

# We will... Unite (Ephesians 4:1-8)

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] And I realized my prologue into the message is going to be a little bit long, so just bear with me. But imagine with me that you're this new young married couple and you give birth to this child, and you rejoice over the opportunity to have this child, and yet you put this child out on the curb in front of your house.

And you just imagine with me, and you post a sign next to the child that says, Dear homo sapiens, would you care for this child, please?

Sincerely, mom and dad. And you touch that child, you see that child no more, and you just put them out there with that sign.

Because you're appealing, aren't we all homo sapiens? Why can't we all just take responsibility for this child? Why have to do that? That would be for most of us probably an unconscionable thought to say, What on earth is a parent doing?

There is something deeply wrong here, and we would all think that that is unconscionable. Because we know the best environment for a child to be raised under God's divine design is for in the context of marriage, for that child to be brought forth, to be cared for, to be nurtured, to be raised.

[ 1 : 2 0 ] God has designed the family, and mom and dad is the best environment. Now we know sometimes through circumstances the best environment is not possible, but that is the best environment, and that's how God designed children to be raised.

Similarly, God draws people unto himself, individuals place their faith in Christ, and that makes us to be a part of this universal church, the thing that Kamesh just talked about, that there's global leaders, that churches is around the world.

There's tribes still yet without the gospel, but there are many people on every continent who know the Lord, who proclaim Him, and the church is all those in Christ around the world, and for that we rejoice.

But God doesn't place one of His kids out on the global street corner, so to speak, to say, Dear Church of God, please take care of one of my children, you who are in Japan, you who are in Africa, you who are in Iceland, you who even graduated from the University of Washington, would you please take care of one of my children?

That's unconscionable. What does God do? That's not God's divine design. We know that God draws people unto themselves, they are saved, and then God asks local churches, would you care for one of my children?

[ 2 : 5 0 ] I didn't ask the global church to care for my kid, I asked this local church, and that environment, the local church, is the best environment by God's divine design to care for, to nurture, to grow, to feed this child of the Lord.

That's the divine design, the local church. So it's unconscionable in my mind to visit with someone who is okay in their mind as a believer in Christ to be without a local church.

I refer to them as the de-churched individuals. Now I understand sometimes you're de-churched for a little while because you move from city to city, and you haven't found quite a local church yet, you may be new to university, you're looking for a church in that town that you're not familiar with.

I understand there's natural transitions where one maybe is searching for a church, and that's great. But to be permanently okay as a believer in Christ to be de-churched and excused that away in my mind is unconscionable, and it's akin to putting a child out on a curb and saying, please take care of him, world, we're all homo sapiens.

Thank you very much, and walk away. In my mind those two images are one and the same. It's unconscionable. That's not God's best.

[ 4 : 15 ] So today I want us though to understand have the same working definition of a local church though. And so on a slide I've created an on your sermon outline, there's a little box on the bottom of your sermon outline that these things are found.

The definition of a local church, and I call them the irreducible minimums, and so there are a, and what's an irreducible minimum that you reduce, it's the least amount of attributes necessary to maintain the function and identity of a thing.

For example, if we're going to make cookies, you would need flour, sugar, eggs, baking soda, and butter. Those are the five irreducible minimums, ingredients you need to make cookies. Now you can add chocolate chips, you can add oatmeal, you can add other things, but if you don't have these five basic things, you're going to, if you're going to, if you're going to omit one of those ingredients, you're going to have some substance, it's just not a cookie.

Okay, and so, so these things that we're going to mention are, you can omit these things, but then you can't say it's a local church. So what are the irreducible minimums of a local church?

It's God's redeemed people, all who repented and believed in Christ, who number two, covenant together. That is, and we're going to talk about this in a moment, but there's this understanding and recognition that we have responsibilities to the Lord and to one another, and so we're going to covenant together.

[ 5 : 47 ] Number three, who gathered to worship God and hear God's word preached. It's why the word of God being proclaimed and preached when a church gathers, that's so important. But, but it, and then number four, who observed the ordinances.

We gather together, we covenant together, we gather together, we observe the Lord's ordinances of baptism and Lord's supper, and who willingly submit to the loving leadership and oversight of qualified elders. Now, again, this is what separates the local church from a paratroop organization. This is what separates a local church from a home group. You can have a home group of believers from many different churches, but, but they're not all willingly submitting to one group of qualified elders. And so that, that, that this is what separates the local church from a Bible college or a university or a Christian university or something.

