

New Life in Christ – Ephesians 4



MEMORY VERSE: Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

DAY 1 Ephesians 4:1-6 — The Body of Christ

1. What is the “worthy manner” in which Christians are to walk? vv. 1-3
2. Why might these particular character traits have been mentioned?
3. What positive or negative results have you seen when these traits have, or have not, been practiced?
4. What “ones” are the essentials of faith in Jesus Christ? vv. 4-6
5. How do these essential beliefs of our faith unite people from different churches and walks of life?

LEARN THE TRUTH

God’s plan for salvation is revealed. Now we are told how to mature in our faith personally and grow in unity in the body of Christ. God uniquely created and gifted each of us so we can be an effective part of His church. He has a purpose for you that will bring you great joy and benefit others!

DAY 2 Ephesians 4:7-14 — Spiritual Gifts in the Church

6. While we are united in the “ones,” the essential truths of the Bible, we are still unique as individuals. What did Jesus do individually for each of us? v. 7 (read the NIV if it helps clarify)
7. How do verses 8-10 depict Jesus as fully able to bestow gifts on people?
8. What gifts did Christ give believers? v. 11

9. What is the purpose of these gifts of grace? vv. 11-14

10. What other spiritual gifts has Christ given, and how are we cautioned regarding them?
Romans 12:3-8

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

11. Why do you think these are called, gifts of “grace?”

DAY 3 Ephesians 4:14-16 — Gifts, Maturity and Unity

12. What is implied about the result of failing to mature and exercise our God-given gifts? v. 14

13. Why do you think “speaking the truth in love” leads to maturity- both for the one speaking and for the one listening? vv. 15-16

14. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. What do these verses teach about:

Unity

Pride

Value

Love

15. Do you know how God has gifted you, or do any of these gifts seem to describe or inspire you?

DAY 4 Ephesians 4:17-24 — New Life in Christ

16. What must God’s people no longer do? v.17

17. Describe the life of one with a “futile mind.” vv.18-19

18. What is the root cause of such ungodliness? Do you see a progression of sin in this kind of life?

19. Describe the life of those who know Christ, both in their mindset and behavior. vv. 20-24

20. How do these verses help clarify what it means to put off the old self and put on the new self?
Romans 6:11-14

Romans 12:1-2

DAY 5 Ephesians 4:25-32 — Old Life vs. New Life

21. List what we must take off from the old life, put on in the new life, and the reason/motive for each.

OLD LIFE	NEW LIFE	REASON/MOTIVE
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22. In your opinion, what is the difference between healthy and sinful anger? What kind of foothold or opportunity might uncontrolled anger give the devil? What might healthy anger accomplish?

23. Using dictionary, write a short definition and a few appropriate antonyms for the following sins:

	DEFINITION	ANTONYM
Bitterness	antagonism, hostility, resentfulness	comfort, geniality, sweetness, joy

Wrath

Anger

Clamor

Slander

Malice

24. Are there any particular sins you need to put off and new ways of living you want to put on?

25. Why is verse 32 the key to maturity, unity and peace in the body of Christ?

LOVE THE TRUTH

It is a joy to be a useful part of the body of Christ. We each influence it for better or worse. While only God's Spirit can transform us from the inside out, we can grasp the benefit of living the new life and choose to get rid of the old and put on the new. Then we will thrive personally and bless others.

Ephesians 4

New Life in Christ

What does it mean to live a worthy life? It means living in a way that glorifies God. It hinges on two things, our belief and our behavior. These are essential beliefs: one body- the church, consisting of every follower of Christ; one Spirit- the Holy Spirit of God who indwells, seals, guides, empowers and is our guarantee of our inheritance; one hope- of salvation and eternal life through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; one Lord and one faith-trusting in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit, the triune God for redemption; one baptism- dying to self with Christ and being raised to new life in Him; one God and Father of all- the only true all-loving, perfect God who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent.

Many behaviors are part of the worthy life, but here we are specifically told to walk in humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The emphasis here is on unity in the church, and these traits are key to unity. People are difficult. Every one of us can be difficult! It takes humility and patience to keep peace and unity in God's family because of our different personalities, experiences, and maturity. While we are united in our essential beliefs, we are also uniquely gifted. It can take time to discover and operate in our God-given spiritual gift, so we must bear with each other as we grow. Sometimes we even have to bear with ourselves!

The body of Christ is compared to the human body. Every part is important for health, and when one part is not working properly, the whole body is affected, even sick. Just as one failing body part triggers problems in other parts of our bodies, so it is with the church. Part of being mature is not only finding our gifts and exercising them, but knowing our place in the body of Christ. We are each needed and valuable, and we really need each other and must value others. It is a wonderful

thing to put God in His place as Lord, and then to know our own place. We must guard against thinking we are insignificant, but also against thinking we are overly important. We need each other. When one fails to do what God has gifted them to do, there is a hole, an unmet need. Perhaps then others jump in to meet that need and then neglect the need God intended them to meet. It is freeing to know that we each only have a part in the church rather than having the whole thing resting on one person's shoulders. When the body of Christ operates in their giftedness, the burdens are divided, but the victory is shared. And there is a lot more victory!

WALK IN TRUTH



Paul uses another analogy, that of garments to compare the old life with our new life in Christ. Some people make their own clothes, but most don't. We just pick them up and put them on. But before we put on our nice new garments, we must take off the old dirty ripped ones. We must get rid of them! Some even need to be burned! While we are not able to transform ourselves from the inside out- that is the work of the Holy Spirit- we can definitely decide what needs to go. We can choose take off or put away sin and all that goes with our old life. And we can decide what to put on in place of the old garments- beautiful new ones that feel good, smell good and fit much better.

We can take off lying, stealing, sinful anger, corrupt talk, bitterness, wrath, clamor, slander and malice, and put on truth, fulfilling labor, constructive anger, uplifting speech, kindness, goodwill, calm, commendation, respect, goodwill and forgiveness. After all, God, in Christ, forgave us!

Notes