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# The Scrolls



Studies for families in Belonging, Becoming, and going Beyond

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This issue is dedicated to Dr. Howard G. Hendricks (1924-2013), who was affectionately called "Prof" by more than 10,000 students he taught over 60 years at Dallas Seminary. Prof taught God's people how to study the Bible so they might "live by the book." I ran across this endorsement for *The Scrolls* that he so graciously wrote years ago:

*I have given my life to studying the word of God and challenging others to be students of the Bible. Nothing excites me more than to see God's people discover him through their personal involvement in God's book. In all of my travels, I haven't found a better tool to assist people in their study of the word of God than The Scrolls. It is theologically sound, intellectually stimulating and gets to the heart of practical application. If you want to go deeper in your study of the Bible and the God who wrote it, try The Scrolls. You won't be disappointed.*

## HOW CHURCH WORKS

### "HOW TO LEAVE" EPHESIANS 4:1-6

#### This Week's Core Competency

**Humility** – I unconditionally and sacrificially love and forgive others. I choose to esteem others above myself. Philippians 2:3, 4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Trying hard to be humble, like trying hard to be patient, is in the words of the Preacher in Ecclesiastes "a chasing after the wind." The very moment you think you've arrived you realize you haven't. As a nerdy mathematical friend of Philip Yancey once expressed it, "the humble are a self-swallowing set; when you become conscious of belonging, you're immediately excluded" ("Humility's Many Faces," [www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/014/37.96.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/014/37.96.html)).

Still the Apostle Peter tells us, "be humble" (1Pe 3:8), and the Apostle Paul commands us emphat-

ically, "be completely humble" (Eph 4:2). So what can we, who take the apostles' words seriously, do? Answer: we can train ourselves to be humble. Think of it this way—we may never *become* humble, but we can learn to *practice* humility in routine acts of service in which we put others first. Humility isn't thinking less of ourselves; it's thinking less *about* ourselves. Obsessing over what we aren't makes us as self-absorbed as those who obsess about what they are. Humility is first and foremost a matter of serving others.

With this Peter would most certainly agree. In 1 Peter 5:5 he tells his readers, "All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'" The Greek verb the apostle used, translated "clothe" in most versions, is a vivid one derived from a series of words implying clothing that is tightly wrapped, rolled up, or knotted. The word pictures one donning a slave's apron tied on tightly so as to leave his body free for vigorous service. Jesus' example obviously left an indelible impression on Peter, for his choice of words clearly amounts to an allusion to the Upper Room when Jesus took up the menial task of washing the

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**"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."**

— C. S. Lewis

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disciples' feet. After which, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (Jn 13:12-15).

Humility isn't the expression of a negative self-image. Humility is an ongoing choice to credit God, not ourselves, for our spiritual gifts and natural abilities and then to use those gifts and abilities to serve God and others.

## For Discussion

Every passage is about something; every passage has a *subject*. Every passage says something about its subject. Every passage has a *complement*. Read Ephesians 6:1-4. If the *subject* of this passage is "living up to God's calling," identify its *complement*. What does Paul say about "living up to God's calling"?

Every time you read a passage try to answer two questions: what is the *subject* of this passage, and what is the *complement*? What is the writer talking about, and what does he say about what he is talking about?

Or . . . Humility was not considered a virtue in the ancient world. Discuss why you think it is or isn't valued in our day.

# day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

## Ephesians 4:1-6

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (NIV(c)1984)*

## Cf. another translation

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (ESV)*

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

\* Box "then" indicating *result* in v. 1.

\* Highlight "I urge you" in v. 1.

\* Circle "to live" in v. 1.

\* Circle "calling" in v. 1 and "called" (2x) in v. 4.

\* Bracket "in love" in v. 2.

\* Bracket "of the Spirit" in v. 3.

\* Bracket "of peace" in v. 3.

\* Number each "one" in vv. 4, 5.

\* Underline each "all" in vv. 5, 6.

