

Ephesians Verse by Verse

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[0 : 00] So continue to pray for them. I reached out to them through email this week and just acknowledge that I know this is far from over for you and your family, for the children, for whatever. But just let's pray for them and keep them before us.

All right. Let's get into the Bible now. Ephesians chapter 4. Ephesians 4. We have been working our way through this chapter.

It's hard to go too fast because it's just a great chapter. It's so loaded. It began with this talk of unity. It began with examples and illustrations of God's oneness and unity.

And we moved into a section on the gifts, some positions or some offices given to the body of Christ and the reasons and purposes for their giving. We came in through verse 12 and 13 and 14.

And I know we stopped. I know we were in verse 15 when we stopped last week. So we'll pick it up there with a little bit of review. Before we do that, let's pray together and then we'll get into these words.

[1 : 03] Father, we love you. We're thankful this morning to be able to come together into church. Thank you for this book. Thank you for your spirit that leads and guides us in all truth. God, we realize these words have been penned for nearly 2,000 years.

And they were written to a people in a place we've never been and have never met. And yet we believe that these words are living. We believe they have application to us today. We believe these are your words.

And we believe that you want us to know them and study them and apply them. And so, Father, I pray that you'll guide my mind and my mouth and lead us into all truth this morning.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. All right, so in verse 12, we notice this threefold application or purpose for the giving of these offices to the body of Christ, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

And the first was for the perfecting of the saints. You recall that that is the maturing and the growth of the saints. It's not to make you sinless.

[2 : 07] That's not the word perfect there. And it isn't in your Bible. You can just study that out. It's pretty easy to see. For the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ.

And the goal is to come, in verse 13, in the unity of the faith. So right back to unity again. And he wants us to grow. Unto the knowledge of the Son of God. Unto his perfect man.

Unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. And so that's where we stopped in that verse 15. We'll pick it up right there. I know I pointed out that as we speak the truth in love, that the growth that follows that is from speaking the truth.

And the truth is to be spoken in love, but it's not from the love. And love has definitely become the popular theme of the church these days. But the truth ought to be the popular theme of the church these days.

[3 : 13] And it always should be. It always has been where God planted it, and that's what he wants us to see. And so we need to speak the truth in love. And the result will be growing up into him in all things.

Now, this thought of growth, that kind of goes back to what I saw or mentioned in verse 12 with the perfecting of the saints. The saints, you and I as saints, ought to be moving forward, ought to be growing.

There shouldn't be a stagnant space in your Christian life. As a matter of fact, any way you look at it, you ought to be further along today than you were at this same point, if you want to say last year. I don't know if you've been saved 10 years, but there ought to be some evidence and some proof, some fruit that you've been saved 10 years, if you have. You've been saved 20, 30. There should be some real indicators that you are growing into him.

Look at Philippians chapter 3, at something the apostle Paul said, speaking of moving forward and not pretending like we've arrived or, as he says, attained.

[4 : 19] Philippians chapter 3. There's always room for improvement. Always. Philippians chapter 3, we'll start in verse number 12, just 12 through 14.

Paul says, Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. So there's the place where Paul says. And if he stood in a pulpit and preached that to him, he'd say, Look, I am not there yet.

I'm still growing. I got room. But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

There's more to say here from this passage even. Maybe we'll come back to it. But moving forward in growth, there's always room to grow. And the Apostle Paul acknowledged he himself had plenty of that room to grow.

[5 : 22] Keep your hand there. We'll probably come back to that or somewhere close shortly. I want you to realize from Ephesians chapter 4, verse 15, Speaking the truth and love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

Your growth is to be growing into Christ. Your growth is not just, I know my Bible. Man, I know the book. I know so much. I have so much knowledge.

I've grown so much. That's a great thing. And it should be. It's a necessary thing. If you don't know your Bible, then why not? I know why. Because you're not spending time with it. And you're not interested in it.

