

Ephesians chapter 4 - Building up the Body 4:1-16

Even though we have the life of the trinity in us, we live in spiritual immaturity until we are willing to do the hard work of developing and creating unity in the church.

The Life of the Trinity

What is a Christian? (Eph 2)

Being a Christian is not that you are a nice person but that you have the life of God in you. It is not just a way of life. You are new (not nice). You are not just nice but renewed and you have the trinity in you.

Spiritual Gifts – these are abilities to serve one another.

What is the purpose of all our ministries? The Job of the church.

V12 – prepare God's people for works of service until we become mature. Spiritual maturity.

We are infants – that is why we need the church.

Even Paul needed the church for his maturity.

1 Peter 2:1 – we are born again which makes us Spiritual babies.

What does it mean to be a spiritual infant?

1. Not Discerning – a baby will put anything in its mouth.
2. Self-Centered – babies want what they want now! Don't want to share. Feel slighted
3. Not Stable/Wobbly – shallow attention span

Don't be shocked at immaturity of other Christians. Churches will be full of immature Christians (poopy diapers)

Don't put up with Spiritual immaturity in yourself.

Q: Are you humbler, happier, more self-controlled than last year?

Q: Do you have the courage to ask someone who knows you if this is the case or not?

How can we get out of spiritual immaturity?

It is through involvement in a Christian community. Christian unity builds maturity.

We must reflect the pattern of the triune God.

You cannot just drop in on a church and think you will grow. You need a close church community.

4:15 "Speaking the truth in love"

- Love without truth is deadly
- Truth without love is deadly.

None of us are able to keep truth and love together because of our sin. What is the solution?

- Truth – We are sinners and lost!
- Love – Jesus died for us

Jesus dying on the cross for us is a horrible insult to us.

Ephesians chapter 4 – The New Self **4:17-24**

(Take On – Put Off)

We all want to change and Christianity gives you the resources to change.

What does change mean to Christians? It means you have to ...

1. Make Decisions
2. Change from the Inside
3. Transforming your Thinking
4. Being Captivated by Jesus

Jesus was born to give us a second birth. Jesus underwent a physical birth so we can have a spiritual birth.

Making a decision: v22/v24

Put off old self – put on new self : these are conscious decisions

V17-19 (written to Gentile Christians)

1. Futility
2. Given Over

These Christians were living meaningless lives because they were separated from God. If you do not have God, everything you do in the end is meaningless.

Who am I living for? Who calls the shots in my life?

Change from the Inside:

Christianity is *not* being more moral. Many who are thinking about becoming Christians ask ...

- Will I have to stop sleeping with my girlfriend?
- Will I have to change the way I use my money?
- Will I have to forgive my sister?

The answer is “Yes”, but this is the wrong question. First you must change yourself.

About 30 or so years ago in America, if you took a survey on morality, it would align with Biblical principles. But most people were putting on social morality – doing what was expected. Inside was still empty.

Christianity vs Morality:

 Morality = being nice

 Christianity = being new

Transforming your Thinking

Do we feel like we are on probation with an ankle monitor when we become a Christian? We should feel free of guilt and sin and thankful.

Ephesians chapter 4 – Forgive One Another **4:25-5:7**

The Newness of Life

How Christianity calls you to a new life

1. Basis for Newness of Life
2. Community for a Transformed Life
3. Power to Have a Transformed Life

1. Basis for Newness of Life

V24 “Therefore ... “ Paul’s version of the 10 commandments. A list of what not to do (vices to avoid) and virtues to affirm.

Take Off	Put On
Old Self	New Self
Lies	Truth
Anger	Peace
Theft	Generosity
Gossip	Encouragement
Revenge	Forgiveness
Promiscuity	Self-Control
Drunkenness	Controlled by God’s Spirit

Signs of Having the Spirit:

1. Singing Together
2. Singing Alone
3. Being Thoughtful
4. Elevating Others (...more than self)

What makes Christianity distinct from other world religions is not the presence of moral guidelines but it is the work “ *therefore* ”. Following the guidelines is not as important as your motivation – the be a son of God. The goal of Christianity is not to be nice but to be new. The message of Christianity is a message of grace:

- God works first then we respond, instead of ...
- We work first and then God responds

2. Community for a Transformed Life

V25 – Communal nature to our behavior and sin (there is no victimless crime or victimless sin)

- Speaking the truth has the power to build up the community of believers
- Falsehood has the power to harm the community.

Our speech matters !

3. Power for a Transformed Life

V4:32 – 5:2 Jesus carried our sin – he labored for us so he had something to give.

Sarcasm can be dangerous – can be a way we distance ourselves from others. In Greek it literally means “ **to tear the flesh** ”.

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Unity! v4-6



Many Gifts:

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelist
- Pastors
- Teachers

What is the purpose of these gifts? **Service and Unity in the Faith!**

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Q: How can we get out of Spiritual immaturity?

Speaking the Truth in Love (4:15)

Ephesians chapter 4 – The New Self **4:17-24**

4:17-19 was written to Christians.

Q: Who am I living for?

Q: Who calls the shots in my life?

Change from the Inside:

Christianity is not being more **moral**, but becoming **new**.

Christianity vs Morality:

- Morality – **being nice**
- Christianity – **being new**

A Christian should not feel like they are someone on **probation**.

Ephesians chapter 4 – Forgive One Another 4:25-5:7

The Newness of Life

(Take On – Put Off)

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Q: **Why do we work?** 4:28 So we have something **to share**