

Eph. 4:1 — Gk. *desmos*: to bind or to chain
Eph. 4:3 — Gk. *syndesmos*: that which is
bound or chained

Guard the Spirit's gift of unity to the Church — Eph. 4:1-11

- **Why we must guard the gift—vv.4-6**
 - **Because the Church's unity is derivative of God's unity and displays God's unity**

“First, the one Father creates the one family. Secondly, the one Lord Jesus creates the one faith, hope, and baptism. Thirdly, the one Spirit creates the one body.

Indeed, we can go further. We must assert that there *can* be only one Christian family, only one Christian faith, hope, and baptism, and only one Christian body, because there is only one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You can no more multiply churches than you can multiply Gods. Is there only one God? Then he has only one church. Is the unity of God inviolable? Then so is the unity of the church. The unity of the church is as indestructible as the unity of God himself. It is no more possible to split the church than it is possible to split the Godhead.”

— John Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*

²⁰"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

John 17:20-23

“Consider verse 3, in which we are told to be ‘eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’ This is a very strange exhortation. Paul first described the church’s unity as the ‘unity of the Spirit’ (meaning a unity which the Holy Spirit creates) and then argues that this unity is as indestructible as God himself. Yet in the same context he also tells us that we have to maintain it!

What can he mean? What is the sense of urging the maintenance of something indestructible, and of urging *us* to maintain it, when it is “a unity of the Spirit,” which he created and is therefore presumably himself responsible for preserving!

There seems to be but one possible answer to these questions, namely that to *maintain* the church’s unity must mean to maintain it visibly.

Here is an apostolic exhortation to us to preserve the actual concrete relationships of love (*in the bond of peace*, that is, by the peace which binds us together) that unity which God has created and which neither man nor demon can destroy.

We are to demonstrate to the world that the unity we say exists indestructibly is not the rather sick joke it sounds but a true and glorious reality.”

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Guard the Spirit's gift of unity to the Church —Eph. 4:1-11

- **Why it is hard to guard the gift—vv.7-11**
 - **Because a diverse group of believers receives and exercises a diversity of Spiritual gifts**

¹⁶But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷'''And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

Acts 2:16-18

APEST—The Gifts of Ephesians 4:11

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- **Apostolic—looks out**
- **Prophetic—looks up**
- **Evangelistic—looks around**
- **Shepherd—looks in**
- **Teacher—looks back**

How do you discern your Spiritual gifts?
wcchapel.org/cuttingroomfloor

**Search: cutting room floor on Apple
Podcast (look for the lantern logo)**

“Many organizations, and sadly, many churches today think diversity is the enemy of unity. Diversity is therefore resolved rather than celebrated. That is not unity. That is uniformity. Uniformity is not the oneness for which Jesus prayed and Paul is not prescribing uniformity in this great chapter on how the church is designed to function.

The diverse members of the body Paul is describing are not required, or instructed to sacrifice their diversity to experience the unity that is a miraculous reality in their churches.

Paul uses his body analogy to instruct the Corinthians (and you and me) that *diversity is not to be resolved but celebrated* while they are expressing their spiritual oneness as members of a healthy church of Jesus Christ.”

**— Dick Woodward
*Ten Fingerprints of a Healthy Church***

Guard the Spirit's gift of unity to the Church — Eph. 4:1-11

- **How do we guard the gift— vv.1-3**
 - **Walk—slow down**
 - **Be humble— Matt. 5:3**
 - **Be gentle— Matt. 5:5**
 - **Be patient— Prov. 16:32**
 - **Bear with one another in love**

“Better to be patient than powerful; better to have self-control than to conquer a city.”

— *Proverbs 16:32 (NLT)*

Guard the Spirit's gift of unity to the Church —Eph. 4:1-11

- **How do we guard the gift—vv.1-3**
 - **Bear with one another in love—“The gifts of the Spirit without the fruit of the Spirit leads to divisions in the body. The gifts of the Spirit manifested alongside the fruit of the Spirit leads to unity...”**
— Dale South

Guard the Spirit's gift of unity to the Church

—Eph. 4:1-11

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 - **Walk—slow down**
 - **Be humble—Matt. 5:3**
 - **Be gentle—Matt. 5:5**
 - **Be patient—Prov. 16:32**
 - **Bear with one another in love**
 - **Be eager**