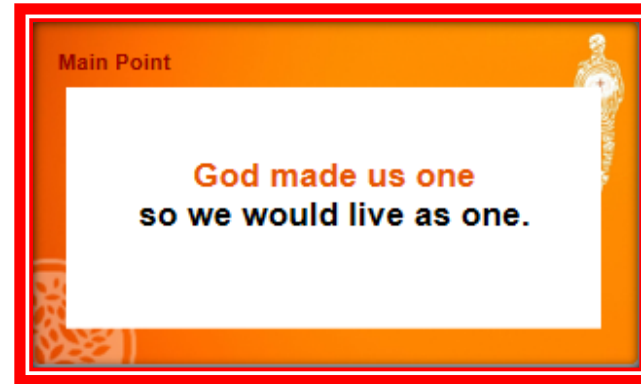
The fisherman is intrigued, so the Christian joyfully shows his rescuer all his gardens, his favorite beach and swimming hole, and his favorite lookout point. At the end of the tour, they approach three small buildings. The Christian says, this building here is my church, where I worship God. And this building here is my home, where I sleep and shelter from storms. Abruptly, the Christian then turns and says, so now that you've seen the island, let's go!

But the fisherman pauses, and says, wait... what's the third building? And the Christian says... O...that's the church I used to go to!

We laugh because there's such a sad truthfulness to it. Christians today are far more divisive and judgmental than God created us to be. It's rare to find any Christian who has been part of the same local church for their entire life. The frequency of flock-swapping and church-splitting today is a woeful blemish on God's glory in the world.

So listen carefully – Paul wrote **Ephesians** to Christians who were tempted to proudly discriminate among themselves and separate from one another. The Ephesian believers were tempted to separate from each other because of racism... Jewish Christians against Gentile Christians. So Paul writes **Ephesians** to reveal the Gospel mystery that God is building a new people – called the church – from *both* Jewish and Gentile people.

Paul wants his readers to know God has united all believers in His grace so that we might all live in love together for the praise of His glory. And particularly in **verses 1-6 of chapter 4**, Paul teaches that,



God made us one so we would live as one.

Once God unites Jews and Gentiles together in His gospel... Jews and Gentiles can now walk together in loving unity and relational wholeness.

Now church... we must approach this text with honest humility. Most of us probably don't care much about the Jewish/Gentile distinction. But we still need **Ephesians chapter 4**. Because all of us wrestle with pride and selfishness.

What part of God's true family – what part of God's church – do you tend to judge, discriminate, or even separate ourselves from?

Do you refuse to relate with certain Christians, just because of the color of their skin, or their economic needs, or their level of education? God's Church is unnecessarily splintered today by disagreements over politics, music, homeschooling, and of course theology. And while there's room for some local churches to have different theological convictions than other local churches

when it comes to non-essential doctrines,¹ we must be careful to never excommunicate ourselves in proud judgmentalism from those who are truly part of God's church.²

So please honestly consider your relationships with other Christians. Do we put too much weight on our preferred theological convictions? Are we too quick to fight with true Christians wearing different "labels," like Methodists, or Baptists, or Presbyterians, or Apostolics? Have we allowed fear to build unnecessary walls between us and other true believers who believe differently than we do regarding the Holy Spirit, or the sovereignty of God, or the age of the earth, or the timing of the rapture or the tribulation, or women in spiritual leadership?

Please don't misunderstand. I'm not saying that these doctrines don't matter. Here at New Castle Bible Church we believe that the glory of God necessarily demands doctrinal soundness. We care deeply about rightly interpreting and obeying God's Word in all our life and practice.

But what I'm saying is that too often Christians cluster together around shared convictions to the exclusion and judgment of other true believers. We only self-

¹ I highly recommend Gavin Ortlund's book, *Finding the Right Hills to Die On: The Case for Theological Triage* for a helpful treatment of what theological disagreements truly merit ecclesiastical separation. After all, while all doctrine is important as the revelation of God, not all doctrine is equally significant to our salvation or our spiritual fellowship with other believers in God's Church.

² I.e. Mark 9:38-40; Luke 9:49-50; However Scripture is clear that

righteously fellowship with those of our tribe, and no others.