And you should be and can be. And you should grow in your knowledge of the Scripture. But this knowledge here or this growth is about growing up into him. It's your relationship with Jesus Christ. You're not supposed to be growing in the ministry. Like climbing some ladder. I started as the youth director. Or I was the bus director. And the visitation guy. But now I'm the assistant to the pastor.

[6 : 24] And I'm going to be the associate to the pastor one day. And then I'll be the senior. That's growing in some corporation.

That's what it sounds like, doesn't it? That's not growing up into him. It's not about positions. It's about your relationship with Jesus Christ. And God gave offices to the body of Christ to be examples and leaders.

So go back to that passage now of Philippians. Of growing up into him. Actually, go to Philippians 1. Let's go there first.

If you talk like this, it may be good evidence that you're growing up into him. Verse number 21. The apostle Paul says, For to me to live is Christ.

For to me to live is Christ. It's not like some might have to say, and if they were honest, it's my family. Or it's my business.

[7 : 30] Or it's my money. It's my portfolio. Or it's my land. It's my position in government. Or helping the people.

For to me to live is Christ. And to die is gain. I notice this. It's all over this first chapter. If you started peeking, just glance through it.

Notice how many times he mentions Christ. It's from the very beginning to the very end. It's literally, it's probably every other verse on average. It's Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ, Jesus Christ, Christ, Jesus.

The entire chapter. For to me to live is Christ. That's something that's evidence of a man that's growing up into him. Now look back at chapter 3 where we were.

In verse 7 he says, But what things were gained to me? Those I counted loss. Because I want to grow up into Christ.

[8 : 32] I want to be found in him. In verse number 9. And then he talks about reaching forward and the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Now let's continue where we stop there.

Look at verse 15. Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded. And if in any other thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, where to we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.

Let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me. Paul's an apostle, right? The apostle Paul. And in this case, Paul's an office given to the body of Christ to perfect the saints. To edify. To grow them. And so he says, well follow me there. I'm an example to you. Verse 18 says, Many walk of whom I have told you often. I'll tell you even weeping. They are the enemies of the cross of Christ.

Whose end is destruction. Whose God is their belly. Whose glory is in their shame. Who mind earthly things. And that's something we'll see, Lord willing, maybe in a little bit about the Gentiles. [9 : 34] The vanity of their mind. They mind earthly things. But Paul's an example to follow. Look at chapter 4, verse 9. Philippians 4, verse 9.

Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do. And the God of peace shall be with you. Do. There's plenty to do.

And Paul's an example to follow. Come back to chapter 1. I wanted to point something else out to you. In chapter 1 of Philippians. When he talks about verse 21.

For me to live is Christ. To die is gain. Verse 23. I'm in a straight between the two. Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ. He's growing up into Christ.

Verse 24. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. Having this confidence. I know that I shall abide and continue with you all.

[10 : 34] Why? For your furtherance. And joy of faith. Because that's Paul's calling. That's his duty in Christ. Is to grow the church.

The believers. He was given as an apostle to them. And so. I'd rather be with Christ. He said. He's my life. But. It's more needful for you.

That I abide in the flesh. And I'm going to do that. And I'm going to continue with you. For your furtherance. And joy of faith. That your rejoicing. May be more abundant.

In Christ Jesus for me. Notice that line. That your rejoicing. May be more abundant. Not for me. You rejoice for me. No. That your rejoicing.

May be more abundant. In Jesus Christ. For me. By my coming to you again. He wants to see them growing up into him. Pointing them to Jesus Christ. Their growth is in him.

[11 : 28] They're going to rejoice in Jesus Christ. By what God does in their life. And even in using people. Like the apostle Paul. Now back in Ephesians chapter 4. But speaking the truth in love.

Verse 15. May grow up into him in all things. Which is the head. And even Christ. It's that. It's more important than we know. That this is about your growth.

Into Jesus Christ. Your relationship with him. Ought to be growing. And moving forward. Verse 16 now says. From whom the whole body. Fitly joined together. And compacted.

