

I.D.

“Ephesians – A Journey of Identification”

“I Am United”

“Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.” Ephesians 4:3-4

A. Being united with Christ challenges me to “lead a life worthy” ...

“Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God.” Vs 1

1. “Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.” Vs 3
2. “Make every effort...to always be humble.” Vs 2
3. “Make every effort...to always be gentle.” Vs 2
4. “Make every effort...to be patient with each other.” Vs 2
5. “Make every effort...to make allowances for each other’s faults because of your love.” Vs 2

B. I am united by relationship...

“For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.” Vs 4-6

1. I am united with one body by “one Spirit” who lives in me. Vs 4
2. I am united with one Lord by “one faith” and I am saved. Vs 4
3. I am united by “one baptism” by which we profess our faith. Vs 5
4. I am united by “one God and Father of all, in all, and living through all.” Vs 6

C. I am united when I share in the gifts given by Christ...

“Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.” Vs 11

“Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to

each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.” Romans 12:4-6a

“A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.”

1 Corinthians 12:7

1. The gifts are to equip God’s people.
“Now may the God of peace... equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him.” Hebrews 13:20a, 21b

2. The gifts are to do His work.
“Jesus told them, ‘This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.’” John 6:29

3. The gifts are to build up the church, which is the body of Christ.
“so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.” Romans 12:5

D. The difference between immaturity vs maturity comes through that united relationship...

Immaturity is...

1. Seen by the demands of little children. Vs 14
2. Seen by not being grounded in our knowledge and faith. Vs 14
3. Open to deceit by clever lies that sound like truth. Vs 14

Maturity...

4. Will speak the truth in love. Vs 15
5. Will be in a constant state of growth that looks more and more like Jesus. Vs 15
6. Will find my place of service and fit into the body. Vs 16
7. Will work together toward a healthy, growing, and loving body of Christ! Vs 16

E. How do you score in your spiritual maturity?

1. “Make every effort”...in unity, humility, gentleness, patience, and forgiveness.
2. Tests of Spiritual Maturity –Mike Shepherd

God’s will is for every person to experience growth and maturity as a follower of Christ. Maturity is not based on age, appearance, achievements or academics. Maturity is determined by attitude. It is your attitude that impacts your character. Without a commitment to spiritual maturity in relationships, we cannot truly fulfill Christ’s command that we love our neighbor as ourselves.

1. A mature person is positive under pressure.

Test #1 How do you handle problems?

“Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds, because the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its works so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” James 1:1-2

“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life” James 1:12

2. A mature person is sensitive to people.

Test #2 How do you treat other people?

“If you keep the royal law found in scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’, you are doing right.” James 1:12

3. A mature person has mastered his/her mouth.

Test #3 Do you control what you say?

“If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.” James 3:2

“Do not let any negative talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building up others according to their needs.” Ephesians 4:29

“If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.” James 1:26

4. A mature person is a peacemaker.

Test #4 What is your effect on others?

“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?” James 4:1

2 sources of relational conflict:

- *Selfish motives* (James 4:3)
“Only pride comes before contention...” Proverbs 13:10
- *Judgmental spirit* (James 4:11)
3 reasons not to judge—
-I am not God.
-Only God has the facts.
-Only God sees motives by the heart.

5. A mature person is a prayerful person.

Test #5 How much do you depend on God to help your relationships?

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

James 5:16

3. Spiritual Growth Assessment Process - LifeWay

June 11, 2017

“I Am Filled” Ephesians 4:17-5:20

June 18, 2017

“I Am Related” Ephesians 5:21-6:9

June 25, 2017

“I Am a Warrior” Ephesians 6:10-24