

Our Foundation: Unity Provided
Ephesians 1-3

Get in your toolbox

Our Framework: Unity Displayed
Ephesians 4-5

Get in each other's homes

Our Fortification: Unity Protected
Ephesians 5-6

Get in each other's hearts

KEY VERSES

Ephesians 4:1-3

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to *walk* in a manner *worthy* of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager *to maintain the unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace.

HOW we are to protect our unity

- Pursue each other
- “Truth” each other
- Forgive each other

KEY VERSES

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to *the power* at work within us, *to him* be glory *in the church* and *in Christ Jesus* throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

WHY our unity (spiritual friendship) is important

- Our obedient pursuit of unity expresses our *gratitude*
 - Our unity magnifies God's *power & wisdom*



ACTIONS

blessed, chose, predestined,
adopted, lavished, made
known, set forth,
united, worked, sealed

GIFTS

every spiritual blessing,
glorious grace, forgiveness,
knowledge of the mystery,
redemption, inheritance

He filled us to spill us.



Our Unity In Christ

Designed by
Our Father

Eph. 1:3-10

Performed
by The Son

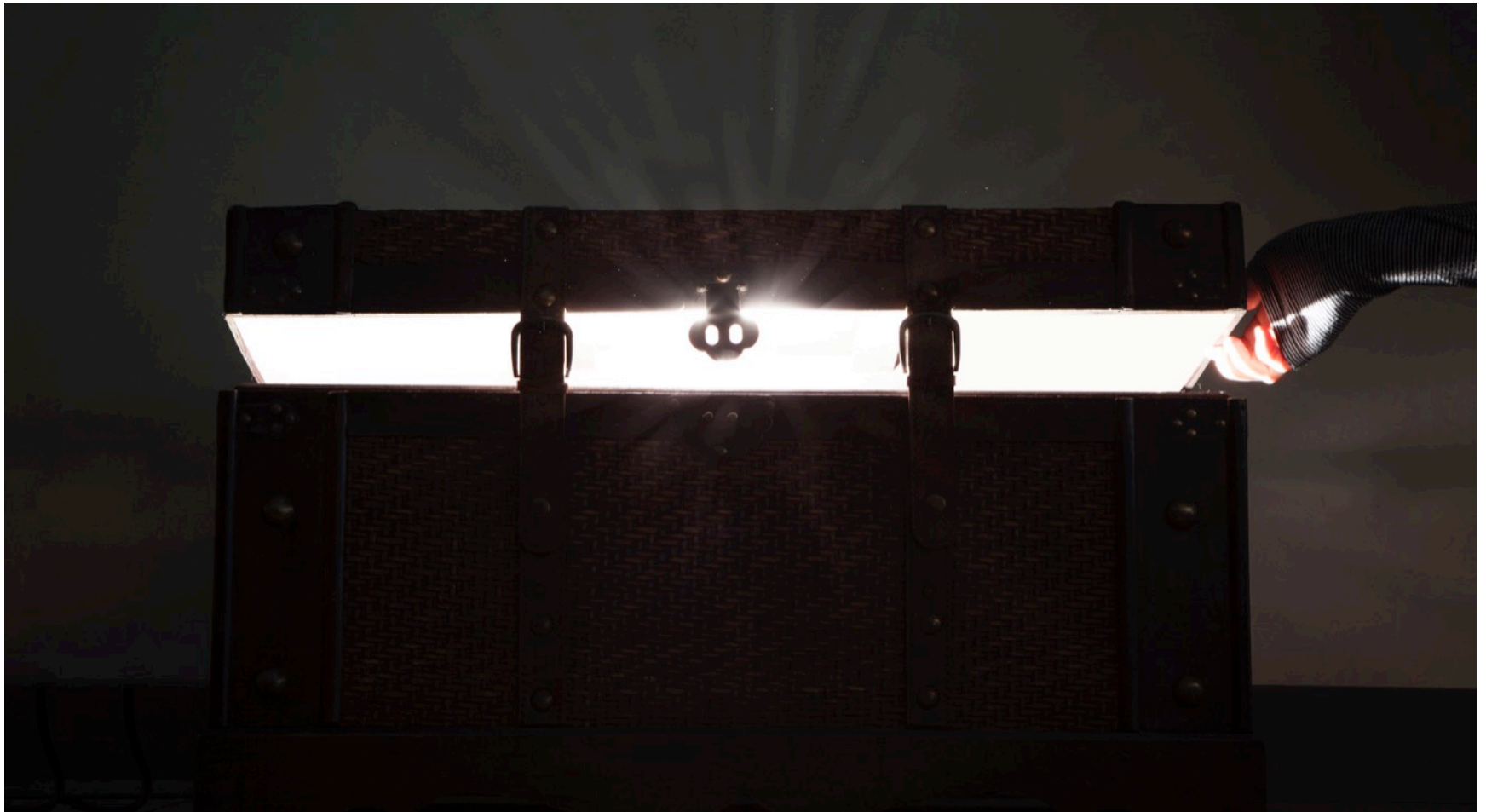
Eph.1:10-13

Sealed by
The Spirit

Eph. 1:13-14




What's provided in the toolbox of our inheritance?(Ephesians 1:18)



Paul's Prayer

That we will embrace the enormity
of resurrection power
living in us, working through us,
so that Christ will receive glory as the
Head of His unified body.

A photograph of a light-colored, weathered gravestone in a cemetery. The stone has a decorative, rounded top and is surrounded by other darker gravestones in the background. The text is overlaid in a black, sans-serif font, centered on the stone. The text describes a state of spiritual separation and alienation.

dead in sin
following the world
following Satan
disobedient
pursuing the flesh
separated from Christ
aliens
strangers
without hope
without God
far off

Restoration

Ephesians 2:14-17

- He destroyed hostility
- He built peace in place of hostility
- He made one out of two
- He created unity between men
- He restored unity between men and God
- He initiated and pursued our unity

In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. - Eph. 2:22



WHY Spiritual Friendship is a Must

- Countless aspects of His wisdom are displayed in the multi-faceted relationships within the church