They meet some of these qualifications, but they don't meet all of them. And this is the distinction, and this is the irreducible minimum. So if you remove one of these things, you have something, but you don't have a local church.

And why is this important? And, and, and why is it that we're beginning this way to open a sermon series? If you're new with us today, we're, we're, we are beginning a new sermon series where we're going to be walking through the, the member covenant that we have that is on the eight and a half by 11 piece of paper that you have, that you may have been given as you walked in.

[ 7 : 23 ] This is our member covenant here at the, at, at Fourth Memorial Church. And you say, Scott, why are you doing this? Because in America, we have this cultural independence.

We had a war of independence. America got its beginning through this desire for independence. And so sometimes that desire for independence, we don't realize it's very cultural.

It's, it's ingrained in us as Americans. We think very independently as a people. There's other cultures that are more collective in thought, but America in particular is very individualistic and, and, and, and not only independent, but we all also, and I just mentioned it, individualistic.

And in the Northwest in particular, we have it bad. We're not just independent. And we're not just individuals. And we don't like just individualism. We add rugged to the beginning of it.

We like rugged individualism here in the Northwest. And so not only do we prize individualism and independence as Americans, but we also enjoy a little bit of rugged individualism.

[ 8 : 33 ] And we're kind of proud of that. And all of that though goes against the grain of what it is to be a church. And so I want to take a time out and talk about what is our responsibility as a church.

If those are the five ingredients of a church, then what is our responsibilities as a church, both to the world and to one another? And so I wanted to, because I don't want to assume we all know that or we all are familiar with it.

Because we take those ideas into the local church that are cultural and we don't like to submit to anybody. We don't like that.

And so we're going to take some time out. So you will, if you have the member covenant, what this piece of paper does is there's a few we will statements.

So the whole sermon series is called *We Will*. And then there's a verb that is italicized and underlined. And that will give the sermon title for the next several weeks. And we will take each one of these lines from our member covenant as an independent sermon.

[ 9 : 53 ] And we will finish this sermon series before Christmas. And then we will have a special Christmas series that we will do as well. But if I could have the five ingredients of a local church back on the board, what I want to do is this.

I want to talk about number two. We're God's people, number one, who covenant together. Now let me explain.

If we were on the east coast and or the Midwest, covenant and together would be a common practice. On the west coast in particular, it's a phenomenon where the covenant and together thing is not so formal.

And so I'll give you my own experience growing up. I've lived in Montana, Oregon, Idaho, Washington, and in those states, there was no formal covenanting together concept of a local church. But the church understood we had responsibilities to one another.

So it's a very informal process of covenanting together. But here at fourth, at least since the 1950s, but maybe even 1902, when the church got its start, fourth has always had a church covenant.

[ 11 : 05 ] This is not nothing new to us at fourth. We adopted a new church covenant that took the old and reworked it in some ways and put it into this format.

And that's what you have in front of us. And so the first line says, we will unite in heart and mind, maintaining the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace in the local church, living in harmony with one another as God's redeemed people.

And you say, well, Scott, this sure sounds like this is like for members only kind of a sermon series. What if I'm just an attender and I like the church, but I'm just, is this going to be a sermon series for me as well?

Yes. Because all that this member covenant does is it talks about what is the essence of what it means to be a member of the body of Christ locally.

So whether you're a member or an attender, you're well, this is for all of us who are in Christ. But so we find this first one that talks about unity, we will unite in heart and mind, maintaining the unity of spirit through the bond of peace in his local body, living in harmony together as God's redeemed people.

[ 12 : 24 ] That's that's our first thing. Where is this found in scripture? This this value for unity in the body of Christ. Where is this found if you have a copy of scripture with you, if you can turn to Ephesians chapter four, this will be the text for our message today.

I want to read for us Ephesians four one through seven, and this will provide the context for the message today. Paul writing to the church at Ephesus, I therefore a prisoner of the Lord urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called with all humility and gentleness with patients bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Therefore, there is one body and one spirit, just as you were called into one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is overall through all and in all.

But his grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Paul begins. Here's the big idea.

I think it's also on your sermon outline. We walk worthy of our calling when we walk in unity. Paul begins saying, I therefore a prisoner of the Lord urge you to walk worthy of a calling in which you've been called.

