

Cultivate Reflection Guide

Different: A Different Unity

Pastor Matt Brown | October 29-30, 2022

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It can be hard to stand up for what's different, so if we want to live differently, we need to see life through a new lens. The apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians is a reminder and a challenge to us that we live differently because we belong to Jesus.

Our Reflection Guide is a tool to help you grow spiritually wise, relationally kind and emotionally healthy. Use it to start a REAL conversation in community or to cultivate God's word into your life through personal bible study. Choose the questions that most encourage you to reflect and respond to what we're learning. Pair it with your bible, a journal or any resource that helps you learn. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

Read: [Ephesians 4:1-7 NLT](#). When a verse begins with "therefore," we need to look back and learn what it's *there for*. Because God's infinite love strengthens us and makes us whole [3:18-19], and because in His mighty power He can do more in us than we can even ask [3:20-21], Paul begs us to walk worthy. How does the life described in the opening verses of Chapter 4 look different from what you're experiencing in the world around you?

Reflect & Respond:

1. Christian unity is different and **does not mean:**

- we will never have conflict
- individual opinions/ideas/feelings do not matter
- we overlook sin to keep the church together
- evil is covered up to protect the church

Share your thoughts on this perspective of unity. How does it encourage you? What does it teach you that you didn't realize before? Does it align with your experiences among believers and the Church?

2. Christian unity is different because it requires **individual humility**.

- [Read Ephesians 4:2-3 NLT](#). Are you known as someone who is gentle and practices patience? Do you make allowances for other's faults? Would others say you are a person who unites others for good?
- When we know better, we do better. Praise God for the goodness you see in yourself, then ask Him to show you where growth is needed. Where in your life do you need to make more of an effort to pursue unity?

3. Christian unity is different because it creates **unique relational challenges**.

- [Read 1 Corinthians 4:5 MSG](#). What happens when you jump to conclusions before the evidence is in? How do you respond physically [body], emotionally [mind] and spiritually [to God]. How does that impact your relationships with others?
- What would it look like for YOU to respond differently SO THAT you can be a person of unity? Be specific and strategic. If I want to pursue unity I need to _____ [pause and pray, believe the best, put faith over feelings, have an honest conversation, control my thoughts, bite my tongue, forgive, etc.]

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for loving me so much that you call me to a better life – a life of humility, patience, kindness and honesty. Forgive me for the times I've run ahead of you and let my emotions get the best of me. Help me to instead run toward you and allow my faith to strengthen, lead and guide me. I want to walk worthy of the call you've placed on my life as I commit to walk with you and lead others to you. Amen.

Dig Deeper Opportunity

[Read 2 Timothy 2:24-25 ESV](#). What we do with Jesus in our lives has eternal consequences – not just for us, but for others. How does this verse challenge you to live SO THAT others not only see Jesus in you, but want to know Him for themselves? Is there anywhere or with anyone in your life that you need to be especially careful to get this right?