Ephesians chapter 4 reminds us that God unites all believers into one universal Church with a capital "C." So while doctrinal soundness matters, and all Christians are encouraged to study like Bereans,³ relational wholeness among believers also matters for the glory of God. With all of our diversity in race, class, education, and culture...with all of our differences in spiritual maturity and understanding... God has made all Christians one in Christ...so that we would live together as one united body.

So let's catch up with the surrounding context of **Ephesians 4** to recognize first that,

believers are to separate from those who teach a false gospel (Galatians 1:8-9; 2 John 10). The church is called to earnestly contend for the truth of God's gospel against false teachers (Jude). False teachers are not to be tolerated in Christ's church (Revelation 2:6, 14-15, 20-24; 3:9), but are instead to be excommunicated (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10-11).

³ Acts 17:11



Our unity must be motivated by God's glory in the church.

God's glory is the only right motivation for unity in diversity in God's church. Write this down:

Your passion for unity among Christians will never be stronger than your passion for God's glory in this world.

After all what did Paul just get done praying in **chapter 3 verse 21**?

To God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

In other words, Paul concludes the first three chapters, which focus on the immense riches of God's saving grace, by praying that God would be glorified in the church. God's gracious calling for sinners like you and me is all ultimately for the praise of God's glory!⁴

⁴ Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; 3:13

Then, **chapter 4** continues with the relational implications of God's grace at work in us,

I therefore ...urge you all to walk in a manner worthy of the calling... eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit ...

The "therefore" in **verse 1** draws out this important implication. God's children should be passionate about relational unity for the glory of God.

Now, why is this so important?



Because only God's exaltation is powerful enough to overcome self-exaltation. Any call for unity in God's church that is not anchored to the glory of God will succumb to a pragmatic ecumenical tepidness that only results in building another tower of babel.⁵

Listen carefully church. It is self-love and self-glory that leads to judgmental discrimination and hypocritical elitism

⁵ Genesis 11:1-9

within God's family.⁶ Therefore, only a passion for the glory of God will ensure that our relational wholeness doesn't just settle for a counterfeit, man-centered unity of external uniformity.

I ought not to love you because you are like me, but I ought to love you because God loves you, and my welcoming of you brings glory to God!⁷

The relational unity of the church – with all of our cultural and personal diversity – is one of the greatest witnesses to the reality of God and His saving grace in this world!

Now, I want to look a bit more closely at that word "Therefore" in **verse 1**.

Paul's Letter to the EPHESIANS						
Focus	Calling			Conduct		
	What God has Done			How We Should Live		
CH.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Topics	Spiritual Blessings & Prayer	Our Position in Christ	"Mystery" Revealed & Prayer	Walk in Unity & Holiness	Walk in Love & Wisdom	Stand against Evil
God has united us in grace so that we may live in love together ...all to the praise of His glory!						

Because, remember, this "Therefore" is the middle point of the entire letter. The "therefore" in **verse 1 of chapter 4** is the hinge that connects all the doctrine and theology of **chapters 1-3** with the practical duties and relationships of **chapters 4-6**.

⁶ Galatians 5:26; James 3:16, 4:1-4, 11-12

All that God has done for us in the first three chapters must now, *therefore*, affect how we live or walk in our daily relationships.

Our unity is **motivated** by God's **glory** in the church (3:21-4:1)

- "Glory"- Only God's exaltation overcomes **self**-exaltation
- "Therefore"- What you **believe** determines how you **behave**

Calling			Therefore	Conduct		
What God has Done				How We Should Live		
1	2	3		4	5	6

In other words, write this down: What you believe determines how you behave. Your calling determines your conduct.

This is why sound doctrine is such a necessary part of spiritual unity. So we must never sacrifice the importance of doctrine on the altar of unity. Because in fact, all the doctrine of **chapters 1-3**...when rightly applied ...fuels the unity that is so beautifully described in **chapter 4**.

