

Sunday, March 30, 2025

The Unity Of The Spirit And Growing Up Into Christ

This is the eighth in a series of sermons through the book of Ephesians, and today we will be going through the first half of chapter 4. We've reached a major division in the epistle, the first 3 chapters focusing heavily on doctrine, and chapters 4-6 focusing heavily on practice. If you study a language, you might learn the difference between indicatives and imperatives. Indicative statements do things like state facts or describe the reality of things. Imperative statements are commands. Chapters 1-3 have been almost entirely indicatives, with the focus being on the reality of what God has done for us, ultimately to the praise of His glory (it's not all about us!) Chapters 4-6 contain dozens of imperatives, to tell us what we are expected to do in response. This pattern is very common in scripture (e.g., first God redeemed Israel out of Egypt; then He gave them the law). You'll note the epistle doesn't stop after chapter 3 with a statement like "Therefore, since God has done all this for us, and God is sovereign so nobody can thwart His predestined plan, you can just go ahead and sit back and relax. Let go and let God." Nor does it begin at chapter 4, jumping immediately into commands. Both doctrine and practice are essential. Any other view is unbalanced, unscriptural and unchristian.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:1-16)

Verses 1-6 are about the unity of the Spirit. Verses 7-10 are about the ascended Christ who gives gifts to the church. And verses 11-16 are about the purpose and result of those gifts.

The Unity Of The Spirit (verses 1-6)

The passage begins with a “therefore.” He’s stating the logical conclusion of everything that he just said in chapters 1-3. Because God chose, adopted, redeemed, raised us from spiritual death, set us in heavenly places, made peace, joined us into one body, etc. Because Paul has been earnestly praying for them to know and experience the power and love of God. Because God has elected us “that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” (1:4). Because we are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” (2:10). Because of all these things and more, the result should be a particular way of life. But that type of life is not automatic – it requires work on our part. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12). This is why Paul must beseech us “that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” He could have given an apostolic command here, but instead, he “beseeches.” He’s encouraging and instructing them. He wants them to know how much he cares for them, and how his heart’s desire is for them to live a life that is pleasing to God. The fact that he is a prisoner while writing it adds a bit of gravitas to the matter – he himself loves and trusts the Lord so much, and obedience to Him is so important, that he’s willing to suffer as a prisoner.

The word “walk” is a very common metaphor used in the scripture, and it refers to our manner of life. In fact, Paul will use this metaphor repeatedly throughout Eph. 4-6. To walk “worthy” does not mean that we make ourselves worthy or meritorious of going to heaven. Another translation might be “in a manner becoming” or “appropriate.” The word refers to bringing a scale into equilibrium. On the one side of the scale, we have our vocation (our calling). On the other side of the scale, we have our behavior. Our behavior should be in balance with our calling. We’ve been called not to be alone but to be part of the church (Church = “ekklesia” = “called out ones”). We once walked “in trespasses and sins” (2:1-2); we’ve now been called to be children of God who live holy lives, so we should live holy lives by the power of God dwelling in us. This is the general exhortation that will overshadow the rest of the book – that is, that we should live our lives in a manner worthy of the calling with which we’ve been called.

Having given us the general rule, he goes into specifics, and the first one has to do with the unity of the church. Why would unity be the first thing? For one thing, he spent quite a bit of time on the topic in chapters 1-3. Ex: joining Jews and Gentiles together – “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” (2:15). It’s also what all history is headed toward: “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.” (1:10). The

church plays an important role in that. If He is going to “gather together in one all things in Christ” it seems that it would sound a rather sour note for the body of Christ to be in disunity.

Paul identifies four characteristics that we need to have to keep the unity of the Spirit. The first is “all lowliness.” This is a humility of mind, where you esteem others better than yourself (Phil. 2:3). If you think truly of yourself, you’ll think lowly. It’s how you should always be in the fullest degree possible –all times, places, situations, etc. The second is “meekness” which denotes gentleness or mildness. It is not weakness – Jesus was meek, but not weak. The word was historically used to describe the training or domesticating of animals, leading some people to describe it as “power under control.” You have control over your spirit and know when it is appropriate to exercise power, be angry, etc. You may have identified that these are the two characteristics that Jesus uses to describe His heart – “I am meek and lowly in heart.” (Mt. 11:29). We’re supposed to be like the Lord Jesus, beloved. The third is “longsuffering.” This is patience, endurance, perseverance, waiting on God. The fourth is “forbearing one another in love.” This doesn’t mean that we need to tolerate brazen or habitual sin, but it means putting up with or tolerating the foibles, weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, differences, etc., of other people in the church...especially when they are annoying or abrasive to you. And it’s not a begrudging “putting up with.” It’s something you do because you love them and have concern for their well-being. Forbearance without love will end in resentment, bitterness, and anger.