- When people who have nothing in common are built together on the foundation of Christ, the church is a cosmic spectacle
- Love shared between very different people is supernatural and gives God glory.





UNITY
in
DIVERSITY

...that you, being rooted and grounded **IN** love, may have strength to comprehend **WITH** all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled **WITH** all the fullness of God.

Eph.3:17-19 (ref. Eph.2:22)



Your personal devotions really aren't personal.

There is no such thing as meaningful personal growth apart from continual reconciliation within the body.

Maintaining unity requires every member to grow personally and to strengthen bonds between us.

We are strengthened in our inner man to comprehend His greatness with all the saints.

Session 2

Our Framework: Unity Displayed

Why is unity so vital?

- Because the defining characteristic of the Trinity is unity
- Because His power works in us so that we can represent Him properly
- Because unity among believers is worship-filled obedience from grateful children



Spiritual Friendship Blueprints

(Ephesians 4-6)

- Be humble, gentle, and patient with each other (4:2)
- Be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving to each other (4:32)
- Seek biblical solutions (5:15-17 /understand God's will)
- Sing spiritual songs together (5:19)
- Submit to each other (5:20 /outward obedience)
- Respect each other (5:33 /heart posture)
- Iron out each other's wrinkles (5:26-27 /sanctify)
- Nourish each other (5:29 /actively meet needs)
- Obey authorities (6:1 /outward submission)
- Honor authorities (6:2 /correct heart attitude)
- Behave humbly (6:4 /don't provoke)
- Train children (6:4 /correct and model)
- Work with excellence (6:6 /right work with right attitude)
- Demonstrate servant leadership (6:9 /don't threaten)

Foremen & Work Crews

- Although we experience God's grace individually, He has given us specific people as gifts to help us experience it corporately.
- Their role is to help get "each part working properly" (Eph.4:16) and to "equip us for service" (Eph. 4:12)

Leaders are Members

All Members are Servants

- Leaders need *equipping*
- Leaders need *encouragement*
- Members *must mature*
- Members *must minister*

Speaking the Truth in Love

AKA

“Truthing” Each Other in Love

- We “Truth” each other by proving God’s ability to replace evil with good.
- “Truthing” challenges unbiblical thinking.
- Sometimes “truthing” comes through confrontation.
- Mostly “truthing” comes through modeling grace-filled responses.

