

# The Summation of All Things in Christ

Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis

LESSON LX : UNITY AND DIVERSITY WITHIN THE CONGREGATION OF BELIEVERS (4:1-16)

*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (KJV)*

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, 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. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 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. (NIV)*

*Call upon you, then, do I – the prisoner of the Lord – to walk worthily of the calling with which ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of the peace; one body and one Spirit, according as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who [is] over all, and through all, and in you all, and to each one of you was given the grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, wherefore, he saith, ‘Having gone up on high he led captive captivity, and gave gifts to men,’ – and that, he went up, what is it except that he also went down first to the lower parts of the earth? he who went down is the same also who went up far above all the heavens, that He may fill all things – and He gave some [as] apostles, and some [as] prophets, and some [as] proclaimers of good news, and some [as] shepherds and teachers, unto the perfecting of the saints, for a work of ministration, for a building up of the body of the Christ, till we may all come to the unity of the faith and of the recognition of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to a measure of stature of the fulness of the Christ, that we may no more be babes, tossed and borne about by every wind of the teaching, in the sleight of men, in craftiness, unto the artifice of leading astray, and, being true in love, we may increase to Him [in] all things, who is the head – the Christ; from whom the whole body, being fitly joined together and united, through the supply of every joint, according to the working in the measure of each single part, the increase of the body doth make for the building up of itself in love. (Young’s Literal Translation)*

*“At 4.1 the tenor of the letter changes: up to now it has been basically doctrinal though including extensive liturgical passages, but teaching about God and praise to him are now replaced with concern for behaviour, though since the type of behaviour required is closely related to the previous teaching that aspect continues to appear. There is also a significant change of style in that, 4.11-16 apart, the long convoluted sentences of the earlier chapters disappear and are replaced by a crisper approach consisting mainly of brief sentences.... The paraenetic motif of 4.2f seems to disappear in 4.4-16, though as we shall see it does not do so entirely; it becomes explicit again from 4.17 onwards. In 4.17-24 [Paul] contrasts the present life of Gentile believers with their past pagan life. In 4.25–5.2 he picks on certain sins into which believers may fall and which would destroy community life, while avoiding them would build up that life. This is largely also the theme of 5.3-14 where the sins are set in the light of God’s judgement (vv. 3-7), and the need of the community is brought out to confront those who sin so that they may reform themselves. In 5.15-21 warnings on conduct are again set together, now with a reminder of the help that may*

come from common worship. 5.21-6.9 indicates the personal devotional equipment that believers need if they are to live as [Paul] sets out.” [Best, 353f] “When we received Christ as Savior we became citizens of His kingdom and members of His family. Along with those blessings and privileges we also received obligations. The Lord expects us to act like the new persons we have become in Jesus Christ. He expects His standards to become our standards, His purposes our purposes, His desires our desires, His nature our nature. *The Christian life is simply the process of becoming what you are.*” [MacArthur, 116]

## PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

**v. 1 reminds us again that Paul is a prisoner and employs one of his favorite phrases for introducing ethical instruction:**

<sup>1</sup> I call upon you (or, I beseech you, I exhort you), I, the prisoner of Christ (“I” is emphatic),

to live worthy of the calling with which you were called,

**vv. 2,3 set out in a general way how readers are to respond if the unity of the church is to be preserved:**

<sup>2</sup> with all humility (or, lowliness) and gentleness (or, meekness),

with patience (or, long-suffering),

paying attention (or, ‘bearing with, forbearing, showing tolerance’) to one another in love,

<sup>3</sup> working zealously (or, ‘making every effort, giving diligence, endeavoring, being eager’) to preserve (or, maintain, keep) the unity of the Spirit

by means of the peace that binds (or, by the bond of peace, in the bond of peace).

