

February 18, 2018
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
Eph. 4:14-16

“Unity through Diversity of Spiritual Gifts – Part Eight”

- 1. Walk in Unity – 4:2-16 (one paragraph)**
 - a. Unity in the Church: The Human Spirit (attitude) (2)**
 - b. Unity in the Church: The Divine Spirit (3)**
 - c. Unity in the Church: The Foundation Stones (4-6)**
 - d. Unity in the Church: The Diversity of Spiritual Gifts (7-16)**
 - 1) Who (7-10)**
 - 2) What (11)**
 - 3) Why (12-13)**
 - 4) So What? (14-16) – “As a result...”**
 - a) No Longer Children (14)**
 - b) Grow to Maturity (15)**
 - c) Every Member Working Properly (16)**

from whom the whole body,

being fitted and held together

by what every joint supplies,

according to the proper working of each individual part,

d) Built Up in Love (16)

causes the growth of the body

for the building up of itself

in love.

So what?

Discussion and Application:

1. How did you do at “speaking the truth in love” this past week? Were you receptive when others spoke truth into your life? Give examples.
2. What role does the head play in the functioning of the physical body? What happens if individual body parts decide not to do what the head wants them to do? What impact does that have on the body and its ability to accomplish what the head wants? How do we personally maintain a close connection to our Head and a sensitivity to what He wants us to do? How do we help others do the same thing?
3. According to 1 Cor. 12, the human body is not composed of one member but of **many** (1 Cor. 12:14), and those members must be **different** (1 Cor. 12:17-20). The members vary in **function** (v. 17), in **strength** (v. 22), and in **honor** (v. 23), but they must function in **unity**. Why does Paul use this imagery of the body so often in describing the church? How could you use this metaphor of the human body to “speak the truth in love” to people who say it isn’t important to faithfully attend a local church?
4. The New Testament speaks frequently about the body of Christ (Col. 1:18, 24; 2:19; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:14-16; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:30; 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Rom. 12:5). Read 1 Cor. 12-14; Rom. 12:3-8; and 1 Peter 4:10-11 and write down one or more principles / applications from each of those passages about service in the body.
5. Paul writes that we are being **fitted together** (cut precisely to come in contact with one another like a jigsaw puzzle) and are **held together** (attached to one another so we can walk in stride with one another). He then mentions joints or **ligaments**. What is the function of a ligament? What happens to our ability to walk if ligaments in our knees don’t work?
6. The word “supplies” in v. 16 speaks of supplying amply, generously, or extravagantly. What does that say about how we should employ our gifts in the body of Christ? Read 1 Peter 4:10-11 and Romans 12:8 to see how we should use our gifts.
7. A lot of people believe that as long as they are personally growing, that is enough. Eph. 4 emphatically tells us that Jesus wants the **whole body** to grow, not just the individual parts. John Calvin said, *“No growth is advantageous which does not bear a just proportion to the whole body. That man is mistaken who desires his own separate growth.”* What can we do about the attitude of *rugged individualism* that has crept into the church in America?
8. Paul brings up love again at the end of verse 16 (see also verse 15). What does this word for “love” mean? Why does Paul talk about love in the middle chapter of 1 Cor. 12-14 (a section on active use of spiritual gifts in the church) and right after talking about spiritual gifts in Romans 12? How does genuine love cause every member to fulfill their role so the whole body can grow?
9. Do you love the people at The Bridge? Is that love obvious by your active and sacrificial service?
10. Eph. 4:2-16 is about walking worthy of all Jesus has done for us (Eph. 1-3), by preserving God’s gift of unity in the church, through personal and corporate maturity. What is one specific thing you can do this week to help other members of our body to grow?