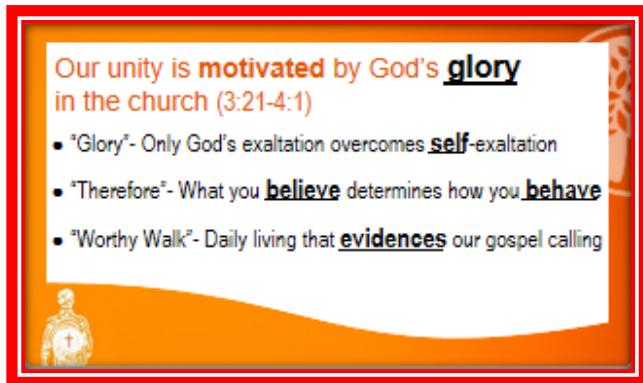
But pull the bus over for just a moment. Because have you ever noticed that sometimes Christians with the greatest doctrinal knowledge are the most proud,

⁷ Romans 15:7

judgmental, and divisive?⁸ And those with the least care for doctrine are the most welcoming and generous to others?

This does not glorify God, loved ones. Truth and love indeed are heavenly companions.⁹ And the more truth we come to understand of God's saving grace in our salvation, the more loving we should practically live – just as the whole letter of **Ephesians** teaches.

So that's why in **verse 1** Paul urges or begs the Ephesian Christians to not let external distinctions divide them, but instead, in light of all that God has done for them, Paul urges them to *walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called*.



Now a “Worthy Walk” simply refers to daily living that evidences our gospel calling. It's not a walk that deserves the calling...for no sinner can ever be worthy of God's grace. So a “worthy walk” doesn't mean a way of living that deserves God's calling.

⁸ C.f. 1 Corinthians 8:1

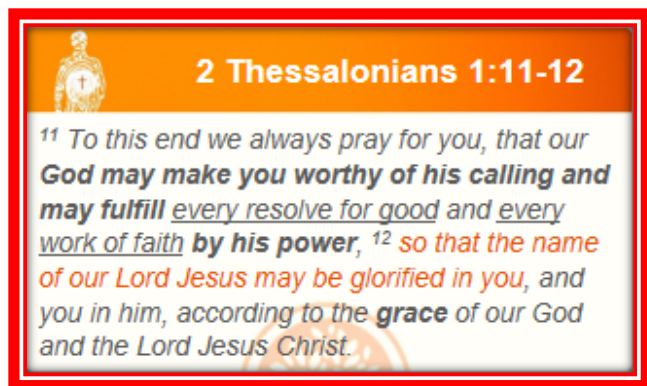
Instead, it's a daily walk that evidences our gospel calling. It's “worthy” in that it's suitable, or fitting, or a consistent expression of our calling.



Our “Calling” simply refers to our glorious position by God's power and grace. “The calling to which you have been called” in **verse 1** is simply Paul's summary for all the immeasurable grace that Paul has described in the first three chapters.

Since we've received such a glorious calling – such a privileged position by God's power and grace – we therefore should live differently than the rest of the world. The glory of God is at stake.

⁹ Psalm 85:10; Ephesians 4:15; 1 John 3:18; 2 John 1:1, 3

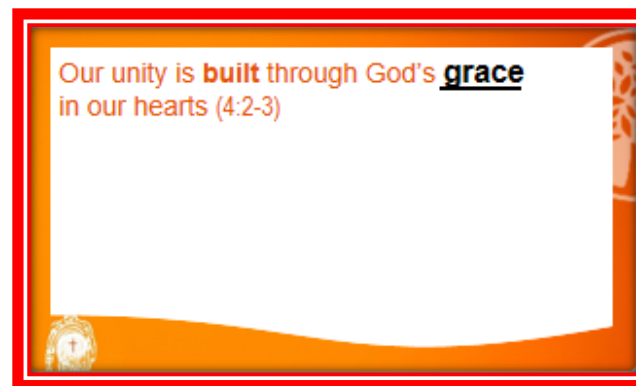


I love how Paul says this in **2 Thessalonians chapter 1, verses 11-12:**

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by His power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

God has made us one so that we would live as one... all for His greater praise, as our daily relationships with other Christians gives visible proof of God's power at work within us.

