

## study 3 - ephesians 4:1-16



# Body Building

So far in Ephesians, we've seen that God has united Jews and Gentiles who trust Jesus into one big family the Church. But family life can be tough when the members all come from different backgrounds. And so for the rest of the letter, Paul gives the Ephesians practical instructions about how people in God's new family should live together... and build up God's church!

## Read Ephesians 4:1-6

- How does Paul summarise the way the Ephesians should live in v 1?
- Thinking back to the first few Chapters of the letter, what calling have the Ephesians received?
- Verses 2 and 3 give a brief description of the kind of life Paul has in mind for the Ephesians. What does it include?

How will this help the Jews and Gentiles from such different backgrounds to get on with each other?

- Verses 4-6 go on to talk more about the “calling” the Ephesians received.

What have they been called to?

What two small words are repeated a lot in these verses?

Why would these it be so out of place if the Ephesians weren't united?

## One for all and all for one...

*All* the Ephesian Christians, whatever their background, have been given the same things. They're *all* called to be part of the *one* body of Jesus, through the same Holy Spirit. They've *all* got the same hope of being in heaven together and they're *all* serving the same “one” God. If they have fights and divisions, it would deny all these things they have in common. Instead of tearing the body apart, they should be building the body up!

## Think it through

How do you cope with people in church who are different from you?

Have you ever thought about the things you've got in common with them?

How would Paul suggest you treat them?

We've seen that unity is one of the key things Paul wants the Ephesians to aim for. But there's more.

## Read Ephesians 4: 7-16

●Paul says when Jesus rose from the dead, he was like a triumphant Roman General returning from battle with the spoils of war, generously distributing them to his people.

What gifts is the risen Lord handing around(v 11)?

Do the gifts have anything in common?

●Why did Jesus give **gifted people** to his church (v 12)?

### Think it through...

The phrase “works of service” in verse 12 is equally well translated “works of ministry.” According to these verses, who does the “ministry” in a church?

Who “prepares” them for this?

●What four goals does Paul have for the church (v 13)?

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ in the faith

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of the Son of God

Becoming \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Having the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of Christ



goals for the church

God has given people different kinds of gifts to help build up his church to maturity and fulness. Paul's focus is particularly on teaching gifts. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers all have different roles in **teaching God's people** about what Jesus has done, and how best to serve him and serve one another.

●What things will characterise a church where people ARE NOT using their gifts to build one another up in the truth about Jesus (v14)?

- What things will characterise a church where people ARE using their gifts to build one another up in the truth about Jesus (v 15-16)?

- Notice the little phrase 'in love' that appears in verses 15-16. Where else is it used in the passage?

Paul wants the Ephesians to be gentle, humble and patient **in love**, AND to teach each other the truth about Jesus **in love**. Both gentleness and truth are needed for the church to grow into unity and maturity.

## Think it through

How do people separate speaking the truth from being gentle, humble and patient?

What do you find easier, a) speaking the truth to people, or b) treating them with humility, gentleness and patience?

What problems arise if you have a) without b)?

What problems arise if you have b) without a)?

How can you make sure one doesn't come at the expense of the other?

