

Grace Bible Church
Adult Elective Winter 2017
Topic: Ephesians
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Textbook Recommended: Living Insights - Ephesians by Chuck Swindoll

Ephesians Chapter 4:1-16

- Intro:
 - The beginning of Ephesians chapter 4 marks a change in the content and direction which Paul is focusing on. The first three chapters focused on right doctrine (orthodoxy) while the last three chapters will focus on right practice (orthopraxy).
 - The first three chapters of Ephesians emphasized the calling of believers: Christians have been called by God the Father who planned salvation; Christians have been called by God the Son who implemented the plan (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3-8); Christians have been called by God the Spirit who baptized, regenerated, sealed, and empowers them.
- 4:1-3
 - Paul implores believers to apply the truth of Christ to their lives. (Gk. *parakaleo* = urge, exhort)
 - Paul urges believers to walk worthily (Gk. *axios*) of their calling. In other words, they should actively live lives according to what God has/asks of them.
 - Humility: Christ first and others next.
 - Gentleness: Considers others above oneself and outwardly manifest a humble demeanor (not harsh, not hostile, etc.).
 - Patience: exercise humility and humbleness in difficult circumstances.
 - Tolerance: exercise humility and humbleness with people who may be “challenging” (a.k.a. difficult, offensive, etc.).
 - Note: This entails extending grace and mercy to others.
 - Note: This does NOT mean accepting sin or sinful behaviors.
 - Love: We should show unconditional love to others (Gk. *agape*)
 - OPPOSITE: The opposite of what Paul taught would be: pride/arrogance, harshness, impatience, intolerance, and hate.

- 4:4-6
 - One body: Inclusion of all believers – slave/free, Jew/Gentle, male/female, rich/poor, educated/uneducated, black/white, etc.
 - One Spirit: Holy Spirit indwells all believers.
 - One hope of our calling: All believers embrace the Hope found in Christ for eternal life and a right relationship with God.
 - One Lord: Christ.
 - One faith: one set of beliefs (the TRUTH of God, Christ, salvation, etc.). Cf. Jude 1:3
 - One baptism: Baptisms by the Spirit (upon salvation) into the body of Christ.
 - One God and Father of all: God the Father is over all and through all and in all. All things are unified through Him.
- 4:7-8
 - The key for Paul is that unity should happen via diversity as members of Christ's body perform service that is unique to them and their gifting.
 - Christ gave us saving grace as well as sanctifying grace (so that we can do something practically!!!).
 - Paul refers back to Psalms 68:18
 - Christ triumphed.
 - Following Christ's life, death, burial, and resurrection, Christ ascended into heaven victorious.
- 4:9-10
 - Meaning of "Christ descended":
 - 1. Earthly, physical sphere: Incarnation, physical planet earth, Joseph's tomb, etc.
 - 2. Holy Spirit descends (sent from Christ) upon the church at Pentecost.
 - 3. Time between Christ's death and resurrection when Christ descended to Sheol/Hades in order to appear to wicked spirits and departed saints. Cf. 1 Peter 3:18-20
 - Bottom line: Christ's victory allowed Him to lead others victoriously and to send the Holy Spirit to manifest His power within the church.
- 4:11
 - Spiritual gifts are special abilities, given only to believers (directly from God), which enable the believer to serve God in a specific way within the body of Christ.
 - All believers have at least one spiritual gift.
 - Only believers have spiritual gifts.
 - These gifts can be used with natural abilities (through practice, teaching, learning, etc.), but they are unique and not the same as natural abilities.
 - Spiritual gifts focus all the glory back to God (and none to the believer).
 - All spiritual gifts are equally important.

- Cf. 1 Cor. 12:4-6,7, 12-25; 14:1, 26; Eph. 4:12; 1 Pet. 4:11
 - Gifts mentioned in Ephesians:
 - Apostles: seen and/or heard the risen Christ [NO LONGER!]
 - Prophets: prophecy and call back to God [NO LONGER!]
 - Evangelist: bring gospel to unbelievers and unbelieving regions
 - Pastor-Teacher: shepherd and teach the flock (likely “elder” role in the early church)
- 4:12-16
 - Growth occurs when believers grow in knowledge and exercise spiritual gifts.
 - Purposes:
 - Immediate: equip saints (shift from leadership to the body!!!)
 - Intermediate: promote unity in knowledge, doctrine, and practice
 - CORE: Who God is, what He has/is doing, how we serve Him
 - Ultimate: All believers submit to Christ’s headship, walk in the Spirit, cooperate together, and reach the lost for Christ.