

EPHESIANS SESSION 4

Review: Last week we went through chapter 3 where Paul reveals to the Ephesians that this dispensation of the grace of God has been revealed unto him. The mystery that was hid in God from the foundation of the world is that God would call out a bride for His son that is a joint-body of Jew and Gentile, that Gentiles would be fellow-heirs and on the same ground as the Jews by the gospel. He recorded another prayer that he was praying for them, the first was for enlightenment and the second for enablement. He prays for them to know the love of Christ and be filled with the fulness of God and finishes with God's exceeding abundant ability to do more than we ask or think.

The first three chapters of this letter are doctrinal. Tonight, as we move into the last half of this letter, he shifts from speaking doctrinally to practically (how to apply what we have learned).

Ephesians 4:1-3 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *Now that they are saved, he urges them to walk worthy of their vocation which is representing Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. Then he gives 4 keys to walking worthy:*

- **Lowliness of mind** – Humility and dependence upon the Spirit.
- **Meekness** – Power under control, gentle
- **Long-suffering and forbearing one another in love** – Not easily provoked, bearing injuries for a long time and withholding from action, having patience
- **Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace** – Unity is not uniformity (sameness). We maintain our God-created uniqueness but share a common vision and goal. This unity is tied to our Christian character and is based on the work of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:4-6 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. These are the 7 one's of which Christians should be united in. There's just one body of Christ, one Holy Spirit, one hope of your calling (conform us to the image of Christ), one Lord (Jesus), one faith (that saves), one baptism (of the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ), one God and Father of us all. These make up the common ground for Christians to enjoy their unity.*

Ephesians 4:7-10 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) *Jesus Christ has equipped the church for unity and service by gifting every believer with at least one spiritual gift. A spiritual ability to be used in service to God's people for the expansion of His kingdom. When Jesus died on the cross, his body was laid in Joseph's tomb, but his soul went into the lower parts of the earth and brought out the Old Testament saints. When he ascended on high, he led those that were in paradise in the heart of the earth, into the presence of God in heaven.*

Ephesians 4:11-13 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: *The Lord not only gave gifts, but he created offices of ministry to bring the saints to maturity, to equip them to minister, to build up and strengthen the body of Christ, and to bring the saints to maturity.*

- **Apostles** – The term comes from the Greek word for “one who is sent out”. Key qualifications for apostleship included being a disciple during the earthly ministry of Jesus, an eyewitness of his resurrection, and a direct commissioning by Christ to go with the message. The apostle’s ministry was foundational to the church, as elders were ordained in every church and they were established, the office of apostle ceased.
- **Prophets** – The ministry of the prophets in the early church was to speak God’s message directly revealed from the Holy Spirit. To offer direction and encouragement, exhorting and edifying believers as well as foretelling future events so that the church could respond accordingly. **Acts 11:28-29** And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:
- **Evangelists** – The primary role of the evangelist is preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. While other ministries primarily serve the church, the evangelist’s distinctive focus is on reaching those who are outside of Christ. **Acts 8:5** Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.
- **Pastors** – The word “pastor” is synonymous with the word “shepherd”. Although Paul told Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist”, the focus of the pastor is on

those already saved. His work is to feed the sheep and disciple them so that they come to maturity. To comfort and care for them as well as protect them from wolves. When sheep come to maturity, they reproduce.

- **Teachers** – There are people in the body of Christ who are neither a pastor nor evangelist, yet they have the gift of teaching. The teachers have spiritual insight into God's word, they make truth accessible, they also equip believers and protect them from false doctrine. They help people understand God's principles and apply them to their daily lives.

Ephesians 4:14-16 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. *The Lord Jesus gave these offices to the church for the purpose of bringing the saints to maturity in Christ so they can be safe from deception. The body of Christ is like the human body; every member has a function that the rest of the body benefits from. When Christians don't know their purpose in the body, then they can't exercise their gift, and the body suffers from the lack of it.*

Ephesians 4:17-19 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. *The term Gentiles here refers to pagans separated from God. The lost are cut off from the life of God because their spirit is dead and their heart is blind. They cannot perceive God or take direction from him, so they walk in the vanity of their mind (they follow their senses). Christians are supposed to be directed by God through his word and Spirit. When we lean on our own understanding then we're no better than pagans.*

Ephesians 4:20-24 But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. *Being a Christian is being a new creature. Since we're new creatures we strive to live a new way. God put Christ in us, it's up to us to put him on! We do that by renewing our minds. Filling our minds with God's word will change the*

way we think, which will change the way we act and help us walk in the Spirit. The only way to overcome the lies of the devil is to know the truth!

Ephesians 4:25-27 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. *One of the hallmarks of our sinful nature is deception. God loves truth and desires truth from us...lies always hurt others. It's not a sin to be angry in certain instances but anger that we hold on to is dangerous because it fuels injuries. The devil works in our thoughts and emotions that we should turn loose of.*

Ephesians 4:28-30 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. *It's God's design that we work and receive for our work. That is good. A Christian labors to have the ability to give to others who are in need. Corrupt communication injures, tears down, destroys, or poisons the image of others. Words have the power to build up or tear down. A Christian's speech should always be to the building up of others and their words carry grace. All sin grieves the Holy Spirit within us. We're sealed with the Holy Spirit which means he cannot leave us, so he grieves which causes us to grieve and motivates us to get right with God. The Holy Spirit grieves because he loves us, and he is never more grieved than when saints hurt each other.*

Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. *This is why we're instructed to let go of anger quickly because it eventually runs into bitterness, wrath, clamor (yelling), evil speaking (slander and gossip), malice (deep-seated desire to harm others). Bitterness is a poison you hold in your heart that contaminates your whole person and defiles others around you. The Christian is to be kind, tender, forgiving because God has forgiven us of far more than we'll ever be called upon to forgive in others.*