**vv. 4-6 pick up the theme of unity, providing a series of declarations in each of which unity is stressed through the use of the word ‘one’ and God’s total government through the use of ‘all’ (v. 4 contains no verb and simply begins ‘one body and one Spirit...’; the words ‘there is’ are often added for the sake of a smoother translation):**

<sup>4</sup> One body and

one Spirit

just as you were also called in one hope of your calling (or, to the one hope of your calling),

<sup>5</sup> one Lord,

one faith,

one baptism,

<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all

who is over all (or, above all)

and through all

and in all.

**vv. 7-16 speaks to diversity within the unity; some of what makes us differ is our gifts as distributed by the sovereign hand of Jesus Christ Himself. In vv. 7-10 Paul begins with a proof-text showing Christ has the right to dispense gifts as He wills:**

<sup>7</sup> However grace has been given to each one of us (‘but, however’ is a subtle change and not a ‘strong adversative’, what one commentator called a ‘transitional contrast’)

in accordance with the measure of the gift of Christ (or, in the proportion allotted by Christ’s giving);

<sup>8</sup> therefore it says:

Ascending on high he led captives captive (or, when he ascended on high he led captivity captive, he led a host of prisoners captive);

he gave gifts to men.

<sup>9</sup> And what significance has ‘He ascended’

unless he also descended [first] into the lower regions,

that is, the earth? (or, into the lower regions of the earth)

<sup>10</sup> He who descended is himself also the one who ascended above all the heavens,

so that he might fill all things. (or, to fill everything, to fill the cosmos, to fill the universe)

**Having earned the right to dispense gifts as He pleases, Paul shows what Christ gave (v. 11) and why (vv. 12-16):**

<sup>11</sup> And he himself gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be shepherds and teachers,

**Although there are questions on the syntax of v. 12, it most likely describes three aspects of the purpose of these gifts:**

<sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints (or, for perfecting the saints, for bringing the saints to completion)

for the work of the ministry,

for the building up of the body of Christ,

**(Those disagreeing with the above syntax believes the verse should be written as follows:**

<sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry,

for the building up of the body of Christ)

**A temporal clause ('until') further clarifies in terms of the goal, using again three prepositional phrases:**

<sup>13</sup> until we all attain (or, arrive at)

into the unity of faith and knowledge of the son of God,

into a mature male (literal; but the sense is 'to a mature person' in contrast with 'immature children' in the next verse),

into the measure (or, to the standard) of the stature (or, the age, the maturity) of fullness of Christ,

**This purpose is now described first negatively (v. 14) and then positively (v. 15). Negatively, there is a need to move away from the present immaturity:**

<sup>14</sup> in order that (hina) we may no longer (or, cease) be very young children (or, infants, babes),

tossed back and forth by the waves,

and blown here and there by every wind of teaching,

in the craftiness of men (or, in human cunning), in craftiness (or, by trickery) towards the scheming of error (or, in deceitful scheming, plotting),

**Positively we are to grow up into our Head, Jesus Christ:**

<sup>15</sup> rather speaking truth in love (or, by 'truthing'; the sense may not be limited to verbal use only)

let us grow in every respect unto him,

who is the head, Christ,

**Paul concludes by summarizing the already mentioned purposes of the growth and building up of the body, while underlining the fact that these processes have their source in Christ and require the activity of each part of the body:**

<sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body,

fitted and held together (or, joined and brought together)

through every ligament of supply (or, gives supply),

makes bodily growth

according to the activity in proportion of each individual part,

achieves bodily growth

into its own building up in love (or, for the purpose of building itself up in love).