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day **2**

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Paul calls himself "a prisoner for the Lord." Why?
2. Describe the *significance* of "then" ("therefore" in most translations) in verse 1.
3. The life of believers and their calling are related. How so?
4. Identify *four* virtues of life lived the way Paul urges.
5. Identify the *goal* of life lived that way.
6. What makes you think that unity is *key* to understanding this passage?
7. Paul says there is "one body and one Spirit." Why not one body and one faith?
8. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" go together. How so?
9. In verse 6 "all" may refer to "all *things*" or "all *believers*." Which do you think better fits the context?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about the sense in which God is "over all and through all, and in all."

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## day 3

# EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Verse 1 marks the beginning of the second major division in Paul's letter. Apart from the opening salutation (1:1, 2) and closing greetings (6:17-20), Ephesians can be divided into two major parts. In the first (1:3-6:21), the apostle describes the believer's calling or position in Christ Jesus. In the second (4:1-6:20), he describes the appropriate conduct for a believer in Christ. Warren W. Wiersbe puts it this way, "All of Paul's letters contain a beautiful balance between doctrine and duty, and Ephesians is the perfect example. The first three chapters deal with doctrine, our riches in Christ, while the last three chapters explain duty, our responsibilities in Christ. The key word in this last half of the book is *walk* (*live* NIV; 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15), while the key idea in the first half is *wealth*" (*The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:34).

What's more, 4:1-6, which is one seventy-one word sentence in Greek, can be divided into two parts. Paul exhorts believers to preserve the unity of the body (vv. 1-3) and then illustrates how the three persons of the Trinity serve as the basis of this unity (vv. 4-6). One author summarizes Paul's thinking this way: He "begins with the exhortation to the readers to live worthily of their calling, an exhortation grounded in the first part of the letter and one which soon focuses in the appeal to maintain the unity of the Spirit (11 1-3). This leads on to an assertion of the unifying realities of the faith on which such an appeal is based (vv 4-6), which makes use of confessional material" (Andrew T. Lincoln, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 42, *Ephesians*, 225).

The apostle begins by telling believers to live up to their calling. God has called them into a relationship with his Son. Once they were dead in their transgressions and sins (2:1), but he made them alive in Christ (v. 4). He saved them by grace through faith to do good works (vv. 8-10). As Gentiles, they were once far away from those blessings promised the Jews in their covenants (v. 12), but he brought them near (v. 13) and Christ made them one with Jewish believers (v. 14) in order to create one new man out of the two (v. 15). Consequently, they were no longer "foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with

Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone" (vv. 19, 20). In a nutshell, they had been called into the blessings of salvation and into the privileges of membership in God's family. Therefore, they had to live in an appropriate manner.

Then he goes on to explain that the goal of a life worthy of the calling believers have received (v. 1) is "to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (v. 3). One writer clarifies the structure of the following verses while at the same time mentioning what it takes to accomplish this goal. "The exhortation of v. 1 continues not with imperatives but with two prepositional phrases ["with all humility and gentleness, with patience"] and two participial clauses which function as imperatives ["bearing with one another in love" and "making every effort to keep the unity"]. These admonitions 'lead in an ascending line to the goal to be aimed for—preserving unity'" (Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, PNTC, 276). The importance of the four virtues Paul mentions in verse 2 for the preservation of unity goes without saying. The Spirit produces unity in the body; peace is the bond, the glue, which preserves that unity. While the Spirit produces unity in Christ's diverse body, its members must preserve it and not undermine it. When peace is displaced by conflict fueled by pride, harshness, impatience, and intolerance, unity is undermined. Selfish Christians, who behave out of "personal ambition or vain conceit" (Php 2:3), indifferent Christians, who look out for their own interests and not the interests of others (v. 4), insensitive Christians, who always have a bone to pick with others, short-tempered Christians, who blow up easily, and intolerant Christians who disrespect others all weaken the bond of peace and thereby threaten the unity of the Spirit.

Paul stresses the importance of unity in verses 4-6 by his sevenfold use of "one" as he explains its basis in the Trinity. He states there is one Spirit, one Lord, and one God and Father of all. One body of Christ, the church (Eph 5:23; Col 1:18, 24) is appropriately associated with the Spirit since he is the one who forms it (1Co 12:13) and through him it has access to the Father (Eph 2:18). The one hope to which all believers are called is the hope that one day God will unite all of creation under Christ's headship in the

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kingdom age (Eph 1:9, 10). Believers will take part in that earthly reign of his. One faith and one baptism are appropriately associated with the Lord Jesus since relative to him believers are saved

through faith and identified through baptism. Supremacy over all believers, through all believers, and in all believers is appropriately associated with the God and Father of all who believe.

