

“Worthy Calling”

Immeasurably More #4 • Ephesians 4

INTRODUCTION

Having laid the foundation of God’s wisdom in chapter 3, namely to create one unified body of believers through the sacrifice of Christ, Paul now proceeds to explain what it means to live out our calling; to be the Church. What does it look like to function as a unified body, growing spiritually, leaving behind the old life and embracing a new life in Christ? Chapter 4 of Ephesians gives us the tools to walk worthy of that calling.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

Have you been part of a group that seemed to stay unified, committed, and bonded to one another over a long period of time? Briefly describe that group.

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Walk in Unity

Q1. Read Ephesians 4:1-6; Colossians 3:13-15

Paul demonstrates a heart that longs to see unity in the church at Ephesus. After urging them to walk in a manner worthy of their calling, how does Paul define such a walk in Eph 4:2-3? These attitudes can be challenging to maintain. What circumstances do you find that make this difficult? What is one thing that you can do to “put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony?” (Colossians 3:14)

Walk in Spiritual Health and Growth

Q2. Read Ephesians 4:7, 11-16, Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28-30

The body of believers is made up of many diverse parts. God shapes us and prepares us to contribute uniquely in the church. Read over the above passages and note which of the various gifts you recognize that God has given you. Share how God has used that gift in your life. Eph 4:15 and 16 refer to both growth and love. What is the relationship between growth and love in a healthy church body?

Walk Away from the Old Life

Q3. Read Ephesians 4:17-19; Ephesians 2:1-2

Even those who are made alive in Christ may have difficulty letting go of their old life. How does Ephesians 4:17-19 describe the life of the unbeliever (Gentile)? A hard heart, or callousness may remain in certain areas of our lives where we need to focus our attention. What are some signs that might alert you to an area of your life where you have callousness or resistance to God? What areas could you use help, prayer, and encouragement in to be further removed from your old life?

Q4. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:25-32

We know 2 Cor 5:17 is true, however we are in a constant struggle to resist the enemy’s lies and believe God’s truth instead. Paul encourages us in Eph 4:25 to speak truth to one another, and act in a way that is consistent with God’s truth; that we are new creations in Christ. Can you recall a time when you received encouragement from a fellow believer to pursue God’s truth? In verses 26 – 32 Paul gives us a list of ways we might fail to live as new creatures, particularly in our dealings with one another. Read through this list. Can you think of things deemed “acceptable” or “justified” actions in our culture, which God might include in these categories? (e.g. little white lies, cheating the system, getting away with something, coarse language, etc.) In contrast, how much more wonderful life would be in the community of God pictured in v. 32!

Wrap-Up

In his epistle to the Ephesians Paul pleads for unity. He recognizes that God has called the church to walk as one body, even though we all have unique gifting to contribute. When each of us recognizes and stewards our spiritual gifts, the whole body benefits. But when we resist God and remain callous in areas of our lives, we hurt not only ourselves, but the whole body as well. Instead we have an opportunity to flourish individually, and corporately, when we walk in the new life God offers us.

Memory Verse

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called

Ephesians 4:1 ESV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more notes) _____

Challenge:

Ask the Lord to show you areas of opportunity to use your spiritual gifts this week.

Q1

Ephesians 4:1-6 ESV - 1 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.

Colossians 3:13-15 ESV - 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Q2

Ephesians 4:7, 11-16 ESV - 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift... 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Romans 12:6-8 ESV - 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28-30 ESV - 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. ... 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all

teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

Q3

Ephesians 4:17-19 ESV - 17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

Ephesians 2:1-2 ESV - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

Q4

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV - 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Read Ephesians 4:25-32 in your Bible

Prayer Notes cont.