## **RANDOM THOUGHTS**

**DEFINITIONS** — some of the ways in which chapters 3~6 are described:

- **exhortation** — language intended to incite and encourage; an utterance, discourse, or address conveying urgent advice or recommendations
- **exhortatory** — an address or communication emphatically urging someone to do something
- **hortatory** — urging to some course of conduct or action; exhorting; encouraging
- **paraenetic (or, paraenetical)** — of or relating to moral and ethical instruction or paraenesis
- **paraenesis** — an exhortatory composition

**DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN ‘DOCTRINAL / EXHORTATION’ SCRIPTURE** — *“This division of doctrine and duty is substantiated [sic] statistically in the use of the imperative. The imperative is used sixty-two times in Romans: only thirteen times in chapters 1-11 and forty-nine times in chapters 12-16 (though fifteen times with reference to greetings in chap. 16). In Ephesians the imperative is used forty-one times: only once in chapters 1-3 (2:11) and forty times in the last three chapters. Granted, there may be implied exhortations without the use of the imperative. However, in reviewing the first three chapters of Ephesians there are only three instances of implied exhortations. Two of them are in Paul’s two prayers: first, that believers might know God more intimately and thus realize that he has directed his great power toward them, implying that this power is to be appropriated for their spiritual welfare (1:17-19); and second, that believers might be able comprehend the power of Christ’s love in order to demonstrate Christ’s love for one another (3:17-19). The only other place that indicates an implied exhortation is 2:10 where believers are to walk in the works God has prepared beforehand for them. **Clearly, the first three chapters concentrate on doctrine and the last three on practice.**” [Hoehner, 499f]*

**LINKS BETWEEN CHAPTERS 1-3 / 4-6** — *“The ‘walking,’ which is the common metaphor for this way of life used by [Paul] in v 1, has been anticipated by him earlier when he reminded his readers of the good works which God had prepared for them to walk in (2:10) and the contrast of these to the trespasses and sins in which they had previously walked (2:2). Numerous other links underline the way in which this first section of the paraenesis builds on the content of the earlier part of the letter. That love is to characterize believers’ living (4:2, 15, 16) has already been made clear from 1:4, 15; 3:17, 19. The peace and unity expected from those who share the one Spirit in the one body (4:3, 4, 13) recalls the discussion and language of 2:14-18; 3:6. The language of the Church as body and Christ as head (4:12, 15, 16) takes up that of 1:22, 23. The interrelationship of the Church’s members and its corporate growth (4:15, 16) have already been in view in 2:21, and the importance of its apostles and prophets (4:11) has been stressed earlier in 2:20; 3:5. The goal of knowledge (4:13) reflects the interests of 1:9, 17, 18; 3:18, 19, while ‘fill’ and ‘fullness’ language (4:10, 13) has been employed in 1:23; 3:19. The provision of grace for believers (4:7) has been a major emphasis earlier in 1:6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8, and their hope, which is made a focus of particular attention through its links with the terminology of calling repeated from the opening verse (4:4), has already been the object of similar reflection in 1:18; cf. also 1:12; 2:12. But, above all, its main theme of the Church’s unity links this pericope with what has preceded. **For [Paul], as we have seen, the one Church out of Jews and Gentiles is both a pledge of the ultimate cosmic unity God will achieve and a witness to the hostile cosmic powers that God’s cosmic purposes are already in the process of realization (cf. 3:9, 10). If the readers are to embody such a vision in their corporate life, then it is imperative that they maintain the unity that was inherent in the Church’s creation.**” [Lincoln, 231] “In the first half of Ephesians the apostle has unfolded for his readers the eternal plan of God with its goal of summing up all things in Christ. His direct appeal in chapter 4 is based on the foundation of their being reconciled in Christ and made part of God’s new humanity. The content of his exhortatory material is regularly informed by what has been written in the earlier eulogy, thanksgiving period, and didactic sections [Note, e.g., the references to the great love of the Father for the Son (1:6) and for believers who are in Christ (1:4; 2:4; 3:17, 19), which occur in chaps. 1-3, followed by the admonitions to love (4:2, 15, 16; 5:2, 25, 28, 33; 6:24). Yet the further point needs to be made that within chaps. 4-6 theological ‘indicatives’ concerning Christ’s love are inter-coven with the ‘imperatives’ (5:2, 25; 6:23).]. The readers have been reminded of the high destiny to which God has called them, and now they are shown that the hope of this calling requires them to live lives in keeping with it. ‘Behaviour is thus seen in Ephesians as both response to what God has done in Christ, and as the proper accompaniment to the praise of God, the two themes present in chaps. 1-3’. **This is not to suggest, however, that ‘theology’ and ‘ethics’ have been placed in two separate, watertight compartments, chapters 1-3 and 4-6 respectively. Already within the first half of the letter, as our exegesis has shown, theology and ethics are closely intertwined: profound attitudinal and behavioural implications were to flow from a right understanding of the apostle’s teaching. Furthermore, in chapters 4-6, as in the case of Colossians, Paul frequently combines theological and ethical statements (cf. Col. 3:1-4:6), with the former often providing the bases for the latter** (e.g., Eph. 4:4-16, 32; 5:2, 8, 23-32).” [O’Brien, 272] “The conduct of believers that Paul addresses in these last three chapters is based on the knowledge given in the first three chapters. In other words, the revealed mystery of the union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ into one new person has practical ramifications for life here on earth. In these chapters the believer is charged to act out his or her position in a world governed by the devil (2:2; 6:12; cf. 2 Cor 4:4; 1 John 5:10). [Hoehner, 500]*

