

# Guard the Oneness

## Ephesians 4:1-6

(Illus: Lego house – Survey: What is the One Great Duty on the Inside of the Church?)

### 1. Read

Read Ephesians 4:1-6, explaining each verse

- 1)
  - o who's "**you**" – the Church – mission agency of God
  - o explain "**worthy**", putting into proper practice what you believe
- 2)
  - o **humility**: low mindedness.
  - o **gentleness**: having the strength to destroy, but using it to love... reluctance to avenge
  - o **patience**: choosing to stay. suffering long, not running away, escaping, giving up
  - o **bearing**: putting up with the faults and idiosyncrasies, knowing we have our own
- 3)
  - o **unity** = oneness
- 5)
  - o **Lord?** Jesus
  - o **Faith?** Content of faith
  - o **Baptism?** Spiritual and external sign

*Blessed be the God we serve, and His Word to us this morning*

### 2. Pray

### 3. Proposition

There's **just as great a job** to do **inside** the church as **outside**. Perhaps even greater! Remember: "significance of the church"??,... That makes the health of the church itself of first concern. Apostle "urges" this developing community of Christians, you must walk worthy/ appropriately!

car guards vs life savers  
how are you going to protect my car?  
if life guards looked like that, I'm not letting my kids in their care

one is worthy of task, one isn't

**“Walk worthy”... What is this Great Task inside the church? of which each and every one of us is responsible! and on which the work of the Church stands or falls?**

(because... often we think of our salvation purely as a private hope!)

PS

<sup>1-3</sup> ~~In v1-6 We find what this duty is, and- when we get tired or reluctant, the ultimate motivation to stand firm and never stop working at it!~~ <sup>4-6</sup> when we feel like we're cramping and want to go back to shore

#### 4. The Great Duty on the inside of the Church

internal R:M

- found in v3 (see the parallel to v1) *“I exhort you... to walk worthy... to [Guard] the [oneness] of the Spirit”*

- That is the One Great Duty on the inside of the Church? =

**“\*\*to Guard the Oneness of the Spirit\*\*”**

- o ‘of Spirit’ = that which the Spirit produces (the Spirit cannot be divided! The Spirit given for this reason. The prayer of Jesus in Jhn 17) **Ephesus**
- o **Implied:** Brokenness [lego]. (cf v11-12). The **Apostle** is **mending** the holes in the saints’

Protect!

- ~~!! Summarising the task (ch 4-6), having 1st considered the theology (ch1-3), One thing!!~~  
Guard the Oneness of the Spirit

#### - APP

- o The power of God, when we follow the word of God, for strong relationships is astounding. I believe that no other institution on earth knows what it’s like to truly be united – in the world, when people have conflict, they part ways. In the church we have heterogeneous members loving! And I’ve seen this, in church, and in the

home, between disciples of Jesus – in a way that makes no natural sense.

- But it has to be guarded. Because it's not **NATURAL** easy.

- **Guarded by Love**

how? 2 words in v3...

- First? "eager": Takes Diligence, speedily with effort. High priority (top priority?).
  - **Would you commit to prioritise the Unity of this Church?**  
that's your primary duty, in light of Glory
- Second? By the peace-bond
  - 'fetters' no option but to be bound by. "Sorry, My hands are tied" ... by peace. "ligaments" in Col 2:19 – the things that bind members to one another
  - (described in v2:)
    - **humility**: thinking less of yourself and thinking of yourself less. **Deflate that big beach-ball head of hot air and come back to earth.**
    - ... "Gentleness", "patience", "bearing with"
- **APP** >> implication – There is rife reason for the opposite (pride, anger, impatience, irritation!) Do we all know how to do these? **Yes we do! But we must tie our hands** by them, speedily for the sake of the House!

you know how often i come back to my car and can't find the guard?

vs lifeguard, at his post, eyes fixed

!! you not watching from distance. Your relationships. in it.

Fight for- **Guarded by What's Right**

- the areas where these peace-bonds are tested, 3 areas where oneness is non-negotiable! **v12ff** (to be dealt with each subsequent week)
- **united in True doctrine (14)** – not shaken by every wind of doctrine
- **united in Purity (17, 24)** – one image, Jesus Christ
- **united in Forgiveness/ Relationships (32)** – one family

ie, edification

**BUT** if I have not love, I destroy the oneness these things are building

- o ... = all vital for the Mission of the Church! ...  
But while we strive for these things, bound by love and peace

**The Great Duty on the inside of the church... to Guard the Oneness of the Spirit**

doesn't leave the believers without motivation

What about feeling like I want to forget the church, and just nurture my private relationship with Christ, after all – being in the church doesn't make me a Christian, and I'm tired of pride, or aggression, or immaturity, or irritating idiosyncrasies... I feel like I could do better without the Church...

**5. The Great Motivation This is your calling!!**

- v4: Read. In effect, the apostle urges,... *'you already understand the Hope ("just as you were called to the one hope", 1:18, 2:12, 3:20) ... but salvation is not only a private hope!'*

you can have all the excuses for...independence, isolation, absence, non commitment

**"Just as" ... Just as you were called** in one, [**so also you were called** in] **"oneness of the Spirit"** or ... "One body and one spirit..."

- Every believer here has the same hope – Heaven!, But in as much as you are called by God into that Hope, **you are called into** One Body and One Spirit.

- o (v4 translation..., not only **"there is one"** – absent verb, no "there is", but implied **"you were called into one"**
- o In exactly the same way, just as, you are certain that God has called you to an Eternal Hope, **understand that He has called you into Oneness! That's the Greatest Motivation...**
- o You cannot separate God's calling into personal and corporate – and elect which suits you. It's all or nothing. **And it's fitting, in that the great work of God is to bring unite everything under Christ (Eph 1:10!)**
- o **Read v4-6. That's the great motivation.**

Yes! Unity is Not easy, Its not natural. But neither is the Gift of God...supernatural

there is no division in the person, kingdom, truth of God, into which we are saved

- **"\*You are called\*!"** A matter of Identity. Ps, ekklesia, "the called"

- o ECF Identity Crisis [S T Logan, "Reformed means Missional" pg xi.] The local church
- o **One Great Duty: Guard the Oneness of the Spirit**
- o **One Great Motivation: God's Calling.**

- o Paul's identity, v1: **prisoner ...- of the Lord.**

I am a **free man – of the Lord.** Husband, Father, Guitarist, Writer, Speaker, Gardener, Cyclist – of the Lord. And just as I am "called individually of the Lord", I'm called together in **His One Body.** [I'm not a lego block, I'm a living stone in the house of God]. **Why will I be a peacemaker, humble, gentle, patient and bearing, in love?** This is my calling.

## 6.2 Applications internal remission

### 6.1. **We are one**

diligent,  
peace bound

- would you **commit to prioritise** your Unity with the rest of this congregation, (and what about beyond!) for the Mission of Christ through us!
- let **'Love'** describe us
- let us **'guard'** oneness diligently

### 6.2. **We are called**

- This isn't only about strong fellowship – as Jesus prayed, by our love for one another, the "World will know". Mission critical. Dominate our Indaba and all work.