By that which every joint supplieth. According to the effectual working. In the measure of every part. Make an increase of the body. Unto the edifying of itself. In love. This verse is a mouthful.

And let's see if we can pull a few things from it. Speaking of Jesus Christ. From whom. From whom the whole body. Fitly joined together. And compacted.

[12 : 26] By that which every joint supplieth. I want you to pull something from there. We'll see it again. Every joint. Every part. Of that body.

Has a purpose. Every joint. Or every part. Next phrase says. According to the effectual working. In the measure of every part. Every joint. Every part.

Has a contribution. To the body. These fellows were out here this week. Working on this block shed. They were building it. And. A lot of the blocks. Were just standard.

Straight off the yard. Formed. Cinder blocks. Just plop. Plop. Plop. One after another. Build that wall right up. And when you get to a point. Where there's a corner. Or where there's the end.

You don't just throw in a block. You've got to make a change. You've got to cut a block. And at some points. There. There's a hole. There's a gap. That needs to be filled. And I just can't take.

[13 : 22] One of these big strong standard blocks. And plug it in. They're going to have to make a cut. And there's something satisfying. If you've done any building. Whether it's block. Or with wood. Or anything. Where you come to a place.

Where you've got to make a specific cut. And you've got to. You just can't. Throw out a measurement. And do it. You've got to. Measure all angles. And sides. And when you do it right.

Maybe on the third try. Or fourth try. If you're me. When you do it right. Finally. And put that thing in. And it fits just right. It's like. Oh yeah. That's nice. That block.

That one wouldn't work. But I made that one work. And I think Jesus Christ. I think that's a. The truth of some. Members. Or parts. Or joints. In the body of Christ.

That. There's some big strong. Pieces. Some big strong blocks. That hold things up. And hold things together. But there's also spots. That need to be filled. In some cases. And I wouldn't doubt it.

[14:18] If God in this. Picture. Just looks at. Broken pieces. In some cases. Some smaller things. That just get overlooked. By everybody else. And says. I think that one will work. And there's a little.

There's a niche. In this church. That could be filled. And I think I'll plug that one. Right into there. And the master builder. Jesus Christ. Can take a block. That we'd overlook.

And say. There's no use for it. It's not serving a purpose. It's not getting recognized. Nobody notices or cares. And says. I've got something for you to do. And the reason I point it out like that.

Is because. This verse says. That every joint. Supplieth. There's a contribution. To be made from every piece. Every part of the body. They're. They say.

In science. They say. I don't know the field exactly. But of course. In evolution. They try to say. That we evolved. And there's evidences of it. Because there's certain pieces. Or parts of our body. That are just unnecessary.

[15:14] And they say. They call them. Vestigial organs. Or parts. One of them was the ear lobe. They say. There's no point for that. Some people have ear lobes. Some people don't.

Some people just go. Straight in. I think my kids were. Learning on that. With the genetics. And. How you get those differences. In your bodies. There's a multitude.

Or a handful. I should say. Of these things. That they claim. And then there's some. Believer. Or Bible believer. Something on the other side. That shows and points out. No. You just haven't studied enough. It actually has a part.

It has a reason. And God's a wonderful designer. He knows what he's doing. And so there's two sides. Of course. To look. Different ways to look at it. Depending on if you have faith. Or don't have faith. Which is about.

Truth for everything. But in this body. There's so many different elements to it. So many small. And large things. If you wanted to.

[16:07] Get somebody to do some work. You'd probably think. I want somebody big and strong. And sometimes that's good. Sometimes you need somebody that's smart. And not just. But you know. Sometimes you need that big guy. That can just run the wheelbarrow all day long.

Or dig the ditch. Forever. I used to work in sprinkler work. And installing pipes. And some heavy stuff. And there was jobs that I was on. There was a time.

A good phase of my working there. Where I had a helper. Who was shorter than I am. Probably about 30 or 40 pounds lighter than I am. And he was just a weak kid.

