

“Together, in Unity” (Ephesians 4:1-6)

Intro: Paul has already reminded the Ephesian believers of their high position in Christ, and now he admonishes them concerning the need to balance this with holy practices in everyday life.

1. The **GRACES** of Unity vs. 1-3

Jesus prayed “that they may be one”... but how can we overcome our differences so as to experience real unity?

<u>The Means</u>	<u>The Meaning</u>	<u>The Model</u>
* HUMILITY/LOWLINESS	lowliness of mind	Phi. 2:7-8
* GENTLENESS/MEEKNESS	strength under control	Matt. 26:51-53
* PATIENCE/LONGSUFFERING	slow to anger	Luke 23:33-34
* TOLERANCE/FORBEARANCE	to put up with; endure	Mark 14; John 21
* LOVE (AGAPE)	the commitment to seek the welfare of all people	Rom. 5:6-8

...and so be diligent to **preserve** the unity of the Spirit. Recipients of grace should extend grace.

2. The **FOUNDATIONS** for Unity vs. 4-6

- one body----- the **UNIVERSAL** church (cp. 1 Cor. 12:12-27)
- one Spirit----- the same Holy Spirit indwells, seals, teaches each of us
- one hope----- the rapture, and eternal life
- one Lord----- the same **MASTER**
- one faith----- one and the same **BODY OF TRUTH** which we hold to (Jude 3)
- one baptism----- the same **PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENT** of faith in Christ
- one God and Father--- We are children of the same Heavenly Father.

Think About It: In this world, conflict is the norm, but the church is to be a clear contrast. We must be marked by unity, for we are “Exhibit A” in God’s testimony to the world that Jesus really is the Answer.

Together, in Unity

(CONNECT questions for 3/24)

--Read Ephesians 4:1-6

1. What are the great hinderances to unity in the church today?

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2. Which is harder, to maintain unity in the local church, or in the universal church?

Why do you think this is?

3. What do all the “graces” of unity have in common? (v. 2)

4. Churches differ greatly in what they believe and preach...What are the essentials that we must agree on if indeed we are brothers and sisters in Christ?

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5. Is it conceivable that there are churches composed of true believers (at least primarily), but we should still distance ourselves from them because of other theological and practical matters?

If so, what should “distancing ourselves” look like?