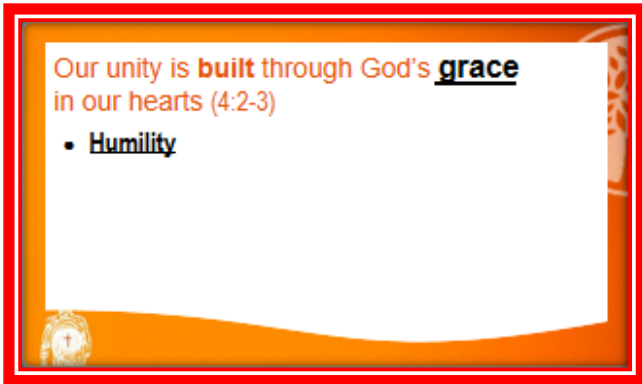
So we've learned how unity must be motivated by God's glory, now let's consider how,



Our unity is built through God's grace in our hearts. **Verses 2-3** make it clear that unity is a matter of the heart before it is ever a matter of external relations.

Verses 2-3 give four necessary heart attitudes of worthy living that all culminate in maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. These gospel-fueled attitudes form a progression where the genuine exercise of one attitude leads to the next until we practically experience the relational unity that God has given to us in Christ.

So the first essential heart attitude that God's grace produces in His redeemed is,



Humility, which is a very fitting way to live in light of our calling in **chapters 1-3**, right?

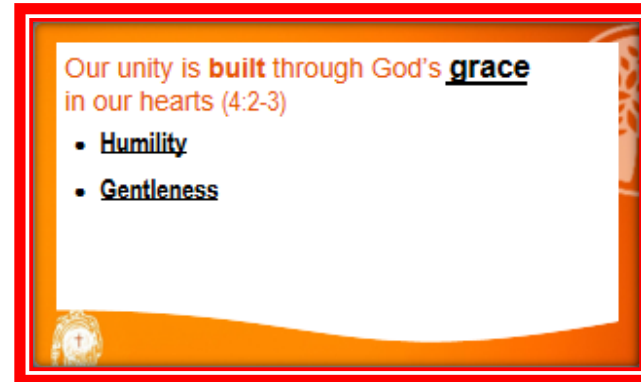
Because humility is the attitude by which you see yourself just as God sees you – no better and no worse. Humility is simply the self-forgetfulness that refuses to focus on one's own rights, but instead embraces a biblical honesty about how God views you.

The apostle Paul is begging us to live everyday with the highest degree of humility. This is the worthy way to live in light of all that God has done for us. None of us deserved to be chosen by God, or made spiritually alive, or to have our sins forgiven. None of us deserved to be granted access to God by His Spirit, and made into a holy temple for God's dwelling.

So church, if we are going to experience the oneness that God has given us together in Christ, then we must repent of the pride that thinks more highly of ourselves than we ought. We must repent of the pride of loneliness and self-pity. We must repent of the pride of boastful comparisons...and embrace the grace of humility which

allows us to both confess and forgive sin, welcome all whom our God welcomes, and submit ourselves gladly to Jesus' authority.

Humility then produces,

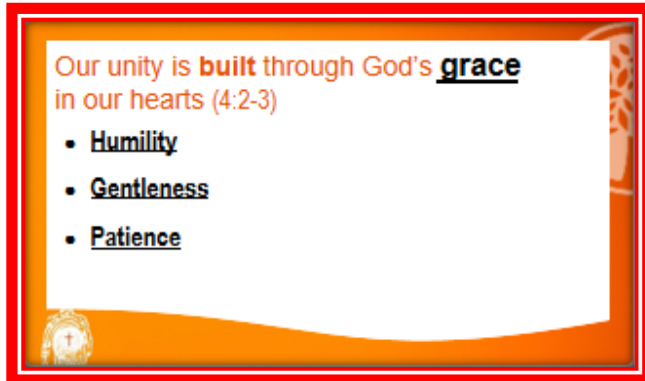


Gentleness or Meekness, which is the opposite of harsh resentment or retaliation. Gentleness is the courageous trust in God that powerfully restrains your emotions for the sake of God's glory and the common good.

A proud heart will never be meek. But humility breeds gentleness, where one's emotions are under the powerful control of God. God is trusted to make all things right in the end.

And gentleness is so essential for relational unity among a diverse group of people. Because gentleness or meekness refuses to get angry or seek revenge when treated unfairly, but only gets angry when God's name or work is being attacked.

