

UNITY AND MATURITY IN CHRIST  
EPHESIANS 4:1-8

WE ARE BACK IN EPHESIANS TO FINISH OUT 2025. WHAT BETTER WAY THAN TO TALK ABOUT UNITY AND MATURITY IN CHRIST. AS WE MAKE NEW COMMITMENTS TO LOSING WEIGHT, EXERCISING MORE, SAVING MONEY, AND FINALLY CLEANING THE GARAGE, LET US NOT FORGET HOW IMPORTANT OUR SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES ARE. THIS SHOULD BE AT THE TOP OF THE LIST. HOW IS OUR PRAYER LIFE? THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORD? CHURCH ATTENDANCE? SOWING FINANCIALLY? DO YOU HAVE ANY KIND OF COMMITMENT TO SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE? PLEASE PRAY ABOUT THESE THINGS AND LET GOD GUIDE YOU DEEPER IN 2026. AMEN?

WHEN PAUL WROTE THIS LETTER, HE WAS ON HOUSE ARREST IN ROME AWAITING TRIAL FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL. INSTEAD OF HARDTIMING AND WHINING ABOUT IT, PAUL LOCKED INTO HIS CALLING. ENCOURAGING THE CHURCH, HE WROTE THE LETTERS, EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS, AND PHILEMON WHILE INCARCERATED. THROUGHOUT HIS LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS AND SURROUNDING CHURCHES IN ASIA MINOR, PAUL REFERS TO HIMSELF AS A PRISONER OF CHRIST JESUS, NOT ROME. PAUL'S CIRCUMSTANCES DID NOT QUENCH HIS FAITH IN THE RISEN SAVIOR AND THE PROMISES OF THE GOSPEL. CHAPTERS 1-3 LINE OUT OUR SPIRITUAL WEALTH WHILE 4-6 LINE OUT OUR SPIRITUAL WALK. FROM DOCTRINE TO DUTY. IN CHAPTER 1 PAUL SPEAKS OF THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST AND HOW WE SHOULD PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING FOR RECEIVING

THEM. IN CHAPTER 2 PAUL SPEAKS OF BEING SPIRITUALLY DEAD BUT BEING MADE SPRITUALLY ALIVE BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST AND HOW NOW THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE IN CHRIST BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE. THOSE IN CHRIST ARE NOW ONE BODY, THE CHURCH. NO ONE IS GREATER OR LESS THAN EACH OTHER, WE SERVE EACH OTHER EQUALLY. CHAPTER 3 EXPLAINS GOD'S MARVELOUS PLAN FOR US GENTILES. THAT WE WHO WERE ONCE OUTSIDERS TO THE THINGS OF GOD, HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR TO GOD. ALL REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY OF SALVATION IS OURS TO CHERISH AND KNOW. GOD, IN HIS GREAT WISDOM AND ETERNAL PURPOSE, HAS MADE PLANE TO EVERY BELIEVER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THIS MYSTERY. TODAY WE PICK BACK UP IN THIS MAGNIFICANT EPISTLE IN CHAPTER 4, WHERE WE LEFT OFF BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

Ephesians 4:1 NIV

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

AS ONE WHO HAS DIED TO HIS OWN PLANS FOR LIFE AND FULLY SUBMITS TO THE LORD'S PLAN, I URGE YOU TO DO THE SAME

LIVE A LIFE WORTHY OF THE SALVATION YOU HAVE RECIEVED BY THE GOSPEL

TO LIVE A LIFE/PERIPATEO/TO WALK AROUND, CONDUCT

A LIFE THAT HAS BEEN BLESSED BY GRACE DID NOTHING TO EARN THIS GRACE, THIS MAKES IT SPECIAL, A CALLING

EVERYTHING THAT WE DO AND SAY MATTERS

Ephesians 4:2 NIV

<sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

COMPLETELY/META PAS/WHOLEHEARTEDLY  
HUMBLE/TAPEINOPHROSYNE/MODEST HUMILITY  
GENTLE/PRAUTES/MEEKNESS, POWER UNDER CONTROL  
PATIENT/MAKROTHYMIA/INTERNAL & EXTERNAL CONTROL IN  
A DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCE  
BEARING WITH/ANECHOMAI/TO PUT UP WITH, ENDURE

Galatians 5:22-23 NIV

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

EASIER SAID THAN DONE, BUT STILL OUR REQUIREMENT AS CHRIST FOLLOWERS. WHAT DOES YOUR FRUIT LOOK LIKE? IS THERE A SECTION OF THE FRUIT YOU NEED TO WORK ON THIS UPCOMING YEAR?

Ephesians 4:3 NIV

<sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

WE MUST DO OUR VERY BEST TO FIGHT FOR UNITY NOT EACH OTHER.... HOW DO WE DO IT? WE MAKE A BOND TO KEEP PEACE THE HIGH PRIORITY

Matthew 5:9 NIV <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God.

Ephesians 4:4-6 NIV

<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

WE MAINTAIN PEACE WITH ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT COMPROMISE OF TRUTH. ALL ROADS DO NOT LEAD TO GOD. JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE WITH GOD. THE UNIVERSE IS NOT IN CONTROL OF YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, GOD IS. WE DID NOT EVOLVE FROM MONKEYS OR PRIMORDIAL OOZE, WE WERE CREATED BY GOD.

Colossians 1:16 NIV

<sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

DON'T MAJOR ON THE MINORS, IT IS A WASTE OF TIME

Ephesians 4:7-8 NIV

<sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. <sup>8</sup> This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high,  
he took many captives  
and gave gifts to his people.”

PAUL IS QUOTING PSALM 68:18

PAUL MOVES FROM UNITY TO UNIQUENESS

WE DID NOT “EARN” THESE GIFTS, THEY HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED BY GOD TO HIS PEOPLE. DIFFERENT GIFTS FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE IN THE BODY. THERE IS DIVERSITY AND INDIVIDUALITY IN THE UNITY OF THE BODY. UNITY IS NOT UNIFORMITY AND HARMONY IS NOT SAMENESS OR THE ABSENCE OF VARIATION

1 Corinthians 12:12-20 NIV

<sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

<sup>15</sup> Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But in fact

God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

WE ARE ALL SPECIAL INDIVIDUALS AND AT THE SAME TIME  
WE ARE ALL THE SAME

1 Peter 4:10-11 NIV

<sup>10</sup> Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

LET THIS NEW YEAR BE A YEAR OF GROWTH FOR YOU  
INDIVIDUALLY AND FOR US AS A BODY

IDENTIFY YOUR GIFTS (YOUR WHEELHOUSE) AND SERVE  
OTHERS WITH THEM

WE FIND THE MOST SATISFACTION IN LIFE AND THE MOST  
CONFIRMATION OF LIFE ON THIS EARTH WHEN WE SERVE  
OTHERS

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!! FOR EVER AND EVER, AMEN!