[ 13 : 56 ] He urges, he beseeches them to do something. And the word urge is this. It's a strong entreaty. So imagine my wife and I were camping and I saw a cougar behind the bush and the trees and the shrubs that were lining our campsite.

And I see it. It's behind Wendy. She doesn't quite see the mountain lion yet. And I say to Wendy, Wendy, please stand up quietly. Put your chair between you and the forest behind you and walk backwards toward me.

And I would pick up a chair and I would walk toward Wendy as she's moving backwards. So if the animal did decide to jump and kill someone, hopefully maybe would choose me first, right? And so, and so, and then we would back up together and we would get in the car and drive away and leave

everything there.

And we'd all be happy. That's the way that would go. But I would be urging Wendy. And what you're doing when you urge someone is you're saying, I need you to see it this way.

Like, I know the campfire is all nice and the s'mores are really tasty, but that is not what's most important right now. I urge you to see it this way. And that is what Paul is doing. He's saying, church, church, church, I need you to see something some way.

[15:15] And what is he saying when he urges them to walk in a manner worthy of the calling which with you have been called?

I want to talk first about the calling. He wants them to, he urges them to do what?

He urges them to walk in a manner worthy of the calling. So we have two words. He says, I want you to walk worthy. The word worthy is a word that means like weight or heaviness.

There's a heaviness to it, not a weight. So what Paul is saying is that, okay, church at Ephesus, I need you to see something this way. I want to urge you to see that your calling weighs the same as your conduct.

Walk your conduct, your daily life. Walk in a manner worthy of your calling. And these need to weigh the same. So let's talk first about this calling that is supposed to weigh the same.

[16:23] In Romans 8.30, Paul writes, and he says, we've been predestined. These he also called, and whom he called, he also justified. And whom he justified, these he also will glorify.

So when we have been called, it's as if you say, you have been saved. So make sure that your conduct is worthy of the salvation that you have.

This calling. What is it that we have been called in other places in Scripture? He has predestined us. He has adopted us to the praise of his glorious grace.

He has blessed us and the beloved. We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. How beautiful, how glorious, how wonderful, how sublime, how exalted is our calling because of what Christ has done.

And the weight of that calling should be matched by our conduct. I urge you, Church of Ephesus, see this the same way that your conduct needs to match your calling.

[17:30] And what I find very interesting, how Paul measures this conduct, you would think, oh, I get it, I know exactly where Paul's going to go.

He's going to say, be holy as he is holy. He's going to talk about his personal righteousness and growing in faith. This is what Paul, this is where Paul's going to go. But no, it's actually quite surprising.

Paul doesn't talk about this conduct that's going to be worthy of the calling. He doesn't talk about it in individual ways. He's going to say, Church at Ephesus, I'll know if your conduct is worthy of your calling by the way in which you relate to one another.

And so let me explain how it is that this conduct should look like in the life of a church. Look with me in the very next verse.

So what does this worthy walk look like? Well, with all humility, he says in the very next verse.

[18:40] Humility is this incredible virtue that it should be highly sought after but never claimed.

For once it is claimed, you don't have it. I could never say, I'm humble, just look at me. I never had it.

But it should be something that is very much sought after. So with all humility, during the slave trade, the West Indies, which is the Caribbean islands, a group of Moravian Christians who found their Moravian Christians are from Czech Republic, Slovakia area.

They were heartbroken and they wanted to evangelize the slaves. But there was a disparity between them and the slaves. And so what these two young missionaries did was determined a way to reach the oppressed peoples was to become oppressed themselves and they became slaves.

And in order to fulfill this calling they felt, they joined the slaves. They worked and lived beside the slaves, becoming totally identified with them and sharing in their overwork, sharing in their beatings and sharing in their abuse.

[20:01] And it is not strange that these two young missionaries soon won the hearts of many slaves, many of whom accepted the Lord.

And this is what it is recorded by one of these slaves. He says, How could I not worship a God who could move such men to such selflessness and humility?

This is a terribly elusive virtue, but it is one worth waging a war on one's flesh and to cherish Christ above all else. And we're to have humility with one another.

And it will become more evident as we go along how, why I'm saying it relates to how we treat one another. Humility is an essential ingredient to this worthy walk where your conduct matches your calling.

What's another metric of this worthy walk? Gentleness is the next one that is found in verse 2.