**BEGINS AS AN EXHORTATION, CHANGES TO THEOLOGY** — *“The section can be divided into two main subsections. In the first subsection (vv. 1-6) Paul launches a series of general but practical ethical admonitions based on the understanding of the church that he has developed in chapters 1-3. Paul’s readers have been called to be a new, unified people, the initial stage of God’s new creation (v. 1). Although the scope of this vision spans the universe, it is accomplished through the cultivation of such mundane qualities as humility, patience, and lovingly putting up with the foibles of others (v. 2). Paul’s readers should zealously pursue ‘unity’ (v. 3). We are prepared for some further practical explanation of what this means, but apparently prompted by his mention of unity, Paul instead breaks off his practical admonitions to give seven affirmations of the theological unity on which the church’s practical unity is based (vv. 4-6). The highly rhetorical — almost poetic — language that Paul uses has led a number of scholars to conclude that this section is derived from a traditional liturgy, perhaps used in a baptismal rite, but as the notes below explain, it is more likely that this is Paul’s own freely composed oratory. He does not return to the sort of practical, first-person singular, authoritative ethical instruction of 4:2-3 again until 4:17. As we have found at several other sections of the letter, then, the structure of the argument exhibits signs of a skillful organizational plan on the large scale, but also of spontaneous, probably oral, composition.” [Thielman, 246f] “4:1-16 as a whole does not have a clearly defined form. It begins as a piece of paraenesis introduced by ... ‘I exhort you therefore.’ The participial forms of the verbs which follow in vv 2b, 3 are also a common feature of paraenetic style. But, instead of*

continuing the paraenesis, [Paul] is led by his appeal for conduct characterized by harmony (vv 1-3) to expand on the theme of unity, first in terms of the realities on which the Church is based (vv 4-6) and then through depicting how the diversity of Christ's gifts to the Church provides for its building up and growth in love and unity (vv 7-16). This expansion means that the direct exhortation with which the passage began temporarily fades into the background to be replaced by theological assertion and has to be reintroduced in v 17 after this treatment of the Church's unity has been rounded off... Although the form of direct paraenesis does not shape the whole passage, [Paul's] depiction of the goals of the Church's unity and maturity in vv 13-15 and of the proper functioning of the Church as a body in v 16 nevertheless constitutes an indirect appeal to the readers to play their part in enabling the Church to become what it should be." [Lincoln, 224f] "4.1-16 begins (4.2f) and ends (4.4-16) with explicit exhortation. More than once [Paul] begins a subject, drops it and then picks it up again. Thus intercession begun at 1:16f is resumed at 3.14 and 3.13f picks up 3.1; 2.5 resumes 2.1. Here at 4.2f is picked up again at 4.17ff though there is no anacoluthon as at 3.1." [Best, 356]