## *The Message of the Passage*

*Live up to your calling in Christ by making sure you preserve the unity of the body, the church, that reflects the unity of the Trinity.*

### day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

### **“How to Leave”**

(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

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# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 1 **prisoner for** Lit., "prisoner in the Lord; cf., "prisoner for the Lord" (NIV, NET, NLT, ESV); "prisoner for serving the Lord" (NLT); "prisoner because I serve the Lord" (GNT). The phrase likely stresses Paul's union with Christ. "Just as the whole of his Christian life is 'in the Lord', so his being a prisoner comes within the same sphere of Christ's lordship" (O'Brien, 274). The book of Ephesians is one of four "Prison Epistles" (i.e., Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians) written by Paul during his first imprisonment at Rome from A.D. 60-62.
- v. 1 **then** Gk. *oun*. Cf., "therefore" (ESV, NET, NRSV, NKJV, NLT). "The conjunction [*oun*] draws an inference or a result from what precedes . . . It is not necessary to choose whether it refers to the prayer or the portion which precedes the prayer. It aptly refers to both since the prayer simply concludes Paul's previous statements. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for Paul to use this conjunction along with [*parakaleo*] (Rom 12:1; 1 Thess 4:1; 1 Tim 2:1; cf. also 1 Pet 5:1) after long doctrinal sections in order to draw inferences from the preceding discussion. Therefore, this conjunction is drawing an inference from all the preceding chapters of Ephesians" (Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 502).
- v. 1 **urge** Or, "exhort." "Most of the versions translate the word as 'beseech' (AV, RV, ASV), 'beg' (RSV, NRSV), 'urge' (TEV, JB, NIV, NJB), or 'entreat' (NASB). These translations seem a little too mild, implying Paul is pleading for a favor. Thus, although the verb can have more than one English meaning, it seems the context demands the primary idea of exhortation" (503). It marks the transition to a new section as in 1 Thessalonians 4:1 and Romans 12:1.
- v. 1 **live** Lit., "walk" (ESV, NKJV, NASB, HCSB). The Gk term [*peripateo*] is used metaphorically here.
- v. 1 **calling** "In the present context, the reference is not only to salvation by election and adoption by the Father (cf. 1:4-5), but also to their union into one body, the church. Therefore, the call to walk worthy of the calling refers not only to the individual believers but also the corporate body of believers" (Hoehner, 505).
- v. 2 **humble/gentle** Lit., "with all humility and gentleness" (NET, ESV, NRSV, NKJV). "The first two graces are closely related: they are joined by the one preposition 'with', while the 'all', which is characteristic of Paul's style in Ephesians, is applied to both nouns and underscores how necessary he considers these ethical qualities to be in the lives of his readers" (O'Brien, 276).
- v. 2 **patient** Lit., "with patience, bearing with one another in love" (NET, ESV, NRSV, NKJV); this prepositional phrase is parallel with the previous one. "These prepositional phrases define the attendant circumstances of the believer's walk in accordance with his call . . . the present context gives them an imperatival force" (508), which explains their translation in the NIV. "Patience' is that long-suffering ['bearing with one another in love'] which makes allowance for others' shortcomings and endures wrong rather than flying into a rage or desiring vengeance" (O'Brien, 278).
- v. 2 **bearing with** I.e., putting up with or enduring other believers' differences; cf., "forbearing" (KJV; NEB). It means "fully accepting them in their uniqueness, including their weaknesses and faults, and allowing them worth and space" (Lincoln, 236, 37). "In other words, differences between believers are to be tolerated" (Hoehner, 509).
- v. 3 **Make every effort** Lit., "making every effort" (NET). The participles "bearing with" (v. 2) and "making every effort" function as imperatives (O'Brien, 278; Hoehner, 510).
- v. 3 **of the Spirit** Grammatically, a genitive of author, originating cause or producer (Hoehner, 511, 12), which "signifies a unity that God's Spirit creates and therefore not the readers' own achievement, yet they are exhorted urgently to maintain it" (O'Brien, 279).
- v. 3 **of peace** Grammatically, a genitive that is either epexegetical, "the bond that consists in peace," or appositional, "the bond which is peace" (Hoehner, 513). In either case, conflict is a threat to the unity of the Spirit.
- v. 4 **one hope** Cf., 1:10, 18. "It seems best to see this in two stages. The initial stage refers to the present time, which is based on Christ's work on the cross (1:7; 2:16) and his exaltation (1:20-21; 2:6-7) . . . The ultimate stage speaks of the time yet future when God is going to unite all of creation under Christ's headship in the fullness of time, the eschatological age of Messiah's rule to which all creation looks forward" (Hoehner, 224).
- v. 5 **one faith** Opinions are divided over whether this refers to *objective* faith, what is believed by Christians (e.g., O'Brien, 283), or to *subjective* faith, the exercise of faith in Christ by all Christians (Hoehner, 517). Either way, it is true that all Christians have one faith.
- v. 5 **one baptism** Water, Spirit, both, neither? (Water) "At that time [water baptism] was a more obvious common mark of identification of Christians than it is now, when it is celebrated in different ways and often only seen by those in the church" (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Eph 4:5). (Spirit or both) Spirit baptism is what joins believers to the body of Christ, and "much of Paul's teaching on baptism elsewhere in his epistles does not make sense unless the notion of spiritual union with Christ, at least, is in view" (O'Brien, 284). (Neither) "A third option that needs to be considered is that it refers metaphorically to the believer's baptism into Christ's death, speaking of the believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection" (Hoehner, 518).
- v. 6 **all** The reference is more likely to believers (personal) rather than things (cosmic). Paul does not normally speak of God as the Father of all things but as the Father of all believers (Hoehner, 519).
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## Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

