

# Studies in Ephesians

## Lesson VIII

### TEXT: Ephesians 4:1-16

<sup>1</sup>As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup>Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup>Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup>There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

<sup>7</sup>But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. <sup>8</sup>This is why it<sup>[a]</sup> says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>9</sup>(What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions<sup>[c]</sup>? <sup>10</sup>He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) <sup>11</sup>It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,<sup>12</sup> to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup>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.

**Footnotes:** a. or "God" b. reference: Psalm 68:18 c. or "the depths of the earth"

# Questions for Discussion

1. Because Jesus Christ has ultimate claim over our lives, how then should we live (vs. 1)? What does the phrase in the verse 1b *mean* and what does it *not mean*?
  - a. What attitudes characterize our new life in Christ (vv. 2-3)?
  
2. Verse 3 directs us to make e\_\_\_\_\_ e\_\_\_\_\_ to keep the u\_\_\_\_\_ of the S\_\_\_\_\_ in the bond of p\_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. What situations and attitudes threaten our unity?
  - b. How does the "natural man" react to these situations?
  - c. How can the "spiritual man" respond differently?
  
3. To achieve unity, we first have to establish common ground.
  - a. What do we have in common, according to verses 3-7?
  - b. Why does unity matter, both in the context of this congregation and the larger Christian community?
  
4. God raises up gifted people to help the church build and maintain unity (vv. 7-12).
  - a. Who are they (vs. 11)?
  - b. What are they responsible for (vs. 12)?
  - c. To what end (vs. 13-15)?
  
5. Who makes the unity of believers possible (vs. 16)?