

**Let me invite you to take your Bible and turn to Ephesians 4:4-6. The last time we were studying Ephesians together, we discussed the introduction of chapter 4 and Paul's call for unity. I encouraged you to...**

- **WALK WORTHY OF YOUR CALLING. (vs. 1)** – "...in a manner worthy of your calling"
- **WALK EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. (vs. 2)** – "...with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love"
- **WALK IN A MANNER THAT PROMOTES UNITY IN THE CHURCH. (vs. 3)** – "...eager to maintain the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace."

**I tried to help you see that the concept of "walking" is a major theme in the practical section of the book:**

- Chapters 4-6 are intensely practical! The key word to follow is "WALK."
  - Walking in unity (4:1-16)
  - Walking in purity (4:17-32)
  - Walking in love (5:1-7)
  - Walking in light (5:8-14)
  - Walking in wisdom (5:15-21)
    - Walking in wisdom in your marriages (5:22-32)
    - Walking in wisdom in your parenting (6:1-4)
    - Walking in wisdom in the workplace (6:5-9)
    - Walking in wisdom in the spiritual realm (6:10-20)
  - Walking away (the final farewell) (6:21-24)

**This morning, I want to help you understand the motivation behind Paul's call to unity. The motivation is found in Ephesians 4:4-6. Together we will consider how to walk in unity as a church...**

- **Walk in unity by keeping in step with other believers in the church.**
- **Walk in unity by following the lead of the Trinity through the church.**

#### **I. WALK IN UNITY BY KEEPING IN STEP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCH.**

Illustration: Participating in a marching band in high school... playing the trombone 😊

##### **A. Jesus prayed for the unity of the Church. (John 17:13-23)**

<sup>13</sup> But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup> I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. <sup>20</sup> "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> that they may

all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup>The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup>I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

## **B. The Holy Spirit inspired 59 one “another passages” to reflect on in Scripture.**

Below is a list of the 59 one anothers of the New Testament. Read each one and visualize how they can be walked out in our church... through our community groups:

### **The 59 “One Anothers” of the New Testament:**

1. “...Be at peace with each other.” ([Mark 9:50](#))
2. “...Wash one another’s feet.” ([John 13:14](#))
3. “...Love one another...” ([John 13:34](#))
4. “...Love one another...” ([John 13:34](#))
5. “...Love one another...” ([John 13:35](#))
6. “...Love one another...” ([John 15:12](#))
7. “...Love one another” ([John 15:17](#))
8. “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love...” ([Romans 12:10](#))
9. “...Honor one another above yourselves. ([Romans 12:10](#))
10. “Live in harmony with one another...” ([Romans 12:16](#))
11. “...Love one another...” ([Romans 13:8](#))
12. “...Stop passing judgment on one another.” ([Romans 14:13](#))
13. “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you...” ([Romans 15:7](#))
14. “...Instruct one another.” ([Romans 15:14](#))
15. “Greet one another with a holy kiss...” ([Romans 16:16](#))
16. “...When you come together to eat, wait for each other.” ([I Cor. 11:33](#))
17. “...Have equal concern for each other.” ([I Corinthians 12:25](#))
18. “...Greet one another with a holy kiss.” ([I Corinthians 16:20](#))
19. “Greet one another with a holy kiss.” ([II Corinthians 13:12](#))
20. “...Serve one another in love.” ([Galatians 5:13](#))
21. “If you keep on biting and devouring each other...you will be destroyed by each other.” ([Galatians 5:15](#))
22. “Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.” ([Galatians 5:26](#))
23. “Carry each other’s burdens...” ([Galatians 6:2](#))
24. “...Be patient, bearing with one another in love.” ([Ephesians 4:2](#))
25. “Be kind and compassionate to one another...” ([Ephesians 4:32](#))
26. “...Forgiving each other...” ([Ephesians 4:32](#))
27. “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.” ([Ephesians 5:19](#))
28. “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” ([Ephesians 5:21](#))
29. “...In humility consider others better than yourselves.” ([Philippians 2:3](#))