**WALKING** — "Paul's ethical instruction in Ephesians centers largely on the metaphor 'walk'. From 4:1 to at least 5:21 the ethical teaching is structured around this verb. Note the following:

4:1: 'walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called'

4:17: 'walk no longer as the Gentiles walk'

5:2: 'walk in love'

5:8: 'walk as children of light'

5:15: 'Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise'

To a large extent, 4:1-16 provides the framework and specific theological basis for what follows in 4:17-6:20." [Snodgrass, 194] "In Ephesians the practical aspects of application are heightened by a repeated emphasis on the believer's 'walk' found in 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15. As discussed at 2:2, *Paul uses this word thirty-two times and always metaphorically, referring to conduct or lifestyle both negatively (e.g., Eph 2:2; 4:17; 1 Cor 3:3; Col 3:7; 2 Thess 3:11) and positively (Eph 4:1; 5:2; Rom 6:4; Gal 5:16). The believers' conduct is implemented not by their own strength but by the utilization of God's power mentioned in Paul's prayers in chapters 1 and 3.*" [Hoehner, 500]

**LIVING BASED UPON DOCTRINE** — "*Behaviour is thus seen in Ephesians as both response to what God has done in Christ, and as the proper accompaniment to the praise of God, the two themes present in chaps. 1-3. Gentile Christians ought to be especially responsive since, as was argued in chaps. 2,3, God has done so much for them. Yet doctrine to which behaviour is the response is not missing from the final three chapters (see 4.4-16; 4.32; 5.23-32) just as it is not wholly absent from chaps. 12-15 of Romans (see 12.3-8; 13.1-6; 14.9, 14, 17).*" [Best, 353f] "*From doctrines come morals. The relation is philosophical and the bond is indissoluble. All the modern hue and cry against dogma is really against morals. The more we reduce the number of the creed articles, the more we undermine practical religion. Neither Christ nor the apostles predicate morals on any other than a doctrinal foundation. If we are to walk worthily of our calling, we must first know the doctrine of the calling, that is, unto what we were called. And all our 'lowliness and meekness and longsuffering and forbearance toward each other, and diligent keeping of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' are dependent on the antecedent doctrines set forth, otherwise there is no force in Paul's 'therefore'.... The modern cry: 'Less creed and more liberty,' is a degeneration from the vertebrate to the jellyfish, and means less unity and less morality, and it means more heresy. Definitive truth does not create heresy — it only exposes and corrects. Shut off the creed and the Christian world would fill up with heresy unsuspected and uncorrected, but none the less deadly.*" [Carroll, 140] "The therefore of Ephesians 4:1 marks the transition from positional to practical truth, from doctrine to duty, principle to practice. Paul makes a similar transition in the book of Romans. After laying down eleven chapters of doctrine, he devotes the remainder of the book to urging Christians to live in accordance with that doctrine — to present their bodies as 'a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship' (12:1). In Galatians Paul devotes the first four chapters to explaining Christian liberty and the last two chapters to exhorting Christians to live by that liberty. That sort of division is found in many of Paul's epistles (see also Phil. 2:1-2; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:1). *Right practice must always be based on right principle. It is impossible to have a Christian life-style without knowing the realities of the life that Christ has provided. Right doctrine is essential to right living. It is impossible to live a faithful Christian life without knowing biblical doctrine. Doctrine simply means teaching, and there is no way that even the most sincere believer can live a life pleasing to God without knowing what God Himself is like and knowing the sort of life God wants Him to live. Those who set biblical theology aside also set aside sound Christian living.*" [MacArthur, 116f] "Paul now applies the doctrine that he expounded in the first three chapters. All knowledge has two components: pure and applied. It is important to embrace both components, for the exclusion of one becomes an exercise in futility. The field of medicine is a good example of this. If only purely theoretical research takes place, the public never benefits from that knowledge. On the other hand, the practice of medicine without pure research excludes the possibility of new discoveries for cures of diseases. *Thus, in theology, head knowledge alone will make little difference in individual or corporate lives, and practice without theological knowledge has the potential to lead to heretical practice. It is essential, therefore, that a proper balance be maintained.* Such a balance is modeled by Paul in his literature, for he consistently presents doctrine first as a basis for the practice on which he later expounds. In Romans, for example, after a long doctrinal discourse, Paul continues in 12:1 with the words, ... 'I exhort you.' This and similar formulations are found in his other letters (cf. 1 Cor 4:16; 2 Cor 10:1; Phi 14:2; 1 Thess 2:12; 3:2; 4:1, 10; 5:14; 2 Thess 3:12; 1 Tim 2:1; Phlm 9-10)." [Hoehner, 499] "This ethical exhortation to show the virtues required for unity is given a