"Truthing"

"I do this not merely by speaking gospel words to them, but also by living before them and generously relating to them in a gospel manner."

Milton Vincent

The Royal Makeover Studio

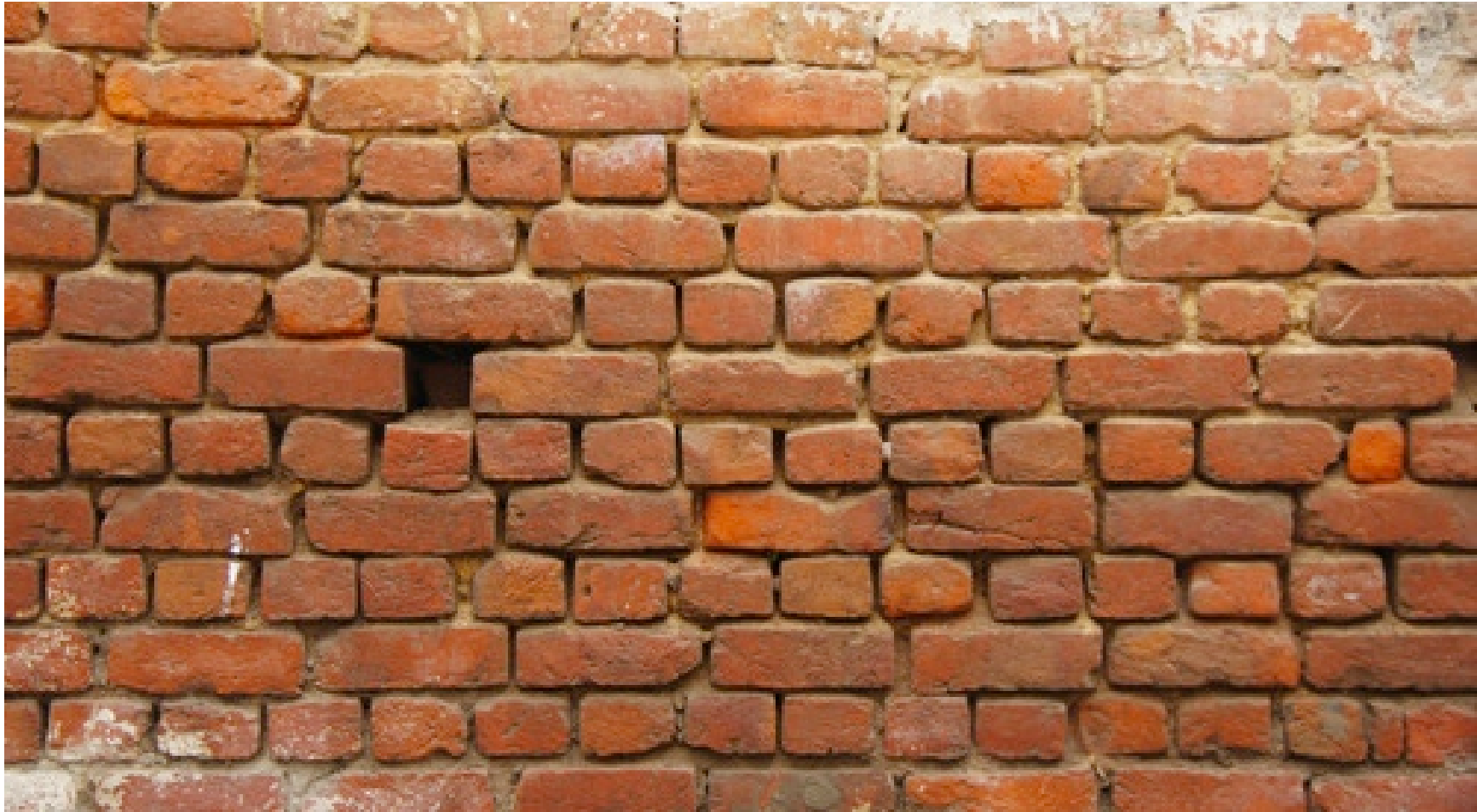
- We exchange our spiritual rags for royal robes when we change our behavior to represent our new status.
- We must demonstrate, explain, and redirect each other through spiritual changes.