30. "Do not lie to each other..." ([Colossians 3:9](#))
31. "Bear with each other..." ([Colossians 3:13](#))
32. "...Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another." ([Colossians 3:13](#))
33. "Teach...[one another]" ([Colossians 3:16](#))
34. "...Admonish one another ([Colossians 3:16](#))
35. "...Make your love increase and overflow for each other." ([1Thessalonians 3:12](#))
36. "...Love each other." ([1Thessalonians 4:9](#))
37. "...Encourage each other..."([1Thessalonians 4:18](#))
38. "...Encourage each other..." [1Thessalonians 5:11](#))
39. "...Build each other up..." ([1Thessalonians 5:11](#))
40. "Encourage one another daily..." [Hebrews 3:13](#))
41. "...Spur one another on toward love and good deeds." ([Hebrews 10:24](#))
42. "...Encourage one another." ([Hebrews 10:25](#))
43. "...Do not slander one another." ([James 4:11](#))
44. "Don't grumble against each other..." ([James 5:9](#))
45. "Confess your sins to each other..." ([James 5:16](#))
46. "...Pray for each other." ([James 5:16](#))
47. "...Love one another deeply, from the heart." ([1Peter 3:8](#))
48. "...Live in harmony with one another..." ([1Peter 3:8](#))
49. "...Love each other deeply..." ([1Peter 4:8](#))
50. "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling." ([1Peter 4:9](#))
51. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others..." ([1Peter 4:10](#))
52. "...Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another..."([1Peter 5:5](#))
53. "Greet one another with a kiss of love." ([1Peter 5:14](#))
54. "...Love one another." ([1John 3:11](#))
55. "...Love one another." ([1John 3:23](#))
56. "...Love one another." ([1John 4:7](#))
57. "...Love one another." ([1John 4:11](#))
58. "...Love one another." ([1John 4:12](#))
59. "...Love one another." ([1John 5](#))

## **I. WALK IN UNITY BY KEEPING IN STEP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCH.**

**A. *Jesus prayed for the unity of the Church. (John 17:13-23)***

**B. *The Holy Spirit inspired 59 one "another passages" to reflect on in Scripture.***

**C. *God the Father provided a way for unity in the Church. (Eph. 2:14-18)***

<sup>14</sup>For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility <sup>15</sup>by abolishing the law of commandments expressed

in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,<sup>16</sup> and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.<sup>17</sup> And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.<sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

**D. Our text this morning provides 7 reasons why the body of Christ should be unified in Ephesians 4:4-6.**

1. One body (4a) – Christ’s body
2. One Spirit (4b) – The Holy Spirit
3. One Hope (4c) – Eternal Life
4. One Lord (5a) – Jesus Christ
5. One Faith (5b) – The Christian Faith
6. One Baptism (5c) – Water Baptism<sup>1</sup>
7. One God and Father of all (6) – God the Father

**Application: HOW IN STEP ARE YOU WITH OTHER BELIEVERS AROUND YOU?**

During World War II, Hitler commanded all religious groups to unite so that he could control them. Among the Brethren assemblies, half complied, and half refused. Those who went along with the order had a much easier time. Those who did not, faced harsh persecution. In almost every family of those who resisted, someone died in a concentration camp.

When the war was over, feelings of bitterness ran deep between the groups and there was much tension. Finally, they decided that the situation had to be healed. Leaders from each group met at a quiet retreat. For several days, each person spent time in prayer, examining his own heart in the light of Christ's commands. Then they came together. Francis Schaeffer, who told of the incident, asked a friend who was there, "What did you do then?" "We were just one," he replied. As they confessed their hostility and bitterness to God and yielded to His control, the Holy Spirit created a spirit of unity among them. Love filled their hearts and dissolved their hatred.

When love prevails among believers, especially in times of strong disagreement, it presents to the world an indisputable mark of a true follower of Jesus Christ.

*Our Daily Bread, October 4, 1992.*

Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshipers [meeting] together,

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<sup>1</sup> Some commentators take this phrase to refer to Spirit baptism (similar to 1 Corinthians 12:12-13: <sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves<sup>[a]</sup> or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.). However, I believe the context supports water baptism. The phrase falls under the section devoted to God the Son (Jesus) not God the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts speaks about baptizing in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38 & 4:12).

each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be, were they to become 'unity' conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship.

[A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God.](#)

**I. WALK IN UNITY BY KEEPING IN STEP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCH.**

**II. Walk in unit by following the lead of the Trinity through the church.**

**A. A Picture of Individuality**

1. Verse 4: God the Holy Spirit
2. Verse 5: God the Son
3. Verse 6: God the Father

**B. A Picture of Diversity<sup>2</sup>**

1. The manifestation of the Gospel
  - a. **One Hope – CONNECTED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT**
    - [BKC] All believers have a hope regarding their future with God (I Peter. 1:3; 3:15).
    - [BKC] This confidence began at the time they were “called” to salvation (Eph. 1:4, 18; 2:7; 4:1)
    - [BNTC] A hope firmly grounded in God’s promises which cannot fail. It was a hope of receiving the inheritance among the saints in the light [cf: 1:18 with Col. 1:12], as God’s gracious reward for a life consecrated to him.)
  - b. **One Faith – CONNECTED TO GOD THE SON**