He was like 17 year old. Drop out of school. And the boss knew his dad. And so he said. I'll give him a job. And I got stuck with him. For not too long. But it was.

He quit. After a few weeks. But he couldn't read a tape measure. I mean. He couldn't do a thing. He really was noodle armed. And weak. And it was so hard to train him.

[17:04] Or to work with him. Just knowing this kid doesn't want to be here. He doesn't want to work. He doesn't want a job. He just has to do it. Because he got kicked out of school. And it was just a bad situation for everybody.

He was worthless on the job. In that job itself. But if God put somebody like that in the body of Christ. I didn't see his effectualness.

I didn't see it. I didn't see what he could contribute or supply. But in the body of Christ. There's things that I probably don't see. That God sees. And God knows. And holes that need to be filled. And God knows how to do it. And the better part of that is. In this. If we grow up into him. And we perfect. Or get edified.

The Lord God himself grows us. In this idea of the building. And stones. Peter calls us lively stones. You're a living stone in this.

[18:01] So the illustration really kind of has a different effect here. Than we clearly see. But that stone has the ability to grow up. And to strengthen. And to become something. Initially it just looks like it's worthless.

It looks like it's not going to amount to anything. But once Jesus Christ gets involved. And once something on the inside takes place. That joint. Or that part of the body. Can actually become. A load bearer. Down the road. It can be something more than it ever was. When it walks in the door. And it's. It's important that you don't. Despise. The small things.

Remember in Zechariah. Who hath despised the day of small things? Because God takes small things. And builds them up. And grows them. To use them. Now. Back in verse 16.

He says. From whom the whole body. Fitly joined together. And compacted. That's. That's the unity. That he's getting at from the beginning. And it keeps coming up.

[18:57] This body that Christ builds. In places. Is something that he. Fitly. Puts the right piece. In the right place. We don't always see it that way. And it doesn't make sense to us.

And sometimes it's like. That'll never work. But if Jesus Christ. Is doing the work. If he's placing the piece. Or the part. Or the block. Or stone. In the body. He's right. Whether you see it or not.

And the whole body. Is fitly joined together. By Christ. And compacted. By Christ. He's not going to leave gaps. And cracks. And. Where it's not fit. Or safe.

Or sound. Compacted. By that. Which every joint. Supplieth. According to the effectual working. Of the measure. Of every part. Maketh increase. Of the body.

Under the edifying. Of itself. In love. So the body. Is going to edify itself. We pointed that out earlier. When we were back there. In chapter. Verse number 12. So let's move into verse 17 now.

[19:54] This I say. Therefore. Therefore. What's that. Therefore. Well if you're going to have unity. Then there's something else. He needs to add on top of this.

Not just that we're going to follow our leaders. And be followers of. The apostles. And prophets. And so forth. But if there. If we're going to have the unity. And the growth.

And get together. And edify the body. Then. Somebody has to go. This I say. Therefore. And he's going to get you down to it. In verse number 24. That you put.

Or verse 22. That you put off. Somebody. And it's the old man. There's no room for the flesh. In the body of Christ. Nobody's going to get edified.

In the body of Christ. If there's flesh. Nobody's going to be perfected. If there's flesh. The work of the ministry. Is not going to happen. And not going to be effectual. If there's flesh. And so Paul's going to point this out.

[20:47] Very clearly. And he's going to give us. Some very good application. And practical applications. To how we do this. Verse 17. This I say therefore. And testify in the Lord. That ye henceforth.

Walk not. As other Gentiles walk. In the vanity. Of their mind. Having the understanding. Darkened. Being alienated. From the life of God.

Through the ignorance. That is in them. Because of the blindness. Of their heart. Henceforth. In verse 17. That ye henceforth.

Walk not. Henceforth. Is one of those adverbs. Of time. We studied these. On a Wednesday night. Through the King James Bible. Some of these words. And the word hence.

