

“Engaging In All that Church Is About”
“Getting the Most Out of Church” — Part 6
Ephesians 4:1-6 and 11-16

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15

Advance Preparation Suggested

Preparation #1: The choice of faithful attendance.

Preparation #2: The preparation of your heart.

Preparation #3: The decision to engage your mind.

What is church all about?

Church is a constant interplay between encountering God and encountering the people of God around us.

Two examples: In our worship and in our study of God’s Word, there are both vertical and horizontal interactions.

...I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:1-6

1. The church is all about grace!

- Grace (thoughtfulness) is necessary for the church to be effective!

...I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:1-3

- **Worthy of your calling:** The word "worthy" means "equal weight"; one's calling and conduct should be in balance. "Calling" refers not only to believers' salvation, but also to their union in the body of Christ. Therefore, a Christian's conduct concerns both his personal life and his responsibility to other believers in the church.
- **Humble:** This is the opposite of pride. This virtue is listed first because of Paul's emphasis on unity. Pride promotes disunity; humility promotes unity.
- **Gentle:** This is the opposite of self-assertion, rudeness, and harshness. Biblical gentleness is power under God’s control. A gentle person is never avenging, self-assertive, vindictive, or self-defensive.

Love sees a need and tries to meet it.
Selfishness sees a need and does nothing about it,
or worse, complains about it.

2. The church is all about sound doctrine.

- Sound doctrine is essential for the church to be effective.

There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:4-6

- The gospel is essential to sound doctrine.

By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:2-6

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Romans 10:9-10

In the essentials, unity.
In the non-essentials, liberty.
In all things, love.

3. The church is all about gifts and service.

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is

the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:11-16

- Spiritual leadership is necessary for the church to be effective.
- Spiritual ministry of the church family is necessary for the church to become mature.
- A growing maturity is necessary for the church to stand on solid ground.
- Truth and love are necessary to grow up in Christ.
- Each person doing their part builds up the church in love.

Application: Church is a constant interplay between encountering God and encountering the people of God around us. We come to worship and we come to learn, and in both we can honor God and encourage others. When God is at work in our lives, grace (thoughtfulness) is at work.

- The way you engage at church affects the way others engage at church.
- There is more to church than the hour we meet!