



Sermon Series: Leave the Light On

Sermon Title: Kitchen

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-16

Speaking: Reid Robinette



Before your group study begins, share your first impressions on the message.

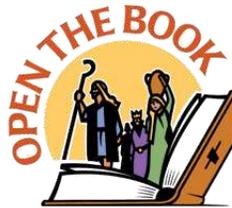
Did the message raise any particular questions?

IF YOU WERE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND THE SUNDAY SERVICE, WATCH OR LISTEN TO THE SERMON AT

<http://www.crossroads140.com/sermons/>



Summary – Every follower of Christ begins as a spiritual infant. Spiritual maturity requires both personal transformation and relational commitment.



Each week you will open the Bible and explore the Scripture for the week. While you're there, take a look at the verses that surround your text for the week. As you read, you might want to make a list of observations. Try to put yourself in each of the character's shoes. Make a list of questions you may not have answers to. Ask God what He may be trying to teach you.

READ EPHESIANS 4:1-16

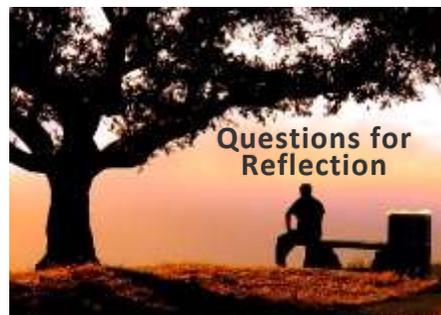
My first impression of the passage:

Observations:

Scripture surrounding your text-

Characters (Who's listening? Who's in the story?) / Setting / Culture-

My Questions:



1. What does it mean to have the life of the trinity in you?
2. Which aspect is more of a challenge for you:
Being surprised by people who are not spiritually mature or being satisfied that you are not growing?
3. Which side of the truth/love spectrum do you naturally gravitate towards?



1. How can we in the church/small groups help each other in devotion to and effectiveness for Christ?
2. What happens when a person doesn't have community within a church? What kinds of things hinder you personally from having that kind of community?



Praise God for making a way for us to grow in our maturity and in our devotion to Him. Pray that we would serve the people of our area well and would lead others to God so that they could grow in their devotion to Him. Pray that your group would be united in Christ and would encourage one another as you desire to become more like Christ.

Go Deeper

Unpack the Biblical Text

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 4:1-6.

What is Christ's call in our lives? What specific ways can Christians walk worthy of Christ's call?

What does this passage say about the source of our Christian fellowship and unity?

What is the significance of the word "one" that Paul uses repeatedly? How are the seven "ones" related to believers walking worthy of their calling?

The sevenfold repetition of "one" in these verses is striking. The unity of the body of Christ reflects the unity and oneness that permeates the Godhead—God the Father, Jesus the Son,

and the Holy Spirit. Since God is one, that same unity should permeate the Christian community. The church displays God through the reflection of His character.

What issues hinder unity in the church?

Which issues are legitimate barriers to Christian unity and which are superficial or arbitrary?

In the first three verses of this chapter, Paul stressed the importance of living a life worthy of our calling, which means bearing with each other in love and striving toward keeping the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. Community in the Church doesn't happen automatically—it's something Christians must cultivate and nurture. It's the process by which believers become sanctified.

Why is unity worth striving for in the church?

Practically speaking, how do we cultivate and nurture fellowship among believers?

The attitudes that help believers express unity (4:2) are as essential today as they were when Paul first wrote them. These seven unities—three related to the Trinity and four related to the church—are eternally true in God's purposes and plan. Realizing these truths will help us live up to our calling.

Have another volunteer read Ephesians 4:7-14.

What does it look like for God to impart His grace in different ways to different people?

What's the purpose of diversity within Christian community? Why is it essential to the mission?

In Ephesians 4:11-13, Paul lists some of the different spiritual gifts Christ gives His followers, making it clear that the purpose of these gifts is to build up the body of Christ, not to earn wealth or praise. Some people become prideful about their gifts, while others feel their gifts are inferior. Spiritual gifting is meant to help the Church accomplish God's purposes.

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 4:15-16.

How did Paul understand the way people grow in Christ? Can a person grow in Christ without the church? Why or why not?

What is the connection between Christ and the church? How does the church accomplish God's plan?

Paul knew that a person could not grow in Christ unless he or she had people around them who could equip and encourage as the person grew in Christ. This is part of God's plan, He made the church to be the body of Christ that is the means by which a person can be devoted to Christ.

Commentary

4:1 The word “therefore” is the pivotal for the entire epistle. Paul was saying, “On the basis of everything I have written so far, certain results should follow.” The verb walk reminds us that holy living is a daily process. The term worthy shows us that we aim toward a high standard.