Which then helps to explain the next internal heart attitude of unity which is,



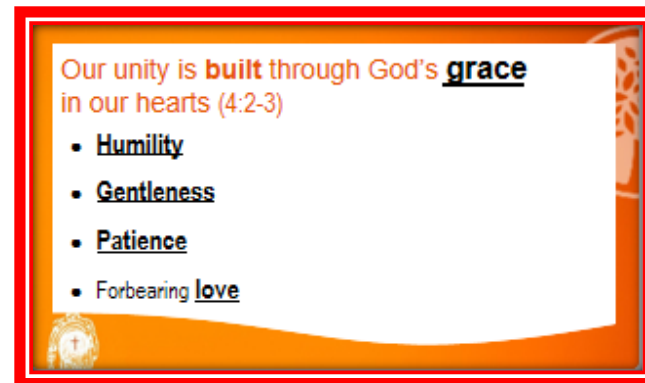
Patience or long-suffering. Literally, this word means “long tempered.” Only a humble and meek heart will continue to patiently endure wrongs without irritation, complaint, or retaliation.

Patience waits for God to act how and when He chooses, instead of taking justice into our own hands.

After all, no group of people can live together for long without experiencing some level of conflict, right? God knows that His children will experience all kinds of disagreements within His body of the church. But unity is not uniformity or the absence of conflict. Spiritual unity is built through God's grace working humility, gentleness, and patience *inside* our hearts. The question of Christian unity is never about whether Christians have disagreements or diversity, but about what heart attitudes Christians bring to their conflicts.

So are your heart attitudes towards other Christians consistent with our gospel calling?

Paul is urging us to live with each other with these attitudes, for this kind of a heart reflects God's character and glorifies God. A right understanding of all of God's grace in our salvation produces humility. Then humility enables meekness which enables patience, which in turn enables,



Forbearing love, or *bearing with one another in love*.

By the way, this is how we know that patience is not just tolerant indifference...because the patience produced by our gospel calling expresses itself in *agape* love – a sacrificial love that is willing to put up with someone or something that is difficult for the sake of the other person's eternal good.

Forbearing love is always unselfish. It is a love that persists in forgiving sin, praying for enemies, and

blessing those who curse you¹⁰... all because you have first been so loved, forgiven, and blessed by God Himself.¹¹

And then notice what all four of these heart attitudes lead to: **verse 3** says we will be,

Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Notice he doesn't say these attitudes *create* unity, but rather these attitudes result in a holy zeal to maintain or preserve our unity from the Spirit – the unity the Holy Spirit has already given us together.

So make no mistake church. God made us one when we were united to Christ in our salvation. Our unity is not created through external human pressure. Christian unity is built inside human hearts by God's grace in response to our gospel calling. Spiritual unity cannot be created by a denomination or a persuasive human leader. Spiritual unity is something the Spirit has given to all Christians to enjoy together, and it is the Spirit which is the bond, or the cement, that chains us together in God's peace through these gospel-worthy attitudes.

God made us one so we would live as one. Our unity is motivated by God's glory in the church, and our unity is built through God's grace inside our hearts.

Finally, in **verses 4-6** Paul teaches that,

¹⁰ Romans 12:14-21

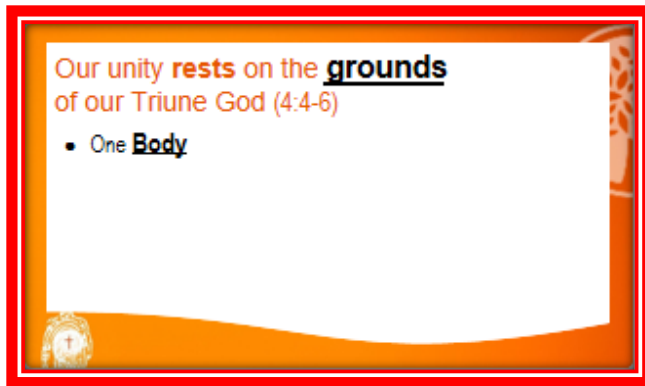


Our unity rests on the grounds of our Triune God.

Here Paul rapidly piles up 7 key realities about the person and work of God the Spirit, God the Son, and God the Father that actually unify all Christians. These are the non-negotiable doctrines that necessarily unite all true believers. These are the grounds and biblical measure of all spiritual unity.

