

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Ephesians: Overcoming Our Insecurities In Christ
Part II: The Believer's Practice Based On His Secure Position In Christ, Ephesians 4:1-6:24
A. Relating Graciously Toward Fellow Christians
(Ephesians 4:1-6)

I. Introduction

- A. A significant challenge in the Church is that of relationships even between believers: numerous times the New Testament authors emphasize our need to relate well to one another, cf. 1 John 2:7-11; John 13:35.
- B. However, living by the sinful nature, i.e., in "carnality", blocks such endeavors (1 Corinthians 3:3), and Church History together with current local history is full of evidences of sad brotherly disunity!
- C. To counter this problem, Ephesians 4:1-6 supplies a reason for relating well to one another (as follows):

II. Relating Graciously Toward Fellow Christians, Ephesians 4:1-6.

- A. Paul began to apply the great teachings of Ephesians 1:1-3:21, asserting that he as a prisoner of the Lord in behalf of his readers' spiritual welfare (Eph. 4:1a with 3:1-13) was admonishing them to walk worthy of the calling they had received of the Lord, Ephesians 4:1b.
- B. In view of the great positional blessings they had received in trusting in Christ as Savior as named in Ephesians 1:1-3:21, that implied the need for the godly behavior as explained in Ephesians 4:2-3:
 - 1. We are to be **humble** with one another, Ephesians 4:2a. Whether we be Jew or Gentile (Ephesians 2:11-17), of high or low station as this world views it, we alike have access to the Father by the same Holy Spirit Who **graciously** seals us (Eph. 3:18; 1:13-14), so we must be humble toward all.
 - 2. We are to be **gentle** toward each other, Eph. 4:2b NIV, ESV. Each of us is vulnerable to pain due to harshness by others due to the effects of sin in our past, but God's grace toward as noted in Ephesians 1:1-3:21 calls us to guard each other's vulnerability to more hurt by our being gentle with one another.
 - 3. We are to be **long-suffering** with one another, Ephesians 4:2c KJV: the Greek word is **makrothumia**, implying "patient holding-out under trial", Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament, 1973, p. 196; U. B. S. Greek N. T., 1966 ed., p. 671. Differences in heritage noted in Ephesians 2:11-13 creates tensions if we live in the power of our sin natures (1 Corinthians 3:3), so we must suffer long with such tensions, placing a high value on others around us regardless of our heritage variations!
 - 4. We must be **forbearing** with one another, Ephesians 4:2d: the Greek word is **anecho**, to "endure, bear with, put up with" one another in tolerating differences that irritate due to human limitations; Ibid., U. B. S. Greek N. T.; Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 1967, p. 65.
 - 5. As we perform these behaviors in love (Ephesians 4:2e), we are to **endeavor to keep the unity created by the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace**, Ephesians 4:3.
- C. Briefly recalling the position all believers have in Christ, in Ephesians 4:4-6, Paul mentioned key realities that call us to try to keep this unity with humble, gentle, long-suffering and forbearing efforts (as follows):
 - 1. There is only one true spiritual body, the Church Universal, Ephesians 4:4a. Thus, we need to seek as much as possible (Romans 12:18) to live in unity with each other in Christ.
 - 2. There is only one Holy Spirit of God Who indwells every believer, Ephesians 4:4b; 1:13-14. Thus, we must seek as much as is possible (Romans 12:18) to live in unity with other Spirit-indwelt believers!
 - 3. There is only one hope of our calling, the hope of attaining the glory of God in heaven when every believer is eventually glorified, Ephesians 4:4c in light of 1:3-3. We must then seek to be unified now.
 - 4. Finally, our Christian faith has only One Lord, one true doctrinal faith, one true water baptism (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 633), One God and Father of all, Who is above all, through all and in all of us believers, making it imperative that we try to be unified with one another now, Ephesians 4:5-6.

Lesson: *Based on our position in Christ, we believers must peacefully seek to keep the unity created by the Holy Spirit with other believers in humble, gentle, long-suffering, forbearing expressions of love!*

Application: *Actually, it is not possible to unite with ALL other believers in fellowship since SOME are so BAD, we MUST BIBLICALLY PULL BACK from them (2 Tim. 3:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14). Yet, our standing in Christ demands that we TRY as much as is POSSIBLE (Romans 12:18) to live in unity!*