

Ephesians 4 (GOD's Word Translation)

1 I, a prisoner in the Lord, encourage you to live the kind of life which proves that God has called you. 2 Be humble and gentle in every way. Be patient with each other and lovingly accept each other. 3

Through the peace that ties you together, do your best to maintain the unity that the Spirit gives. 4 There is one body and one Spirit. In the same way you were called to share one hope. 5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over everything, through everything, and in everything.

7 God's favor has been given to each of us. It was measured out to us by Christ who gave it.

8 That's why the Scriptures say: "When he went to the highest place, he took captive those who had captured us and gave gifts to people."

9 Now what does it mean that he went up except that he also had gone down to the lowest parts of the earth? 10 The one who had gone down also went up above all the heavens so that he fills everything. 11 He also gave apostles, prophets, missionaries, as well as pastors and teachers as gifts [to his church]. 12 Their purpose is to prepare God's people to serve and to build up the body of Christ. 13 This is to continue until all of us are united in our faith and in our knowledge about God's Son, until we become mature, until we measure up to Christ, who is the standard. 14 Then we will no longer be little children, tossed and carried about by all kinds of teachings that change like the wind. We will no longer be influenced by people who use cunning and clever strategies to lead us astray. 15 Instead, as we lovingly speak the truth, we will grow up completely in our relationship to Christ, who is the head. 16 He makes the whole body fit

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together and unites it through the support of every joint. As each and every part does its job, he makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

17 So I tell you and encourage you in the Lord's name not to live any longer like other people in the world. Their minds are set on worthless things. 18 They can't understand because they are in the dark. They are excluded from the life that God approves of because of their ignorance and stubbornness. 19 Since they no longer have any sense of shame, they have become promiscuous. They practice every kind of sexual perversion with a constant desire for more. 20 But that is not what you learned from Christ's teachings. 21 You have certainly heard his message and have been taught his ways. The truth is in Jesus. 22 You were taught to change the way you were living. The person you used to be will ruin you through desires that deceive you. 23 However, you were taught to have a new attitude. 24 You were also taught to become a new person created to be like God, truly righteous and holy.

25 So then, get rid of lies. Speak the truth to each other, because we are all members of the same body. 26 Be angry without sinning. Don't go to bed angry. 27 Don't give the devil any opportunity [to work]. 28 Thieves must quit stealing and, instead, they must work hard. They should do something good with their hands so that they'll have something to share with those in need. 29 Don't say anything that would hurt [another person]. Instead, speak only what is good so that you can give help wherever it is needed. That way, what you say will help those who hear you. 30 Don't give God's Holy Spirit any reason to be upset with you. He has put his seal on you for the day you will be set free [from the world of sin]. 31 Get rid of your bitterness, hot tempers, anger, loud quarreling, cursing, and hatred.

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32 Be kind to each other, sympathetic, forgiving each other as God has forgiven you through Christ.