

# Walk Worthy

of the calling with which you were called. – Eph. 4:1

EPHESIANS 4:1-5:21

LESSON 13 – DOING YOUR PART – EPH. 4:16

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# Every part does its share

- ▶ Ephesians 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.
- ▶ As we have studied through Ephesians 4:1-16 in this series “Walk in Unity,” we have seen that it is Christ who builds His church. We have examined the tools and methods that He has chosen to use to accomplish the building of His House. In fact, we learned that the term “edification” means “to build a house” and we have seen how He edifies His church.

# Every part does its share

- ▶ Before we move on to the next section of text in Ephesians 4 and begin the next part in our series “Walking in Truth” (Eph 4:17-32), I wanted to look for one more lesson at Ephesians 4:16. There is so much here in this verse that shows us just how it is that Christ accomplishes the edifying of His body. So today let’s take this verse apart phrase by phrase and see what we can learn about God’s program for real church growth.

# Every part does its share

- ▶ From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.
- ▶ ***the whole body***
- ▶ It is the whole body that is growing. The whole body is edified. We often only think about the church on the local level. While it is true that much of what we have studied these last few lessons applies specifically in the practice of local congregations, we cannot forget the rest of the body.

# The Whole Body

- ▶ We see the evangelical scene here in the West and we wonder sometimes if the church is dying. We wonder how she can go on so infested with weak doctrine, apathetic practice, and heretical traditions. On a smaller scale we may also wonder how there can be a church on every corner in our town and also at the same time wonder how 90% of them can even call themselves a church and keep a straight face.
- ▶ But let us remember that the church is bigger than just our own local congregation, and just because a group of people put a sign on a building that identifies them as a church does not mean that they are a part of the body of Christ. To make the point we see from the text that the true church, the real body of Christ, is growing and bearing fruit.
- ▶ If a group of people that is called a church is not growing and maturing in the faith and is not bearing good fruit then they prove that they are not a church, for Christ is building His whole church.

# The Whole Body

- ▶ Let us also never forget those other congregations around the world with whom we share this relationship as adopted children of God. I am pleased to be able to interact with churches of like faith in places in England, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, India, Canada, and now, with Billy, across the Caribbean.
- ▶ And let us never forget those members of the body of Christ who live and worship where it is forbidden by the local governments and others hostile toward Christ. Let us pray for the persecuted church as we all grow in grace.

# Knit Together

- ▶ ***joined and knit together by what every joint supplies***
- ▶ We, the whole body, and we on the local level, are being continually joined and knit together. This means literally that we in the church are being fitted together.
- ▶ Technically speaking this is being taught and learning in a way that brings us together in our understanding of truth. We are fitted and united around the truth, around what we believe.
- ▶ Notice too that this fitting and uniting comes by means of what every joint supplies. The term joint there means “bond”. Every place that we are joined, or bonded, is a further step we have taken in unity. It is a deeper relationship, a closer walk, a more intimate trust between members of the body of Christ.

# Knit Together

- ▶ Our obedience, our love, our fellowship, our service, our sacrifice – these are all “bonding” experiences where we are growing together as the church.
- ▶ If a church is divided, or splitting, or breaking into factions, then it is likely that the members of the church are failing to do their part in the work of church growth. Because growth here is referred to as being fitted and united, and this takes time and effort, willingness, teachability, and mutual submission to the Word of God and to each other.



# Effective Working

- ▶ ***according to the effective working by which every part does its share***
- ▶ It is reiterated here that every part does its share when it comes to being fitted and united. This reminds me of a few verses. The Bible is clear that we are not to be troublemakers or busybodies, but instead we are to be at peace with others (as much as it depends upon us) and we are to bear one another's burdens and even put up with each other! We are to be quick to forgive and eager to reconcile. (see 2 Thess. 3:11; 1 Tim. 5:13; 1 Peter 4:15; Rom. 12:18; Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14-15).
- ▶ The phrase here also tells us that each part must do its share effectively if we are to grow. Ineffective work is just that, ineffective. But here each part does its share working effectively – accomplishing what we are equipped to accomplish.

# Effective Working

- ▶ A church member cannot work effectively without being properly equipped. And who does the equipping? Remember? Elders and teachers in the church are given by Christ to equip the saints, and equipped saints who actually do what they have been taught to do work effectively when it comes to unity and growth.
- ▶ The opposite sadly is all too true, where pastors do not equip, but instead entertain, and where members do not work effectively, but instead just act as spectators or consumers, the church does not really grow. It dies. The truth is abandoned. And the Spirit leaves!
- ▶ Church growth is not a reference to having more people this week than last week come and sit to see the show!! Church growth is about every member being equipped to do the work of service, the work of ministry to God and to each other, and then going out and effectively doing it.

# Causing Growth

- ▶ ***causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love***
- ▶ Why then does the church grow? So that the church can be built up in love. There is the goal, the aim, the purpose, the meaning of it all. Church growth is about the body of Christ loving Him with all that they are and loving each other as themselves.
- ▶ Church growth is in fact proof that we are His for as we hear and obey His Word the body is matured and united and fitted together for this one ultimate purpose – to love and glorify God.

# Causing Growth

- ▶ Paul wrote to Timothy and told him that “the purpose of the command is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith.” (1 Timothy 1:5). The Word of God has been given for this purpose – so that as we are empowered and motivated to obey it, we may then love God and love others with a maturing love – a love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

# The End (Result)

- ▶ The end result of true church growth is a church that really and unreservedly loves Jesus Christ. And as the Word is used to equip us and motivate us, as we obey it, then we see that the result is that our love for Christ and each other is a true and lasting love. It is a love that comes first from a pure heart (forgiven) and is magnified by a good conscience (free from indwelling sin and guilt) and is ultimately expressed in an unfeigned faith (absolute and unflinching trust in Christ).
- ▶ Let us not ever forget that to love Christ is to obey Him! So a growing church is an obedient church, and an obedient church is a church that loves God and each other in word and deed.
- ▶ Are you doing your part?

# Next Week

- ▶ We begin the next section of text: Walk in Truth – Eph 4:17-32
- ▶ Lesson 14 - The Truth about Ethnicity – Ephesians 4:17