Gentleness. It's the opposite of self-assertion, rudeness or harshness.

[ 21 : 12 ] I don't like it when I hear, I just, I like to just say it how it is. No, that's just rude. That's not loving. And so, but it is not weak or timid either.

It's not indifferent and nor does it cower. The word has this meaning of like a wild, it's like a wild, this word is often used in the Greek of wild animals that have been tamed.

So you can think of a horse being gentle. It was, it's broken and chain and trained. Such an animal still has its strength. A horse is still very powerful, but it is under control of its master.

Or a tamed lion in an old scent, tent circus type environment. It is still a powerful animal, but it has been brought under the control of the trainer.

Meekness and gentleness is power under control. One whose power is under the control of God's authority. And this is a virtue that is essential to this worthy walk.

[ 22 : 19 ] And we are to be gentle with one another. Patience is another one of these virtues of this worthy walk. It is one who has long suffered and long tempered.

H.M. Stanley was sent to Africa to check on David Livingston in 1871. David Livingston is known as the father of modern missions.

And he served in Africa many years. He spent several months with Livingston, this Stanley character. And he carefully observed the man and his work. Livingston never spoke to Stanley about spiritual matters per se.

But Livingston lovingly and patiently, and his compassion for the African people was beyond Stanley's comprehension. Stanley could not understand how this missionary could have such love for and patience with a backward pagan people among whom he so long ministered.

Livingston literally spent himself in untiring service for those who he had no reason to love except for Christ's sake. Stanley wrote in his journal, when I saw that the unwavering patience and unflagging zeal for the enlightened sons of Africa, I became a Christian at his side.

[ 23 : 41 ] Though he never spoke a word to me, but very little about the gospel. So just by observing this long patience of Livingston, Stanley came to faith in Christ and wanted to labor by Livingston's side.

This amazing virtue is essential to the worthy walk, to be patient with one another. Last attribute here of this worthy walk is this bearing with one another in love.

Love covers a multitude of sins. Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers a multitude of sin.

Love gives itself away continuously and unconditionally, and this too is an amazing and essential virtue of this worthy walk, where one's calling is worthy of one's conduct.

And then lastly, we come to this fifth quality, found in verse 3, and it begins with, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

[ 24 : 58 ] This desire to maintain the unity, but he first begins, eager. Make sure you make every diligent effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

The most interesting about the unity of the Spirit is this, is we don't manufacture it. We don't create it. It is the unity of the Spirit. It is his unity, and we are to maintain it.

We are to keep it. We are to guard it. What God has created us, this one new man in Christ. And Paul, hmm, and the basis of our unity, let me try to take the book of Ephesians as a whole real quick.

The first three chapters of the book of Ephesians are all about what God has done for us to make us in Christ. The condescension of Christ coming to earth, being born, living a sinless life.

The first chapter is this beautiful opening chapter about the gospel and what has been done for you on your behalf that Christ has done for you. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 are all about that.

[ 26 : 13 ] We often memorize verses out of Ephesians 2, 8, and 9. In verse 10, we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared for us to do beforehand. We have these verses memorized by grace, you've been saved through faith.

These are the verses. It's all about what God has done on your behalf. Then chapter 4, 5, and 6 is now what is our responsibility to do with regard to what God has done, almost just like what he's saying.

Make your conduct worthy of your calling. Chapters 1, 2, 3, calling, conduct, chapters 4, 5, and 6. The basis of our unity is based in what Christ has done for us, but there are some things that we need to be unified in.

He tells us this is with all humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. Then he says, okay, but here's going to be the things you need to hang your hat on and be an absolute agreement on because here is what is essential. In verse 4, for there is one body, one spirit. There are seven of ones here. Just as you were called into one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is overall through all and in all.

[ 27 : 43 ] One body. This is the thing that Kamash was talking about, this universal church. We're all in this, all our believers who are in Christ, who have repented and believed the forgiveness of their sins and believed in Christ. We're one body.

One spirit. The Holy Spirit of God possesses every believer who is in Christ. Believers are unified with one hope.

The hope could be more translated like an assurance, one assurance of your calling that one day, if you've placed your faith in Christ, one day you will see the Lord.

You can be assured of that because that's your calling. We're to be unified in one baptism. Some may argue this could be speaking of the spirit's baptism.

Others is a water baptism. I'm not going to get into the reasons for which one and why. But I want to conclude a little bit of, close the message down with a graphic.