First, in **verse 4** Paul reminds the Ephesians that there is only,

¹¹ 1 John 4:19



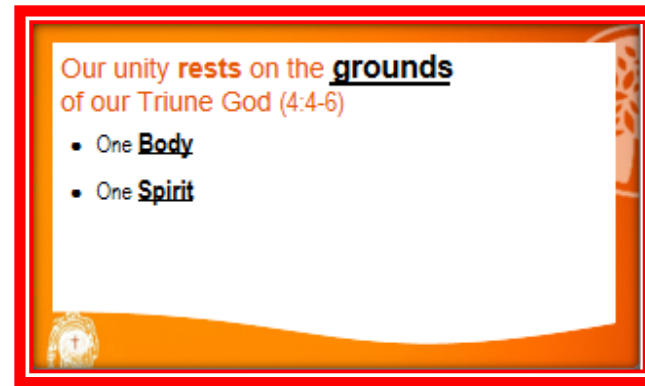
One Body of Christ, which is a metaphor for the Church. One of Paul's favorite metaphors for God's church is the human body.¹² After all, the human body has an organic unity even though it has many diverse parts. It grows through a multiplication of cells, and any separation of its members is very harmful to the whole.

So what's Paul's point? There's only one body of believers which is called the Church – capital "C". Yes, there are many different local churches.¹³

But from God's perspective there's no Gentile or Jewish, Arminian or Calvinist, Charismatic or Cessationist, Democratic or Republican, Hymns only or Contemporary Music body. There is only one body of Christ, and all who are in that invisible eternal body have thereby been unified together by God Himself.

¹² C.f. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

¹³ A Google search reports at least 109,000 different Christian churches

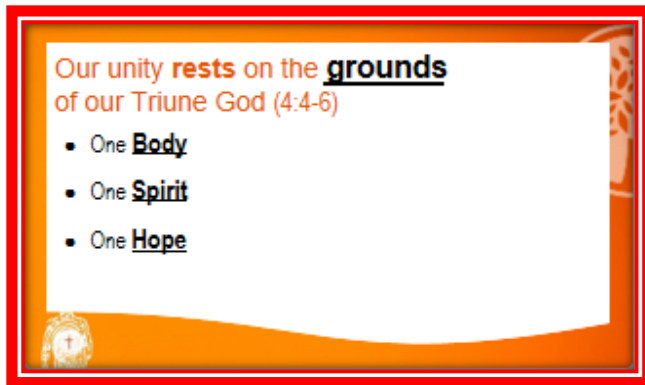


Second, there's only One Holy Spirit. We all have access to God through the same Holy Spirit. We were all awakened to our sinfulness by the same Holy Spirit. We were all born again by the same Holy Spirit, and baptized and indwelt by the same Spirit.

When it comes to the work of the Holy Spirit in our salvation, all true Christians have the same experience!

Third our unity is grounded in,

across the US! C.f. <https://www.churches-in.com/>



One future Hope.

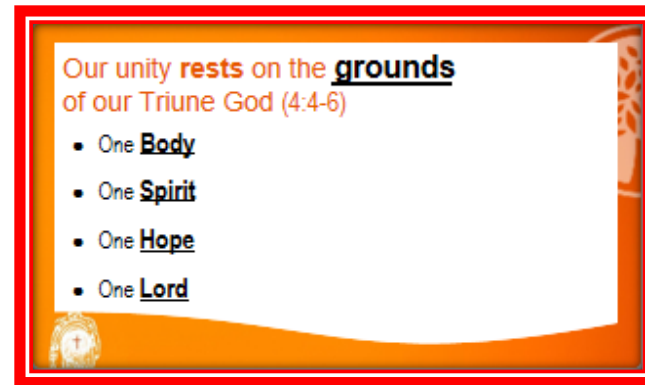
The end of **verse 4** reads,

just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call.

This hope refers to the future certainty of our resurrection and eternal life with God! Paul's point is clear – since Christians are all going to share in our eternal future together... we might as well start living like it now! All Christians have the same hope of resurrection and eternal glory!

