

WHO AM I?

Ephesians



ARE YOU AN ARM OR A LEG?

INTRODUCTION

Ephesians 4:1-16

The Apostle Paul spends the first three chapters of Ephesians helping us to understand our new identity in Christ. We are saints (1:1), chosen by God (1:4), adopted into His family as sons and daughters (1:5), made alive in Christ (2:5), unified with other Christians (2:13), and have Christ in our hearts (3:17). And those are just a few changes that happen to our identity when we come to faith in Jesus!

But now in Chapter 4, Paul begins to show us how we should live in light of these identity changes. Like walking from a classroom where you learn, to a laboratory where you experiment, the Apostle Paul's letters often contain a pivot point – a place where he moves from what we should know to what we should do.¹ It's one thing to be a saint, it's another to live like it!

In the 16 verses we're studying this week, Paul gives the Ephesian Christians a vision for being mature by being unified. They've been transformed by Christ and are able to share His message with the world around them, but the world will not listen if God's people are divided. Paul wants Christ-followers to be gentle with one another, humble, and to work hard to stay unified.² They are like individual parts that make up a body and, in Christ, they can truly thrive!

OPEN IT

1. **We need to take care of our bodies in order to do our best to stay healthy. What are some ways you focus on keeping your body healthy?**

READ IT

Ephesians 4:1-16

¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Galatians, Ephesians*, Volume 8 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 2015), 227.

² Jon Nielson and Bryan Chapell, *Ephesians: The Glory of Christ in the Life of the Church : A 13-Lesson Study* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2021), 69.

EXPLORE IT

2. Paul calls each of us to “walk in a manner worthy” of our calling. What are some of the ways Paul describes what it looks like to walk worthy of our calling?
3. Paul tries to show the unity we have as Christians by listing several things that are “one.” List some of them?
4. Who are the leaders God gave to the church from the beginning?
5. What does God expect these leaders to do for people in the church?
6. What does Paul say happens when the church acts as a body that works together?

APPLY IT

7. Describe a time you’ve been part of a group that has worked well together. What factors kept the group unified?

8. What are some of the challenges that make unity difficult?

In many churches, pastors do much of the work and the people who attend the church simply receive help and encouragement from the pastors. But that's not what Paul says pastors are for. The role of pastors is to "equip the saints for the work of ministry." Leaders are charged with training others to be able to serve the body of Christ. It's vital that churches have pastors willing to train others to serve in the church in order for everyone to benefit from each of our gifts.

9. Why can leaders and the people they serve find it easier to just let the leaders do all of the work?

10. At Village Bible Church, we're blessed to have many people who are not pastors serving in a variety of ways. How are you serving at Village? If you're not, is there any way you'd like to begin serving?

Paul uses the metaphor of the body to describe how a unified church functions together. Everyone is a body part and that means everyone is important! Every member is to contribute, using whatever he or she has. Our ultimate need is Christ. As we grow in maturity in Jesus, we use our gifts in love and build a healthy “body” of Christ. Just as it’s good to take care of the health of our physical body, we need to be intentional about taking care of our church body.³

14. Describe a time when you’ve faced a health challenge. How did it hold you back from truly thriving in life?

15. How does disunity in the body of Christ keep us from truly thriving in life?

³ Tony Merida, David Platt, and Daniel L. Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Ephesians* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2014), 102.
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