Meaning from here. Or in this case. From this time. Forth. From this time forward. And he's talking about. Now that you're saved. Look back at chapter 2.

[21:41] Now that you're made alive. In Christ. You're going to not walk. The same way you used to walk. Back in chapter 2. He talks about time past.

In verse 1. And 2. And 3. You were dead. In verse 1. In your trespasses. And sins. In time. Wherein. Verse 2. In time past.

Ye walked. According to. The course of this world. Prince of the power of the air. Spirit that now worketh. And so forth. Verse 3. Says according. Or among whom also. We had our conversation. In time past.

In the lust of our flesh. Flesh. Flesh. Flesh. Come over to verse 11. Wherefore remember that. That ye being in time past.

Gentiles in the flesh. In verse 12. That at that time. You were without Christ. And so all that's in the past. But verse 13. But now. Present tense.

[22:35] Currently. From this time. At this time. You're in Christ. And you've been made alive. By the blood of Christ. So in chapter 4. In verse 17. When he says.

I testify in the Lord. That ye henceforth. Walk not. He's referring to that fact. That now that you're not. Gentiles after the flesh anymore. And you're not alienated. From God. You now have life.

You've been brought nigh to God. By the blood of Christ. Now it's time to change. How you walk. Verse 17. That ye henceforth. Walk not. As other Gentiles walk. Some of the trademarks. Of a Gentile's walk. Is there. The vanity of their mind. So their mind. Is on vain things. On things of no real. Substance.

At least in a sense. Of eternity. They're going to be consumed. With right here. We read that in Philippians 1. Who mind earthly things. They're consumed. With the here and now.

[23 : 28] With what's happening today. And how's that going to affect me here. And now. And he says. It's time to stop walking like that. We want to turn our attention to something else.

Look at Colossians chapter 3. We want to turn our minds. And our eyes. To things of eternal matters. Look at chapter 3. In verse number 2.

Colossians chapter 3. Verse 2. Set your affections. On things above. Not on things on the earth. Let me ask you.

How are you going to set your affections. On things above. How do you do that? Just going to do it. Just did it.

How do you do that? You have to acknowledge. It's going to take. I don't know if I want to call it a process. But it's going to have to take effort. Into taking your affections.

[24 : 27] Off of things. That are down here. That are temporal. That are earthly things. And you're going to have to. Through the word of God. Renew your mind.

To see something else. In Corinthians. He says. The things that are seen. Are temporal. The things which are not seen. Are eternal. And you can't see them.

I guess you could see. A lost soul around you. A man or woman. That's lost. You could see them. And have compassion on them. And think eternally. And set your affections on.

Winning them to Christ. That's something you could do. Come back to Ephesians 4. Where the Gentiles. Walk in the vanity of their mind. Their minds are consumed. With things that don't matter. In the light of eternity. The test could be. Is this going to burn? Or is this going to last forever? So how are you going to set your mind.

[25 : 21] On things that last forever? Well the best way. The easiest way. Is to go to the word of God. An eternal book. That illuminates your mind.

To seeing and thinking. On things that are eternal. It's not going to be on TV. It's not going to be on your phone. It's not. It's not going to show up there. The eternal things.

You won't find any of them. But if you spend your time there. And consumed with the here and now. Your mind will be on vain things.

Now I realize you have to make a living. I realize you have to support. And there's things that have to be tended to in this life. That's a given. But is that where your affections are?

That makes a difference. I know a man who's done very well in business. And he's satisfied everything in his life in that way.

[26 : 19] But it doesn't have his affection. Because he's a giver. And he gives to missions. And he gives to evangelists. And he has a list of people that he gives to. And that's where he wants to be.

His affections are somewhere else. I heard him say one time that he's just laying up treasure in heaven. When he was writing out a check to a ministry. Because that's where his heart is. It's not on the money.

It's not on the property or the homes. And he's not walking the way Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind. Verse 18 describes the way other Gentiles walk.