Next in **verse 5**, Paul adds that there is only,

¹⁴ Colossians 1:18; c.f. Ephesians 5:23



One Lord. The church doesn't have two heads.¹⁴ There's only one Lord Jesus who has authority to rule and save His people. Salvation is found in no one else but Jesus.¹⁵

So very practically, if all Christ-followers are submitting to the same Lord, and trusting and obeying the same master, won't we all be drawn together?



¹⁵ Acts 4:12; Romans 10:12; Galatians 1:8

Fifth, there is only One Faith. Here faith can be understood in two different ways – objectively and subjectively.

Objectively, there is only one apostolic faith – or settled body of truth about the gospel. There's only one gospel which Jude calls "the faith which was delivered unto the saints."¹⁶

But subjectively, faith refers to the act of believing that gospel in order to be saved. In other words, there's only one way for sinners to be saved, and that is through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus on their behalf!

So regardless of which way you understand faith in this context – both are true, and both are sources of our unity.

All Christians believe in the same gospel for our salvation. And this one gospel joins Christians across all divisive barriers of preference or culture to make us one.

Sixth there is only,



One Baptism for all Christians. Now there's some debate whether this is a wet or dry baptism here.

Some believe this baptism refers to believer's baptism that is done in Jesus' name to publicly identify a Christian with Jesus' death and resurrection.¹⁷ Others believe this one baptism refers to the baptism of the Spirit which all Christian's receive at the moment of conversion.¹⁸

While I'm certainly not dogmatic about this, I personally believe this is referring to a third choice of the believer's dry spiritual baptism into Christ's death. Because at the moment of conversion, **Romans 6** and **Colossians 2** teach that every Christian is baptized into, or identified with, Christ's death.¹⁹

This identification with Christ's death for our own sins is the inward reality which is then later pictured outwardly in the wet ceremony of believer's baptism.

¹⁶ Jude 3

¹⁷ Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12-13; 10:48; 19:5

¹⁸ Acts 1:5, 11:16; 1 Corinthians 12:13

¹⁹ Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; c.f. Mark 10:38-39; Galatians 3:27

But again, regardless of which view you take here, Paul's point is clear. All Christians are baptized, or identified with, the same Lord through the same faith.

Then **verse 6** concludes the grounds of our unity by saying there is only,



One God and **Father** of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. The repetition of the word “all” four times cannot be missed. All believers... all Christians have the same God and Father. We’ve all been adopted by the same Heavenly Father. And our God who unites us is absolutely supreme or sovereign – *He is over all believers*. His work permeates and saturates everything – *He is working through all believers*. And God is dwelling and residing with us – *He is in all believers*.

Therefore, please think through this carefully: All Christians are already united into one body, through one Spirit, and share in one future hope. All Christians are submitted to one Lord, share in one faith, and have identified with Jesus through one baptism. All Christians

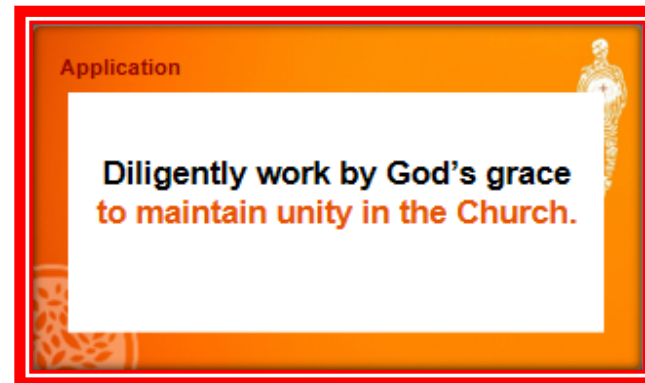
have the same God and the same Father who is over, through, and in all of us together.

The Triune God is the center definition and grounds of our unity.



God made us one so we would live as one.

The glory of God motivates peace-making, our gospel calling compels us towards the inner heart attitudes of unity, since the persons and work of our Triune God has already made us one.

