

Walking Worthy of Our Calling

October 22, 2023 ■ Jeremy Winkelman

Strive to _____ your _____ in the church. (15-16)

Strive to _____ the _____ of the church. (7-14)

Strive to _____ the _____ of the church. (2-6)

Ephesians 4:1-16

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. ⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,

"When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

⁹ (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 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. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: Think about some people with whom you feel a sense of unity. What makes you feel a unity with them? What difference does this unity make in your life?

Read and Discuss: Ephesians 4:1-16

1. Paul starts by calling believers to “walk worthy” of their “calling” (v. 1). From what we’ve seen so far in Ephesians 1-3, how would you describe what God has called us to? In light of the fact that we’re saved by grace and not by works (Ephesians 2:8), what does it mean to *walk worthy* of this *calling*?
2. Paul tells believers in verse 3 to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” How does the phrase “in the bond of peace” help us understand what “unity of the Spirit” should look like? How are the various virtues in verse 2 essential to maintaining such unity?
3. Paul goes on in verses 4-5 to list seven bonds that we already share with all other believers. What practical difference does it make to recognize that we’re told to “maintain” a unity with other believers that already exists rather than being commanded to find a way to *create* unity?
4. What should being “eager to maintain” this unity mean for us in relation to other believers in our *own* church? In relation to believers in *other* churches? How does verse 14 offer caution to the notion that Christian unity means we must embrace *all* those who claim to follow Christ?
5. In verses 12-14 Paul describes what those who are serving the church should be aiming at. How would you put this purpose into your own words? *Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11*. What does this passage add to our understanding of gifts and service? How would you summarize the point Paul is making in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11?
6. Verse 16 says that the church grows as it ought to “when each part is working properly.” How might you use your gifts in the context of Neighborhood Church? In the context of the global church? What are some first steps you could take toward this end?

Pray: Pray that we would walk with humility, gentleness, and patience, being eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit. Pray that we’d all do our part in building up the body of Christ to maturity.