This past November our family spent Thanksgiving at my in-laws' East Texas farm. On the day it rained, we worked for hours putting together a complex puzzle. My daughter and I find it very hard to walk away from an unfinished puzzle so we worked late into the night. Just as we were about to finish - it happened. We realized we were missing a piece! After a thorough search of the entire house, we resigned ourselves to the fact that our puzzle would be incomplete. It's amazing the difference one small missing piece makes. It takes all of us to complete the big picture. Our text today speaks of the unity that should exist in the body of Christ. Because of the reconciling work Jesus did for us on the cross, we can be connected to each other in peace. There are things that just go together. Sit down with your family sometime this week and brainstorm a list of all the things you can think of that go together (peanut butter and jelly, milk and cookies, Mickey and Minnie). At the end of the list put your family's name and Pantego Bible Church. Your family is an important part of the body of Christ. What a privilege it is to be serving Him and doing life together with you in God's church!

### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Eph 4:1-6, Ac 4:1-31

1. What 4 characteristics does Paul say believers should have in Eph 4:2?
2. Fill in the blanks: Make every effort to keep the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit through the bond of \_\_\_\_\_. Eph 4:3
3. According to verse 6, who is over all and through all?

### What Do You Think

1. On a scale of 1 to 4 (1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=a little more, 4=a lot) rank yourself on the following: Am I humble? \_\_\_\_\_; gentle? \_\_\_\_\_; patient? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why might these characteristics be important for keeping unity in the church?
3. What can you do to keep peace in your family and with friends?

### What R U Going To Do

Our core competency this week is humility. Humility causes us to think of others before ourselves. Come up with a way to serve someone this week but do it secretly! (ex: Do someone else's chore in the house, or leave an encouraging note). Humility doesn't try to get attention for good deeds and goes a long way in promoting peace!

## MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Humility - Choosing to make others more important than me

Memory Verse

Acts 2:47 "praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

## KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC \_\_\_\_\_ and Verse \_\_\_\_\_. Family completed **Say** \_\_\_\_\_ **Think** \_\_\_\_\_ **Do** \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

*2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians*

*6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

**Tom Bulick** (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. He and his wife Ruth have been married forty-five years and have one son, Zach.

**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).