[ 28 : 56 ] Emily, if I could have that on the screen, that would be great. When I went to seminary, there was a few things that I'll probably never forget.

There's a lot that I learned that I've already forgotten. I'm sorry. But there are a few things that hang with you for a long while. Let me try to describe the chart and then apply it to the text and how these two relate.

There's things that we die for. And these are things that we believe, that we hold dear, that we're worth dying for. And so the things that may be in that category, and these are essentials of the faith. These are fundamental things to the faith.

And they are the things that are in verses 4 through 6. One body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. These are the essential things and you and I should die for them. Many people throughout history have died for these things. Let me give you some other things that may be included in the things that people have died for throughout history and we should be willing to die for them.

[ 30 : 08 ] The inspiration and the authority of Scripture. Tyndale lost his life over that one. He was martyred for that one. The doctrine of the Trinity. One God subsisting in three co-equal persons.

Father, Son, Holy Spirit. The incarnation of the second person of the Trinity. That the second person of the Trinity is the one who condescended and took on human flesh, whose name was Jesus, who lived a sinless life, who died a death for sin, was in the grave three days, rose victoriously over sin, and is now ascended to the right hand of the Father.

The basic gospel truths. And that's what's in verses again, four through six. This is what Paul is saying. This is what you need to be unified in together.

And that's going to take humility and gentleness and patience and bearing with one another in order to maintain this spirit, this unity of the spirit. The next one down is divide.

There are doctrines that divide the church. There are. And this is if you want to think of this category is why we have so many denominations. What is it? Why do we have so many denominations? Is that we recognize this. We recognize you as a brother and sister in Christ, but because we have such fundamental differences as how we see something, it's good for us to not be dividing over those things in one local body, so it's good for us to worship the Lord separately.

[ 31 : 37 ] And so there are things that the church has divided over. Let me give you an example of one is this first one in a theological term is more like talking about covenantalism, those who are in a more covenantal understanding.

And so they would see baptism as a sign and seal of membership into a covenant community. And so these are the ones denominations that maybe baptize infants, but it's more than just baptizing infants.

There's a whole theological that's just an outworking of a whole camp of theological thought. Then there's more of those who may see things like forth and our practice of baptizing believers is an act of obedience as an adult who wants to give testimony of their faith in Christ by immersion.

So some churches will divide over this issue and say, man, there's so many theological things here that it's just good for us.

We don't deny that you're in Christ, but it's good for us to not worship together. So some doctrines people divide over. Then there's a third category of debate. And I would argue this should be the largest category.

[ 32 : 49 ] Most issues should be in the debatable category. That you should be able to worship together in one church and have a wholesome debate, but not cause disunity.

We can have a rich debate about many things, but please don't get tribal over the arguments. And so this is how what that might look like. We say Pastor Jay thinks this.

Pastor Scott thinks that. I'm with Jay. And then what if Jay and Scott started dividing the church and that little issue, whatever it was, became, now we're encamped with, well, Pastor Jay says, Scott says, and whatever.

And then we all understand he went to the University of Washington. So we know who would win that argument. Yeah, so it's all about remembering where we went to school.

So debate. And here's what I will have to admit. When I was younger, I did not know what was worth fighting for and dying for.

[ 33 : 58 ] And so I chose to die on every argument and every hill. And so I died on a thousand molehills, which were really just debatable issues. And I didn't have the maturity to understand it.

This is why I say debatable things should be the largest category and you should be able to maintain being in one church together, understanding what it is that you're talking about, agreeing to disagree and not causing disunity in the body about it.

That's the issue. And then there's a decide issue of deciding issue. These are morally neutral things that you and I just have freedom to decide in Christ. So how does someone entertain?

What does entertainment look like? Some families would have a culture that would ascribe something bad that other Christian families have a culture that would be okay with. And there's not necessarily a moral leg to stand on. There's freedom in both of these camps and we're just to let them go in that.

And so that you have the freedom to just decide on some things that are morally neutral. Again, we're only talking about things that are morally neutral. But again, it's amazing how many folks get in really fights and split a church over things that you just have the freedom to decide over.

[ 35 : 19 ] And let me try to explain. Let me give you an illustration and I'm actually speaking well of this person while the beginning of this story may come across that I'm speaking poorly of the person.

When I first came to fourth, this is 11 years ago, there was an older man who was a generation and a half older than myself. And he had served in the armed forces.