[BNTC] Is it faith in the objective sense, a body of truth, creed [Acts 6:7; Gal.1:23; 6:10; Phil. 1:27; Jude3 and frequently in the Pastoral Epistles: *I Tim 3:9; 4:1, 6*], or it is faith in the subjective sense, reliance on our Lord Jesus Christ and on his promises? **I believe it refers to faith in the subjective sense (Col 2:7) given the broader context of how a believer covenants with other believers to form a church membership.**

    - It is one faith – not historical nor miraculous nor temporary but true and genuine – by means of which we embrace the one Lord Jesus Christ. [BNTC]
    - It is true that the subjective and the objective cannot be separated: when a person surrenders himself to Christ as his Lord he at the same time also accepts the body of truth with reference to him. [BNTC]
    - Yet this is not the same as saying that the term *faith* is here used in a double sense. The fact that *faith* is mentioned immediately after *Lord* and is immediately followed by

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<sup>2</sup> Content derived from the Baker NT Commentary [BNTC] and the Bible Knowledge Commentary [BKC].

*baptism*, all in one very short sentence, would seem to indicate that the triad is a closely knit unit (which was true also with respect to the first triad, mentioned in verse 4). [BNTC]

- Hence, I agree with Scott, op. cit., p. 204, when he states, “It is better to take the whole sentence as expressive of a single fundamental fact: ‘one Lord in whom we all believe and in whose name we have been baptized.’” [BNTC]

## 2. The mystery of the church

### a. **One Body** – CONNECTED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

- [BNC] Refers to the universal church, all believers (1:23; 2:16; 3:6)

(the church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles [Eph. 2:14-22], the one family in heaven and on earth [3:15]. Though in a sense, we are many, yet are one body in Christ [Rom.12:5]. There is one loaf, one body [I Cor. 10:17]) [BNTC]

### b. **One Baptism** – CONNECTED TO GOD THE SON

(“There is only one baptism which is received by many (perhaps a number of persons simultaneously). All the members of the congregation are baptized in the same manner, and we may well assume, after or in connection with the same sermonic elucidation.” – Grosheide) [BNTC]

- Spirit Baptism (Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 3:27) or Water baptism (Acts 2:38)?
- By means of baptism the fellowship of believers with their Lord is sealed (Gal. 3:27).
- In baptism lies the evidence that all sorts of people (cf. Gal. 3:28), without any discrimination, share in the grace of Christ” (H.N. Ridderbos, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*.)

## C. **A Picture of Commonality** – “who is over all and through all and in all...”

### 1. The manifestation of the Gospel (Eph. 3:14-17)

<sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees before **the Father**, <sup>15</sup> **from whom every family<sup>14</sup> in heaven and on earth is named**, <sup>16</sup> that according to the riches of his glory **he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being**, <sup>17</sup> **so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

### 2. The mystery of the Church (Eph. 3:20-21)

<sup>20</sup> Now to **him who is able** to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, **according to the power at work within us**, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and **in Christ Jesus** throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

### 3. The distribution of spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:4-6)

<sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts, but **the same Spirit**; <sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of service, but **the same Lord**; <sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is **the same God** who empowers them all in everyone.

**Ephesians 4:6 (BKC):** The order in the listing of the three Persons of the Trinity is interesting. Paul began with the Holy Spirit rather than with the Father. The reason for this is that in the preceding verses he was discussing “the unity of the Spirit” (v. 3) and in verses 7–13 he discussed the gifts of the Spirit. The same order of Trinity Members is given in 1 Corinthians 12:4–6, where Paul also discussed the gifts of the Spirit.

#### **APPLICATION:**

- **Seek unity in the body by getting to know God and His Word better.**
  - Participate in a Community Group!
  - Read “[31 Ways to One Anther](#)” by Stuart Scott.
  - Try “[Look at the Book](#)” by Desiring God Ministries.
- **Don’t be threatened by the display of individuality in the church.**
  - External appearance
  - Responses to the pandemic
  - Hobbies and interests
  - Political preferences
- **Embrace the diversity of gifts and responsibilities in the church.**
  - Public ministry
  - Support ministry
  - Private ministry
- **Promote unity by building up the body and assisting in areas of weakness.**
  - Community outreach
  - Organization
  - Communication