



ENOGERA BAPTIST CHURCH
Jesus changes lives

EPHESIANS: PART #2 THE CHURCH



Ephesians #11 – A Church that is Maturing (4:7-16)

“¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry...”

Ephesians 4:11-12

NOTE FOR LEADERS

This document is intended to be used as a discussion *guide*, rather than a curriculum. As small group leaders, please feel free to lead through the topic as most appropriate for your group.

HOUSEKEEPING

Things going at the moment:

- **Apologetics and the Church**
 - Date: Friday 8th of Nov, 10am-3:30pm.
 - Location: Life Centre Church, Level 3, 1642 Anzac Ave, Northlakes 4509.
 - Register & Info: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/acts-29-brisbane-event-tickets-76179475863?fbclid=IwAR0tmkcrJnVLSd3XGW8MPfYV1u60mOF-YbppA4D54DOJ3gYOR8CJHh-RUKU>
- **Alpha Course! Thursday nights – Be praying for us**
 - **Pray** – God’s Spirit to draw people and open up their hearts.



EPHESIANS #11 – A CHURCH THAT IS MATURING (4:7-16)

REFLECT

This is a time to generate some discussion by reflecting on the ideas in this week's message. Some ideas include:

- Ask the group to debrief for those who have missed the sermons on Sunday
- What stood out? Do you have any questions?
- Were there any special moments of clarity where God spoke to you clearly?

DIG INTO THE WORD

Let's dig a little deeper. Use the biblical text to discover what God reveals to us in his Word.

Ephesians 4:7-16

⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

⁹ (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

APPLY

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives. Get group members to talk about the real-life implications of the study.

1. **DISCUSS:** How are we to apply these things? Are there any immediate implications?
2. **MATURITY:** What does maturity look like? How is an adult different from an infant?



3. **MATURING IN GOSPEL SERVICE (First sign of maturity):** *Read verse 7-12*
 - a. *Talk through v7, 11 and 12 – What has been given to the Church from Christ? Why did he give them?*
 - i. *We are gifted with gifts and leaders to equip us for the work of ministry*
 - b. *Are you using the gifts Jesus has given you?*
 - c. *If we are given gifts to do the work of ministry/serving/building up the body of Christ, as a Home Group we should be encouraging one another in our giftings. Take time as a group to explore with one another what your gifts are so you can grow in them and build up the body of Christ.*
4. **MATURING IN GOSPEL DOCTRINE (Second sign of maturity):** *Read verses 11-14*
 - a. *Talk through v13-14 – Why should we pursue maturity?*
 - b. *What steps are you taking to grow your maturity by Gospel Doctrine?*
 - i. *Reading your Bible, Home Group, One to One, seeking out mature Christian mentors, good books that grow you in your faith.*
5. **MATURING IN SPEAKING TRUTH:** *Read verses 15-16.*
 - a. *Talk through v15 and 16 – What picture does it paint for how we build one another up in response to v14?*
 - b. *How fluent are you in speaking the gospel to the body of Christ?*
6. **PRAY:** *Pray through the area that spoke to you the most. Do you have gifts you're not using? Do you need to grow in gospel doctrine? Do you need help becoming gospel fluent? Pray that you'll be grown by God in these areas.*

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NOTES

Eph. 4:1–16 Unity of the Body of Christ. Paul now turns to exhortation (with three subsections in vv. 1–6, 7–10, and 11–16) based upon the truths he has been teaching—a common format for his letters, in which doctrinal truths are stated first (here, chs. 1–3), then application to life is built on that doctrine (chs. 4–6). The exhortations of Scripture become empty moralism without this gospel foundation.

Eph. 4:7–10 The Different Gifts. Paul describes diverse gifts in the church. These come from the ascended Christ.

Eph. 4:7 Grace ... according to the measure of Christ's gift does not refer to different levels of SAVING grace but of grace given to serve Christ's church. To hold an office in Christ's church (see 3:2; 4:11–16) requires a special calling from Christ himself, who rules his body as its head (see 1:22; 4:15; 5:23).



Eph. 4:8 it says. Paul cites Ps. 68:18, where the one who ascends is the triumphant Lord God. Paul sees this as referring to Christ Jesus in his resurrection as head of the church. gifts. In Ps. 68:18, the divine victor is seen “receiving gifts among men,” but Paul adapts the passage to his purposes (as NT authors sometimes do in citing the OT) to show that Christ gave gifts to his people from his spoils of victory (interestingly, ancient Syriac and Aramaic translations of Ps. 68:18 also have “gave”). The “gifts” given by Christ turn out to be the church leaders described in Eph. 4:11. The captives over whom Christ triumphed are most likely demons (cf. this theme of victory over demonic forces in 1:19–22).

Eph. 4:9 lower regions, the earth. In the incarnation, Christ descended from the highest heavens to the lowest regions (i.e., to the earth), where he suffered, died, and was buried, but where he also defeated death and rose again. He then ascended (Acts 1:9) 40 days later to be seated in the highest heavens at the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33).

Eph. 4:10 far above. Christ is the supreme head of the church who fills all things (see 1:23) with his glory, power, and sovereign prerogative to dispense gifts to his people (see 4:11–16).

Eph. 4:11 Christ gives specific spiritual gifts to people in the church whose primary mission is to minister the Word of God (v. 12).

Eph. 4:12 Those church leaders with various gifts (v. 11) are to equip the saints (all Christians) so that they can do the work of ministry. All Christians have spiritual gifts that should be used in ministering to one another (1 Cor. 12:7, 11; 1 Pet. 4:10).

Eph. 4:13 The diversity of gifts serves to bring about the unity of Christ’s people. Mature manhood extends the body metaphor used earlier for the church and contrasts with “children” in the next verse (see Heb. 5:11–14). Some people think that the learning of doctrine is inherently divisive, but it is PEOPLE who divide the church, whereas the knowledge of the Son of God (both knowing Christ personally and understanding all that he did and taught) is edifying and brings about “mature manhood” when set forth in love (Phil. 3:10). The work of the gifted ministers (Eph. 4:11) was to proclaim and teach the word centered on Christ rather than on speculative or eccentric teachings of their own (cf. 1 Cor. 2:2). measure. Christ Jesus is the standard of the maturity to which the church must aspire. Christ’s fullness is the full expression of his divine and human perfection (see Eph. 1:23; 3:19; Col. 1:19; 2:9).

Eph. 4:14 children. Immaturity in the truths of Christian doctrine makes the church like gullible children tossed helplessly by the waves and wind of cunning and deceitful schemes of false teachers (1 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 4:1–3; Jude 4; Rev. 2:2).

Eph. 4:15 The truth must not be used as a club to bludgeon people into acceptance and obedience but must always be presented in love. The truth leads the Christian to maturity, which is defined here as growing up into Christ. As head, Christ leads, directs, and guides the body (see 5:23; 1 Cor. 11:3).

Eph. 4:16 joint. Paul continues the body metaphor to describe the church’s maturity. Every member (i.e., every believer, viewed as a limb, or unit, in Christ’s body) plays a crucial role in



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this growth. In love. There is no Christian maturity or true Christian ministry without love (1 Corinthians 13), and every act of love in the name of Christ is valued and remembered by him, as each part is working properly (illustrated in Eph. 4:25–32; cf. Matt. 25:31–43; 26:6–13).

REFERENCE:

Developed with the help of the following:

- ESV Study Bible, Crossway.
- NIV Zondervan Study Bible.