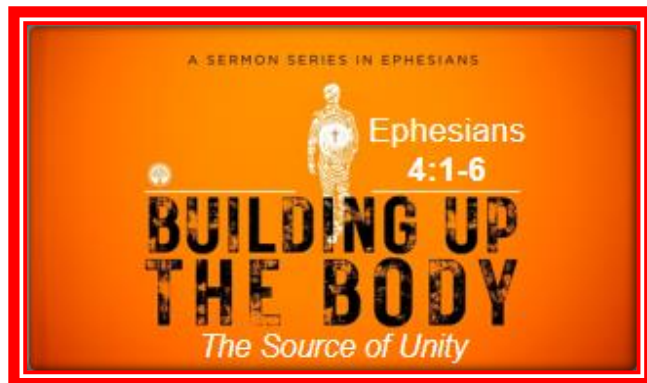


So then, may we diligently work by God's grace to maintain unity in God's Church with a capital "C."

Ask yourself, where am I most quick to judge, discriminate, or retaliate against some part of God's church? What Christians do I think I'm better than?

Repent of all your pride and self-righteousness. Stop comparing yourself among others, but instead go back and reflect more carefully on the glorious calling that God has mercifully given you in your salvation, as described in **chapters 1-3**. Cultivate humility by reflecting on your gospel calling.

Jesus died and rose again to deliver you from your sinful death, and unite you with everyone else in His church. We, along with Paul, have lost our freedom of independent and self-reliant living. We are now prisoners of love for the Lord.



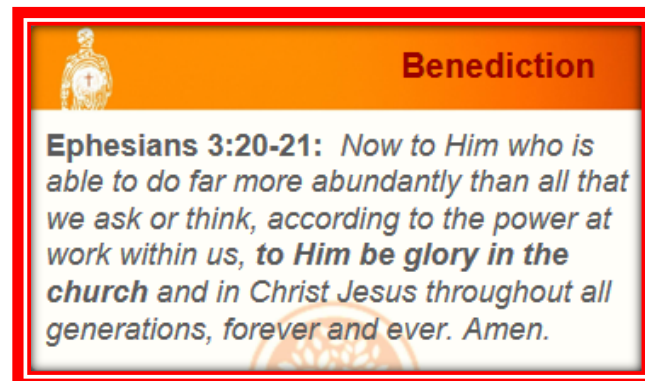
May God help us build up His body for the sake of His glory, by the power of His grace, on the grounds of what He Himself has done.

Let's pray.

<<Oh How Good It Is>>



<<Exit Offering for Camp Nathanael Flood Relief>>



Let's pray aloud our benediction from **Ephesians 3:20-21**:

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Recommended Resources on Ephesians 4:1-6:

- Psalm 133
- John 17:11, 21-23
- Romans 15:1-7
- 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:3-4, 23; 12:12-13, 20
- Philippians 1:27
- Colossians 3:12-15
- 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12
- 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12
- 2 Timothy 1:8-9
- James 3:13-4:10
- 1 John 2:6
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/deep-doctrine-makes-houses-happy>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/what-is-worthy-walking>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/the-heart-traits-behind-a-worthy-walk>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/how-to-pursue-all-lowliness>
- *Finding the Right Hills to Die On*, Gavin Ortland
- *United*, Trillia Newbell
- *A Plea for Unity*, John MacArthur
- *The Peacemaker*, Ken Sande
- *Bloodlines*, John Piper

Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions

1. Review Ephesians 4:1. Why do you think Paul includes the reference that he is a “prisoner for the Lord”? Why is “worthy walking” often so costly to our personal freedoms, comfort, and pride?
2. Quickly skim Ephesians chapters 1-3. How would you summarize all that God has done for you in salvation (i.e. “the calling to which you have been called”)? Why is our calling so glorious?
3. Compare the heart attitudes of Ephesians 4:2-3 with Galatians 5:22-23. Discuss how our unity together in God’s church is the work of God’s Spirit. Why are each of these attitudes necessary for unity?
4. Review Ephesians 4:4-6 and identify all seven realities that are the grounds of our unity together as believers (each are marked by the word “one”). How is the Triune God at the center of all our unity? Explain why it’s not possible to build unity on anything other than biblical truth about the person and work of God.
5. What kinds of Christians do you find most difficult to live at peace with? Perhaps those with a different religious tradition? Political background? Economic status? Or those in your own home or those with a particular sin struggle, or even others? Assuming that the realities of 4:4-6 is true for both you and them, discuss how the heart attitudes of 4:2-3 would practically help you to diligently walk in unity with these believers this week.