



Sermon Growth Guide

May 25, 2025

He is Able - Ephesians 4:1-16

Key Verse: Ephesians 4:3-4 “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.”

Big Idea: Prayer is about relationship: we are made one with God and with one another as we pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Foundations

The book of Ephesians continues to teach us about how we are called to not just practice prayer, but to live in a spirit of prayer. So far, Paul has written about the Holy Spirit's power at work in us; the blessings and purpose God has for us in Christ; and the grace that allows us to ask the Lord for His intervention. Paul doesn't just give instructions; he also includes prayers.

A majority of the Ephesian church would have consisted of Gentiles who knew they were not originally “God's chosen people.” So, he addresses Jews and Gentiles alike, people from different backgrounds who are now, mysteriously, members of the same family. What could go wrong? Well, numerous misunderstandings, challenges and divisions had emerged.

Chapter 4 focuses on themes of unity, maturity, and humility. Paul also writes about spiritual gifts and the fruits of the Spirit. He implores believers to shift how they live so that their actions will reflect God's love and the new life they have in Christ. Perhaps most evident in this passage is Paul's emphasis on being one (7x). Living, working, and serving in unity: what a witness to the world!

Understanding God's Word

Read Ephesians 3:7-11 and Psalm 68.

Verses 7-10 are often glossed over because they seem more like a sidenote or digression. But they speak to God's extravagant grace! Here, Paul writes about the cosmos-unifying power of Christ's incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension. By quoting Psalm 68:18 and shifting the focus from “receiving” to “giving,” he emphasizes the Old Testament prophecy of God's victory and the New Testament understanding of Christ's work. What, according to Paul, is the result of Christ's victory and ascension? Why is that important to how we understand the purpose of our gifts? How does unity emerge?

Applying God's Word

Paul encourages us to be united around Christ's generous gift of grace, love, and peace. How does Paul describe Christ followers who are not making the efforts to grow? What things do we (personally or corporately) need to confess, let go of, or talk about in order for unity to be a priority?

Witnessing God's Word

The church has a clear opportunity to demonstrate who Jesus is through our unity in how we live and serve. What divisions are getting in the way of us being one in the Spirit? How can we work to be one, united voice in prayer and in practice?