

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS



7. Building up the Body

Introduction

In the first three chapters of Ephesians, the Apostle focusses on the blessings we receive in Christ. When we understand what God has done for us it will change the way we live. As we come to the second half of the letter, Paul tells us the difference it will make in our personal life, our family life, our work and in our relationships with one another in the Body of Christ. He begins with writing about the Body of Christ.

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:1-16

- † What qualities does Paul mention in verses 1 and 2 that we need if we are going to live a life worthy of our calling?

(Humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love.)

- † How will these qualities help us keep the unity of the Spirit mentioned in v3? From your experience, how does a lack of these qualities easily create disunity? Discuss.

- † What are the 7 aspects of our unity in verses 4 to 6?

(One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. These are the main truths that unite us as Christians.)

- † There is to be unity in the Body of Christ, and yet there is also diversity. What is the diversity? V7-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6.

(Each of us receive grace from God as he chooses, to enable us to do the work he calls us to do.)

Then in verse 8 Paul quotes Psalm 68:18. This is a fulfilment of what Jesus came to do. When he died and was buried, he went to the lowest parts of the earth and set free the many who had been bound in Hades. Rather than demanding gifts from his subjects as human Kings would, he gave gifts to his people.

- † What are the gifts that God has given to the church that are mentioned in these verses, and why does God give these gifts? See v11, 12a

(These gifts are men and women who God has chosen to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. He gives these gifts of men and women so they can train the Body of Christ to do the work of the ministry.)

- † You may not be a prophet, teacher or pastor, however that doesn't mean you are not important in the Body. What is God preparing all of us to for right now? V12-13

(We are being prepared for the works of service so we will all grow to maturity in Christ.)

- † What are the characteristics of a mature Christian? V14-16. Also see 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. Do you think you are a mature Christian?

(Eph.4:14-16 A mature Christian knows what he believes and is not moved by false teaching. Also they speak the truth in love and are becoming more like Jesus.

1 Cor. 3:1-13 A mature Christian isn't worldly, nor does he get jealous or quarrel. He is able to take solid food.)

- † How does the Body (each one of us!) grow into maturity? V15-16

(The Body grows as each one of us does the work God has called us to do, and we do that in love.)

- † What do you think your part in the Body is? Discuss.

Conclusion

Have you ever been to an orchestra? Many different instruments are playing, some have a bigger part than others, while others have a small part. Each is needed to produce the beauty and harmony of the music. In the same way every one of us is important in the Body of Christ. Are you playing your part?