theological framework and thereby linked to the first part of the letter through the introductory appeal to live worthily of their calling from God. Lives which contribute to the unity of the Church are, therefore, seen as the only appropriate response to the divine initiative in accomplishing all the blessings of salvation and to the divine purpose for cosmic unity which has its present focus in the Church. [Lincoln, 264f] “Throughout the New Testament, ethical imperatives are based on theological indicatives. Obedience is always a response to grace. God acts first, and humans respond. Just as kerygma (proclamation) and didache (instruction) cannot be separated, neither can the indicative and the imperative. Often the two blend together in the same text.” [Snodgrass, 194]

**MOST CHURCH-INTENSIVE PASSAGE IN EPHESIANS** — “[T]he nature of the church is the theme of 4.4-16, even though the word church is not used. The virtues mentioned in vv. 2f are those appropriate to this theme and the need for ‘one-ness’ which they suggest is carried on in the repeated use of ‘one’ of vv. 4-6. Vv. 7-16 continue the theme in showing how diversity may be combined with unity, though unity precedes diversity. Discussion of unity had been already present in 2.11-22, but there it was the unity of Jewish and Gentile Christians; now it is the unity of all believers irrespective of racial or religious origin. Thus the inner condition of the church is discussed in relation to individuals as individuals within it; only after this is it proper to discuss in detail the behaviour of Christians towards one another (4.17-5.14). The inner unity and strength of the community enable believers to live with one another. 4.2-16 thus sets all that follows within a corporate frame of reference.” [Best, 354] “This entire section has contemporary relevance. In fact, Ephesians contains more specific practical applications for daily life than any other NT book. Furthermore, the material presented not only applies to individual believers but also to the corporate body of believers in relationship to those outside the church. *Spiritual growth and maturity of individual believers is measured in light of the body of believers. Individual spiritual growth that is not shared with the rest of the body is not true spiritual growth or maturity. Although today individualism highly prizes independence, the NT envisions individuals dependent on the Lord and fellow members of the body in a corporate setting.*” [Hoehner, 500] “So Eph 4:1-16 concentrates heavily on the Church. In fact, no other section of the letter is so directly and intensively devoted to the Church’s life and purpose. The Church is the sphere into which the readers have entered through their faith and their baptism, the context in which they live out their calling. The major image for this community, as earlier in the letter, is that of the body (vv 4, 12, 16) and, as earlier, this image can be combined with the language of building (vv 12, 16). The Church is also the fullness of Christ (v 13), again taking up an earlier description, and in its final state can be seen as ‘the mature person.’ All this is part of a dynamic picture of a corporate entity which grows as its individual members are involved in a continual process of mutual adjustment and which is on the move toward unity, completeness, maturity, and conformity to Christ.” [Lincoln, 267] “NO PASSAGE IS more descriptive of the church in action than Ephesians 4:1-16.” [Snodgrass, 194]