Truth & Love

(Spiritual Mortar)

- Truth provides structural integrity against the winds of selfish, worldly thinking.
- Love displayed through kindness and forgiveness keeps bricks from grating against each other.
- Without properly maintained mortar , bricks shift and buildings become unstable.



Ephesians 4:16

If _____ joined and held together, equipping each other under Christ's leadership then _____ working properly and _____ growing and building ourselves up in love.



Keeping Our Work Site Well-Lit

Eph. 4:26

- Don't say it's okay when it's not (you need to be truthful and the other person needs the chance to make things right).
- Chase down the cause of your anger and keep a spotlight on it 'til it's dealt with. James 1:20, Ex. 34:6, 2 Pet. 3:9
- Deprive the devil of opportunities; (remember that anger rushes in where love is absent).
- Unity and anger don't tolerate each other. Hidden anger interferes with building each other up.

Keeping Our Work Site Well-Lit



“For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.” Eph. 5:8-9

“But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Eph. 5:13-14

Don't Complicate Truthing



Session 3

Our Fortification: Unity Protected

Get in each other's hearts!



HOLINESS

DOES NOT
HAVE A DIMMER SWITCH.



SHINE RIGHTLY.

Friends Help Each Other Shine Rightly



- Private (discerning God's will) 5:15-17
- Public (as the Church sharing music) 5:19-21
- Private (at home) 5:22-6:4
- Public (at work) 6:5-9

Invest Opportunities & Discern God's Will

-in-

Ordinary
Events

What am I doing?

Difficult
Decisions

What's the problem?

Why am I doing it?
(is God at the center?)

Why do I feel this way?
(am I spirit-controlled?)

How can I modify it?

How do I apply the armor to
this situation?



Music & Spiritual Friendship



**Our biblical *unity*
is more important
than whatever threatens
to separate us.**

UNITY AT HOME

A man and a woman are sitting on a light-colored sofa against a white brick wall. The woman is on the left, wearing a white long-sleeved top and dark pants, with her arms crossed and looking towards the man. The man is on the right, wearing a dark button-down shirt and blue jeans, looking towards the woman. The scene is lit with soft, natural light.

Mutual submission shows our reverence through obedience.

Submission makes us more lovable.

Submission makes us more lead-able.

Submission deprives enemies of ammunition.

Submission attracts people to God.

Unity Under Attack

- *Spiritual forces of wickedness* continually oppose our families and friendships.
- We are *incapable of withstanding* the onslaught alone.
- By utilizing the armor of God we *stand on His pre-written of victory.*

Our Strong Standing

- Empowerment is given to us, not done by us.
- Empowering is an on-going process, not a one-time event.
- We are to apply our gear, train for combat, and charge into battle as one cohesive unit.
(Philippians 1:27)

Combatting Threats to Unity

- Disunity originates in pride.
- Anger arises when proud hearts are offended.
- The cause of our anger must be exposed to the light of Truth. (Eph. 4:26)
- Battling lies requires reinforcements. (Phil. 4:2-3)
- Proud Christians make lousy evangelists.

The Armor of God

- **Belt of Truth:** None of the other armor can help if we believe lies.
- **Breastplate of Righteousness:** We are unprotected when we choose wrong responses.
- **Shoes of the Gospel of Peace:** Can we share the Good News properly if we won't allow it to mend our interpersonal conflicts?



The Armor of God

- **Shield of Faith:** Faith locks us to Christ, and our shields lock us together. If one is unguarded, *all are endangered.*
- **Helmet of Salvation:** We must *take captive all thoughts that stand contrary* to the forgiving love that brought us salvation.
- **Sword of the Spirit:** We can only go on the offensive when *Spirit-guided* to *sharpen and heal* using The Word.

PRAYER

Theological



Trinitarian



Transformative

Preparatory



Protective



Empowering