4:2 Four attitudes are essential to the Christian’s worthy walk—humility, gentleness, patience, and love. Humility is the lowliness of mind that sees other people as valuable. Gentleness refers to strength under control. Patience means slowness to avenge a wrong or to retaliate when hurt by another. Love is the famous Greek noun “agape,” the sacrificial concern for others that sent Jesus willingly to the cross.

4:3 The unity of the Spirit already exists. It was brought about by Christ’s cross. We experience it by God’s Spirit. Thus we do not have to manufacture unity; rather we are to work at diligently keeping it. This happens as we focus our energy on expressing the peace that binds us to God and to one another (Col. 3:15). Christians are not called to create spiritual unity but to demonstrate it through relational unity.

4:4-6 The sevenfold repetition of “one” in these verses is striking. The bottom line is that Christian unity (one body, one hope, one faith, and one baptism) arises out of the Trinitarian unity of God (one Spirit, one Lord, and one Father—listed in the reverse of our usual order).

4:7 The grace of God saved us (2:8). Furthermore, He continues to work in each believer, enabling a worthy walk. Our unity is not the same as uniformity. Diversity is expressed by the great variety of spiritual gifts that the risen Lord has given. “The measure of the Messiah’s gift” means that He has distributed spiritual gifts to believers according to His plan, not according to our wishes.

4:8 Paul quoted Psalm 68:18 as the biblical precedent to explain the Lord’s giving gifts to His people. This psalm celebrated a great military victory in which David praised God as the true King who had led Israel to victory. In ancient times, victorious kings often ascended to their throne with great pomp and with bound war captives following them. These kings also received the spoils of war and distributed them to their own people. In Paul’s thinking, this was comparable to what Jesus did in His victory over death.

4:9 In His exaltation, the Lord Jesus is like an ancient king who led his people to victory. The words He ascended point to Jesus’ ascension after His victorious resurrection (Luke 24:51). In Paul’s teaching, Jesus’ ascent (from earth to heaven) necessarily implied a previous descent (from heaven to earth). Thus the words “He descended to the lower parts of the earth” most likely refer to His incarnation, when God’s Son humbled Himself and took on humanity.

4:10 Paul was more interested in highlighting Christ’s ascent than His descent. His victorious ascent is greater than that of any mere earthly king, for He ascended far above all the heavens.

He has taken His position at the Father's right hand (Heb. 1:1-3). Furthermore, there is no place in the universe from which He is excluded, for He fills all things.

4:11 Our exalted Lord has distributed gifts as He wishes. Although each believer has at least one spiritual gift, Paul focused on the gifted leaders Jesus personally gave so that congregations will grow. Apostles refers to those Christ personally commissioned. Prophets spoke messages inspired by God (3:5). Evangelists can make the gospel especially clear and relevant to unbelievers. Every Christian is called on to be a witness for Christ, but some are especially capable in this area. Pastors and teachers provide leadership for local congregations.

4:12 To what end has the Lord given congregations gifted leaders? The goal is that they will train the saints in the work of the ministry. It's not that the leaders do all the ministry; rather the ministry is to be done by all believers working together.

4:13 In 4:3, Paul had urged believers to be "diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit." Now the term "unity" occurs as one goal toward which believers (with diverse gifts) are working together. This unity is both doctrinal (in the faith) and relational (in the knowledge of God's Son).

4:14 Paul noted two illustrations of what happens when believers work together. The first is drawn from human development. Individual believers grow from infancy to adulthood. The second illustration is from nautical life. Believers who work together will not be like a storm-tossed boat, upset by the waves and blown around by every wind. To be sure, there will always be false teaching to confront. There will be human cunning with cleverness. There will be techniques of deceit to lead believers astray. But Christians who have worked together to develop a clear understanding of the faith and who know Christ intimately will survive such attacks.

4:15 The cure for immaturity and instability is speaking the truth. Yet this truth is to be expressed in love—with compassion and understanding. Truth without love can be cold and harsh; love without truth can be mushy and weak.

4:16 Paul returned to the illustration of human development, but with a twist. This time he thought of a single body. It has a Head (Jesus Christ; see 4:15 and 5:23), who directs all the operations (from Him). At the same time, the body (the local congregation) has many parts that need to work together. An individual church member is a supporting ligament or an individual part (see also 1 Cor. 12:14-21). Each part has been fitted and knit together by the Lord with all the other parts. With the proper working of each part, the body will do what it's supposed to do.



*There are free Go Deeper Devotionals available at our Resource Center. The Go Deeper Devotionals will take you through the Bible over a period of three years. There is a commentary for every chapter of the Bible. Reading the commentary will give you some background before reading the scripture text. We encourage you to use the devotionals. Grab as many months as you wish. Share them with your friends, neighbors. Dive into God's word. **Psalm 119:105 - You're word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.***

August 2016- Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah

September 2016- Esther, Romans