



The Grand Theater in Ephesus
(ephesusbreeze.com)

Unity Deep and Deliberate

Ephesians 4:1-16

Unity Deep and Deliberate

Introduction

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Previously in Ephesians:

Unity Deep and Deliberate Introduction

Previously in Ephesians:

- Every spiritual blessing in heavenly places is already ours.
- We have been saved by grace through faith.
- We are now part of God's new humanity – a spiritual family.
- We need to be strengthened by God's power and more fully experience God's love – as in Paul's prayer.

Unity Deep and Deliberate Introduction

What Comes Next:

- Paul now begins to explain the Christian life, which grows out of the facts of our faith.
- Right belief expresses itself in right living and right relationships within the local church.

Unity Deep and Deliberate Introduction

Soundbite:

A church's unity grows out of the unity of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Let's not allow what God has united to separate.

Unity Deep and Deliberate Outline

1. Unity 4:1-6
2. Diversity 4:7-12
3. Maturity 4:13-16

1. Unity 4:1-6

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- **4:1** Paul's status as a prisoner is a powerful reminder that living out our faith requires sacrifice.
- We are members of the body of Christ and family of God.
- What kind of behavior is worthy of that calling?

1. Unity 4:1-6



- There was that time Queen Elizabeth got caught picking her nose.

1. Unity 4:1-6



- There was that time Queen Elizabeth got caught picking her nose.
- Funny but not scandalous.
- When royal behavior is bad, their status or position makes it worse.

1. Unity 4:1-6

- **4:1** As brothers and sisters in the family of the King of Kings, our status motivates us to live up to higher standards.

1. Unity 4:1-6

- 4:2 Humility – our example is Christ.
- Gentleness – mildness or kindness, but from the angle of controlled strength rather than weakness.
- It is a word also used of domesticated animals.

1. Unity 4:1-6

- 4:2 **Patience** – “forbearance, internal and external control in a difficult circumstance, which control could exhibit itself by delaying an action” (Mounce)

1. Unity 4:1-6

- 4:2 Bearing with one another in love

Compare:

1. A friend calls at an odd time with a real need.
2. A telemarketer calls at a totally convenient time trying to sell you something.

1. Unity 4:1-6

- 4:3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace
- (CEV) Try your best ...
- (NIV) Make every effort ...
- “To endeavor earnestly, to strive” (Mounce)

1. Unity 4:1-6

- 4:4-6 Seven unifiers:

Three pertain to God:

1. One Spirit
2. One Lord
3. One God and Father of all

1. Unity 4:1-6

- 4:4-6 Seven unifiers:

Four pertain to the church:

1. One body
2. One hope
3. One faith
4. One baptism

1. Unity 4:1-6

- A deep and deliberate unity in the church is possible because it grows out of the unity of the Triune God.

1. Unity 4:1-6

Soundbite:

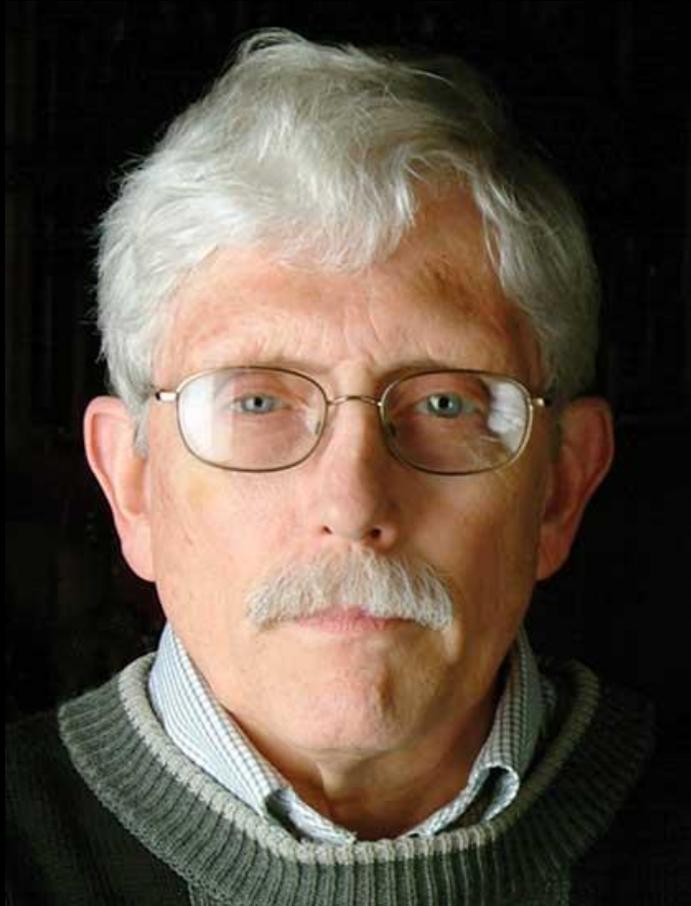
A church's unity grows out of the unity of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Let's not allow what God has united to separate.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

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- 4:7 To each one Not to “all” or “everyone” in a general sense, but to each member of the church individually.
- Consider that your deficiencies may also be God-given.
- They require us to depend upon others for our growth and maybe even our survival.