Having the understanding darkened. Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them. Because of the blindness of their heart. So we know.

We understand. Having our eyes opened. Because we receive Jesus Christ. And having a spirit. We understand how these things change. In our lives.

[27 : 14] But to look at a Gentile. And see from the scripture. We realize it's a heart problem.

They're blind in their heart. The God of this world. It's blinded the minds of them which believe not. And as they're blinded.

And closed to the truth. The result is they're ignorant. They lack knowledge. And lacking knowledge. It's the same thing as saying in verse 18. Their understanding is darkened.

And they're alienated from the life of God. Understand that this passage. The Bible teaches us so much about the truth. And about the way things are spiritually speaking.

You're alienated. If you're lost. You're alienated from the life of God. Through the ignorance. Because you're ignorant. Because you lack knowledge. You lack truth. And somebody needs to speak the truth. And love to you. You lack knowledge. You're not alienated from the life of God. Through the bad deeds that you've done. Or the lack of good deeds that you've done.

[28 : 12] A man will think that way. But the word of God shows us. No it's something wrong in your mind. Your understanding is darkened. It's closed off. You need the light. The glorious light.

Of the gospel of Christ. To shine unto you. And you'll see clearly. That the Lord Jesus Christ died. And so forth. We know that. Now the Gentile mind. Is on vain things.

Their mind is blinded and ignorant. To truth. And Paul's like. You don't want to walk like that anymore. Your mind should be on the truth.

Your mind should be on eternal things now. And if your mind's on it. Then your hands and your feet. And your mouth are going to be on it too. Verse 19. He describes them.

Who being past feeling. That means they can't respond. Have given themselves over. Unto lasciviousness. To work all uncleanness.

[29 : 10] With greediness. What a horrible description. They're given over to. Lasciviousness is an excessive sin. And it's just pure lust of the flesh.

Being past feeling. The more you give to your flesh. The more it just. It wants more and more and more. Until it's just not satisfied. It's never satisfied. Until it just is bored.

And it's past feeling. And it needs something different. To stimulate it. And to chase after. Who being past feeling. Have given themselves over. Unto lasciviousness. To work all uncleanness.

With greediness. Because. I'm sure you've tried to talk to somebody. Or witness to somebody. Or just have any kind of conversation. That. And maybe in your heart. You want to turn it to God. You want to turn it to the Lord.

To spiritual things. And you just can't even. Get your foot in the door. There's some people. They're just so. Closed. Closed. Even if you. Even if you have a great opportunity.

[30 : 09] And you say something about Christ. It's just. Like. Like. They don't even get it. They don't even know what you just said. They don't even care. Because they're just. Beyond them. God has got to do a work.

In their heart. In their spirit. To open their eyes. To say. Hey. I'm going to die. I'm going to go to hell. The God has to do some work on them.

I don't know if you've experienced that. But that sounds like that Gentile. In verse 19. But in verse 20. We're going to have to quit here. Ye have not so learned Christ. Ye have not so learned Christ. So. What he's pointing at is that. You're not going to walk like that. You're not going to walk the way they walked. You have learned something different. A new life. A new way. And Jesus Christ is that way.

And you've learned something different. And I'm going to show you that. And then. Philippians. He points out. Jesus Christ's way of humility. And his. This mind being in you. Which was also in Christ Jesus.

[31 : 06] You've not learned. These things from Jesus Christ. If so be you've heard him. And been taught by him. As the truth is in Jesus. You didn't learn lasciviousness. From Jesus Christ. You didn't learn.

Uncleanness. And greediness. From Jesus Christ. If you've got that in you. And you do. It's. It's a work of the flesh. It's a mark and trait of your old nature. Now we're going to have to quit here. But what we're going to pick it up with next week. Or willing. Is this. Old man. New man. And there is not a. It. It is a rule.

So there's a rule. I've got to call. It's better. It's just one off. It's better.