This is important for you to understand something. There was a person that was a generation younger than myself who had never served in the armed forces.

This person noticed this person wearing a hat in church. And so this person came to me and said, Scott, are you going to say something to that person?

And I, this one? Yeah. And I said, what for the hat? I said, I am not going to do that. I'm encouraging you not to say anything either.

[ 36 : 21 ] Because this is a deciding issue. It's not morally, it's morally neutral. It's not necessarily innately sinful to wear a hat. But I understand generationally and in his military service where he's coming from and it's legitimate and I honor that.

I also understood where this young person was coming from. So I said to this older gentleman, sir, I said, the thing I want people to stumble over at fourth memorial church is Jesus Christ.

And if you mentioned something about his hat, he may not have an opportunity to stumble over him. So can we make that the issue? So then I gave him a task.

I said, instead, I said, do you think you could welcome that person, learn his name and get to know his story? Do you think you could do that? And mention nothing about the hat.

He said, yes. After the service, he came to me and said, Scott, he understood what just happened. He said, Scott, thank you.

[ 37 : 35 ] He said, here's his name. And he grew up with an absent father just like me and we're going to have coffee this week. I am so proud of this man.

But do you see how easily we were a hairs breath away from a point of disunity? Over a decide for issue, nothing worth debating over.

Nothing worth dividing over and certainly nothing we're dying for. But if you're not careful, we can do this all the time.

And so what is it going to take? Verse two, with humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love, eagerness to maintain the unity of the spirit and the bottom of peace.

That's what unity, that's what it's going to take to be unified as a church. And we're going to emphasize the most important things, things worth dying for, one body, one spirit, to which you've been called one hope that is belonging called one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all, who is overall and through all and in all.

[ 39 : 01 ] And this is what Paul is talking about when he opens up in verse one where he says, I want you to walk worthy, make sure your conduct is in keeping with your calling.

Church, let's do that. And let's do that very well. And so that's why one of the first lines of our church covenant is about this unity thing.

We will unite and heart and mind and maintain the unity of spirit and the bottom of peace. And this local body living in harmony together as God's redeemed people, we will do that together.

And that is part of the essence of what it means to be a church. Every member has to work hard at this. We all do. I want to conclude with this. There was a far more serious issue in the church in the book of Acts.

There was a division concerning two groups of widows in the church. Under one church there was Hellenistic widows and Hebrew widows, and one group of widows being neglected the daily distribution and it was becoming a thing.

[ 40 : 11 ] And it got all the way up to the apostles and the apostles under their leadership asked the church to appoint seven men to take care of this issue. So they appointed seven men and the issue was diminished.

So here's my point. We all are responsible for this. We all. It's interesting that the church appointed these seven men. So when you hear things of gossip, speaking poorly of one another, when you hear tribalism beginning to rise in the church, you're responsible.

It's not the pastoral staff and the elders who are going to sweep in and put down the disunity. No, it's going to be you. It's going to be me as a member, not a pastor.

When I hear one of those things, I say, hey, I just want to encourage you. I want you to consider what you're doing. Do you feel like you with humility and gentleness and patience?

You're bearing with someone else in love? And that the thing that I just heard you say, it doesn't quite have the ring of keeping being eager to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace.

Would you please consider what you're doing?

[ 41 : 19 ] It takes all of us. And we're going to do that together. I love it. I look forward to it. Let's pray. Father, thank you for being kind.

Thank you for your kindness. Or thank you for your humility in the calling with which you've called.

Thank you that you modeled this for us, that we already even have this mind that you have that you call us to in Philippians chapter two.

It says, who though he was in the form of God did not count it equality with God, a thing to be grasped or hold on to. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

You did that to call people unto yourself. You became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. Lord, you did that so that we might be called.

And so Lord, I pray that our conduct would be in keeping with our calling. And I thank you for reminding us today that a walk worthy of our calling is only done when we are walking in unity.

[ 42 : 33 ] So Lord, I pray that we would grow in our unity. Thank you for the unity that we have and thank you for the unity that has that flavors this place for many years. And I pray that we would be a

people who just love the unity of the spirit, that we are to guard it, to keep it, to maintain it.  
And the unity is yours. We love you, Lord. Thank you for this church. Thank you for getting to be a part of it. And may we walk with you. Love you.  
Amen.