2. Diversity 4:7-12



There is no haphazard, random distribution of gifts. Every gift is carefully chosen and apportioned according to the sovereign will of God ... It is our privilege to unquestioningly accept and use his gracious gifts. The joint ministry we have in the church is the result of the particular gifts each of us has received.

*– Grant Osborne,
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School*

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:7-8 grace *charis*
- gift *charisma* (In Romans 12:6 and 1 Corinthians 12:4)
- One of the words for “gift” in Greek reminds us that they are gifts freely given, not rewards for good behavior.
- Paul’s translation of Psalm 68:18 likens Jesus to a victorious general distributing the spoil to his supporters.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:9-10 he ascended ... descended ... descended ... ascended
- Never forget that Christ achieved his victory over sin and death only through humbling himself.
- He willingly became a man, went to the cross or took our sins upon himself.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:11-12 Christ himself gave
- Here the gifts come from Christ.
- In 1 Corinthians 12, they come from the Spirit.
- In Romans 12, they come from God the Father.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:11-12 Christ himself gave
- We also see that the **leaders** are given to the church as much as **gifts (abilities)** are given to the leaders.
- That could be why Paul uses a different word here for **gifts**.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:11-12 the apostles, the prophets
- These laid the foundation of the church.
- Today's version of these gifts operate in a less technical sense than in Paul's day.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:11-12 the evangelists
- This word refers especially to those who are gifted in proclaiming the gospel.
- Evangelists can be effective in personally sharing their faith or gifted to preach in a public setting.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:11-12 the shepherds and teachers
- These roles are overlapping.
- The Greek construction seems to require that pastors must also be teachers – as in “shepherd – teachers.”
- In 1 Timothy 3:2, one of the qualifications for an overseer is that he be “able to teach.”

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- 4:11-12 to equip the saints
for the work of ministry
for building up the body of Christ
- The leaders of the church are responsible to train and equip the members of the body.
- The saints in turn, should minister to one another in order to build up the body of Christ.

2. Diversity 4:7-12

- A deep and deliberate unity in the church grows when we use our differing gifts to willingly serve one another.

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3. Maturity 4:13-16

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- The picture here continues the idea of a growing body.
- Christian unity demands that we grow to maturity.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- **4:13** In **v.2** Paul reminded us to eagerly **maintain** the unity of the Spirit.
- Here he informs us that we must **attain** the unity of the faith.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- **4:13** There is no such thing as instant maturity.
- All of us have to be willing to grow – and may get growing pains.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- 4:14 Immaturity can be due to a lack of exposure to good teaching.
- It can also be due to lack of receptiveness.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- 4:14 The alternative is to remain spiritual children, permanently immature in our faith.
- Immaturity is normal in children, but the older we get, the uglier immaturity gets.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

A lack of sound doctrine and teaching will result in a fragmented church with a weak faith and inadequate knowledge of Christ. Such a church is vulnerable to the influence of false teachers.

Immature ... weak Christians are tossed around and become unstable.

*– Yusufu Turaki, Jos ECWA
Theological Seminary, Nigeria*



3. Maturity 4:13-16

- 4:14 by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes
- Paul was an accomplished Bible scholar, a trained rabbi.
- He reminds us though, the most dangerous false teachers are also smart.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- 4:15 speaking the truth in love
- Loving truth is the remedy for evil falsehood.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- 4:16 when each part is working properly
- But what happens when things go wrong?

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- **Matthew 18:15-17** (ESV)

¹⁵ “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

3. Maturity 4:13-16

- Jesus is not envisioning a church in which people are continuously confronting one another.
- **1 Peter 4:8** says that “love covers a multitude of sins.”
- But for those times when a conversation is needed, Christ’s method cannot be beat.

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3. Maturity 4:13-16

- A deep and deliberate unity grows when we are committed to one another – and to one another's spiritual growth.

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 2. The fact of our **diversity** – and how it enhances unity.

Unity Deep and Deliberate Conclusions

- Paul has been focusing on:
 1. Our need for **unity** – based upon the unity of God.
 2. The fact of our **diversity** – and how it enhances unity.
 3. A call to **maturity** – to prevent our being childish believers.

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- A final passage: **Philippians 2:1-11**