

## Episode #1028 Ephesians 4 Part 5-Growing Up into Christ

I. In Ephesians 1-3, the Holy Spirit revealed to us all the glorious things that are true of us “in Christ.” Now, in Ephesians 4-6, we are told of the “worthy walk” that we should live in love and gratitude to God for the glorious position we have received.

II. In Ephesians 4:3-6, we learned of the unity of the Spirit, which all believers today are to keep. In Ephesians 4:7-13, we learned of the many gifts Christ gave to the believers in Acts to keep them in unity, as described in Acts 2:44-47 and Acts 4:32-35. Now, we will consider the final goal of Christ-likeness to which we all should seek to attain.

III. Ephesians 4:12-16. The Goal of the Gifts.

A. Verse 13. The final goal was that the believers all come into unity regarding what they believed. This happened! Acts 2:44-47, 4:32-35. If you had a God-given teacher, prophet, or apostle to go to when you had any different opinions about doctrine or practice, it would make it much easier to be in unity. Without these, we sometimes just have to agree to disagree. The final goal also had to do with a deeper knowledge or realization of the Son of God. This would lead them all to come to maturity, the full stature of the complement of Christ. Without these gifts, we often fall short of this today. We have only the Bible to help us grow to maturity.

B. Verse 14. Also that they no longer be minors. Not just by living long enough, but in Godliness. Those who are still children in the things of God are constantly surging back and forth and being carried about by every wind of teaching that comes along to blow them to a new viewpoint. An immature believer like this is convinced of what he thinks is true by some clever man who speaks well, and comes up with a methodized error that makes sense to the young believer. The Lord does not want us to be led along by teaching like this!

C. Verse 15. Instead, they should be true, even as they come to know the truth. In love, which is the best motivation for seeking truth, they should be making everything in their lives grow up into the Him Who is the Head, even Christ.

1. A “head” means an outflowing source. Christ should be the source for everything to the believer, and so the true believer should be growing up into Him in everything.

2. When we are firmly rooted in Him, we will not be blown about by every wind of teaching. This was God’s desire for the believers in the Acts period, and He gave them the help they needed to achieve this. In Acts, they had a God-created unity, but it came through many powerful gifts. We might not have this, but God’s goal for us is the same: that we reach maturity in life and walk. We need to grow into Christ!

D. Verse 16. Out of Christ, the body grows. Problem: the joints do not supply the body, the circulatory system does, nor does the head grow out of the body. The body of Christ is an illustration. In I Corinthians, the illustration is of a human body. Here, it is of a body of water. Picture a great river fed by many little streams. The body is supplied by the joints. Every part makes for its growth. Christ’s body flows from Him, and is built up by love, Christ’s greatest gift to us.

IV. Ephesians 4:17-19. The way the nations walk.

- A. Verse 17. Paul says and attests in the Lord that they should walk (order their behavior) no longer like the nations walk. Their lifestyle is ignorant and futile. They do not know God's truth, and the things they try to accomplish bring them no good.
- B. Verse 18. The problem: their understanding is darkened. They do not know when what they are doing is good and when what they are doing leads to disaster. They are alienated from the life they could get from God through their inherent ignorance. They are like this because their hearts are callous.
- C. Verse 19. They are past feeling proper remorse at their actions. Therefore, they give themselves to greed with out-of-control actions bent on satisfying their desires. This results on them living in all kinds of unclean activities simply as their lifestyle.
- A. Verse 20. We haven't learned Christ like this! Christ never taught anyone to live like the world around us lives, and as we lived before we came to Christ.
- B. Verse 21. We should not live like this since surely, as believers, we listen to Him, are taught by Him, find the truth (of right living) in Him. He is an example for us to look to and follow!

V. Conclusion: When it comes to the truth, we should not continue to act like minors, but should come to maturity. We should be growing up into Christ and into maturity in our walks with Him. We should no longer live as the nations around us live, or even like our own nation and culture. The nations are darkened in their understanding, are alienated from the life of God, and are past feeling in their hardened hearts. We have learned differently from Christ. Let us all strive to walk worthy, and to be taught by Him how to live!