**Ephesians 4-6**

Today’s Summary: Today Paul reminds the Jews and Gentiles of 1st century AD and us today that we have ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, ONE CHURCH, ONE SPIRIT, ONE GOD, ONE FATHER, ONE BODY. He was pleading with them and he is pleading with us today to be UNIFIED in CHRIST through the BIBLE, which is JESUS IN THE FLESH AMONGST US. God has always begged us to seek peace and UNITY in the Church, the bride of Christ, by asking us to purge the evil from amongst us, live holy and pure, AND to FORGIVE 70 x 7 and be reconciled to one another. Love one another, especially in the Church, is His highest command.

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

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

**7**But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. **8**This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”

**9**(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? **10**He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) **11**So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12**to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13**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.

**14**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 people in their deceitful scheming. **15**Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **16**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.

Instructions for Christian Living

**17**So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. **18**They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. **19**Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

**20**That, however, is not the way of life you learned **21**when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. **22You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.**

**25**Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. **26**“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27**and do not give the devil a foothold. **28**Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

**29**Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **30**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31**Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32**Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**5 1**Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children **2**and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

**3**But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. **4**Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. **5**For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person - such a person is an idolater - has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **6**Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. **7**Therefore do not be partners with them.

**8**For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light **9**(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) **10**and find out what pleases the Lord. **11**Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. **12**It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. **13**But everything exposed by the light becomes visible - and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. **14**This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

**15**Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, **16**making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. **17**Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. **18**Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, **19**speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, **20**always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Instructions for Christian Households

**21**Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

**22**Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. **23**For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. **24**Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

**25**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her **26**to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, **27**and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. **28**In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29**After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church - **30**for we are members of his body. **31**“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” **32**This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church. **33**However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

**6** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2**“Honor your father and mother” - which is the first commandment with a promise -  **3**“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” **4**Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. **5**Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. **6**Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. **7**Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, **8**because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free. **9**And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

The Armor of God

**10**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.** **12**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13**Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. **14**Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15**and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16**In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17**Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

**18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. 19**Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, **20**for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Final Greetings

**21**Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. **22**I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.

**23**Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **24**Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.