These four things aren’t just nice-to-haves. They are necessary for the body to function in unity. Together, they are the polar opposite of: pride; ambition; contentiousness; self-aggrandizement; being short-tempered, argumentative, contemptuous, overbearing; always looking for a fight, debate, argument; censoriousness; flyspecking; focusing on others’ sins but not your own; impulsiveness; browbeating; striving over words; lording over; threatening; coercing; attributing worst motives and intent; impatience; suspicion; envy; etc. Any of those things is devastating to unity. If people perversely behave in these ways to try to force or dictate or manipulate a unity, all they’re going to do is ensure that there will be no unity.

So, the exhortation is “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” “Endeavoring” means to give all your effort to it; be diligent and conscientious about it; make it a top priority. “Keep” means to guard, preserve, maintain. It is called the “unity of the Spirit” because it comes from the Holy Spirit. It is there because the Holy Spirit indwells all of us, joining us together as one. It’s part of the fundamental nature of what the church is. This isn’t a matter of gathering a bunch of disparate people together and rooting out differences and disagreements so you can create unity – it’s a matter of being branches in the true vine (John 15). You may not have looked at unity in this way before. We’re not being told to create it – we’re being told to maintain it. The implication is that it’s something that requires hard work to maintain and is easy to lose. The way we maintain it is “in the bond of peace.” A

“bond” is something that binds together - think of a chain or a fastener on a garment. Peace is what holds us together. Again, if you deviate from the four prerequisites in verse 2, there will be no peace, and where there is no peace, there will be no unity. This is a matter that’s very near and dear to the heart of Jesus – you only need to read John 17 to see that.

This is not a worldly notion of “peace and unity at all costs” or ignoring doctrine to keep everything light and frothy. We can’t adopt false doctrine or practice or indulge delusions under some foolhardy notion of “peace and unity.” Ex: you have to believe chapters 1-3 before any talk of unity. But when issues are addressed, peace is maintained by addressing them with the proper spirit. The unity of the Spirit is an organic, essential, vital thing that already exists, and it’s our job to live in such a way that we don’t mess up this priceless gift. If your way of interacting with the body breaks the peace, the most likely culprit is that there’s an ego issue - a sinful deficiency in your character when it comes to lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearance in love. In those cases, when you come in with a contentious and divisive spirit, even if you’re “right,” you’re wrong. God hates people who sow discord among the brethren (Prov. 6:19). It’s Satan’s design and desire to introduce strife and division.

After giving the exhortation, he abruptly goes into a seven-fold list of “ones” (v. 4-6). You’ll note that each Person in the Trinity is represented here. The message is that the unity of the church is grounded in these realities, including being grounded in the unity of the members of the Trinity. If there’s any deviation from these things, there can be no true unity in the church.

- *One body.* This is the church. The one body of all the redeemed of God, past, present and future. It’s a single body that spans all the ages. Of course, this reality is represented to the world through the existence of local, visible churches. If you realize that you’re part of a single body, each part working toward the same grand end, that should end all petty rivalries, self-seeking, etc. He’s gone to great pains to demonstrate, e.g., that there isn’t a Jewish body and a Gentile body – there is one body; one new man. Creating or perpetuating those divisions is fatal to the unity of the church.
- *One Spirit.* There is one Holy Spirit, and it is by His work that we are born again. This is the only way to be incorporated into the one body. The details of how He goes about regenerating each of us will vary, but this one thing is true of all who are in the body – we have been born of the Spirit. He indwells each of us individually and the church collectively, thereby uniting us to one another. If there is no Spirit, the body is dead.
- *Called in one hope of your calling.* We’ve each been personally called from having no hope to sharing in the same hope of an eternal inheritance. The one body hasn’t been incorporated by the one Spirit for no reason – there’s a future to this. The church is the mechanism through which God calls out a people to perfect and eternally dwell with Him in glory. There will be no division in heaven – we’re all headed to the same glorious end. That is a great motivator to keeping the unity of the Spirit now.

- *One Lord.* There's only one Jesus Christ. He is utterly unique - nobody else is like Him. And He can't be divided ("Is Christ divided?" – 1 Cor. 1:13) – He is what He is, and if you don't take Him as He is (that is, as the whole Christ), then you're not really part of the one body. He is the one body's one Lord, one Savior, one Redeemer, one Mediator, one Husband. He and only He died and redeemed me – nobody else did that or could do that. It is by being united to Him that we are united together.
- *One faith.* This one has generally been taken as either the body of doctrine that we believe ("the faith"), or the fact that we all have faith in the same one Lord. The message here is that there is one way to salvation, and that is through faith in the one Lord. This is how God saves people, and this is how God has always saved people. (Rom. 3-4). Once you start relying on your own works, or once you've denied the one Lord in whom we have faith, you've denied this fundamental doctrine.
- *One baptism.* Those who have this one faith in the one Lord are all baptized into Christ (Rom. 6). That is, we're incorporated into Him; we belong to Him. We're all baptized into one body by the one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). This is the reality of those who believe, with immersion in water being the outward act that represents this internal reality.
- *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* "All" refers to those who are in the body of Christ. He is our God and Father; we are united together as His children. "Above all" refers to His supremacy. He's the one who elected us, predestinated us, adopted us, etc., all according to His good pleasure and to the praise of His glory. His supreme plan and purpose is to "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (1:10). How can we not do everything we can do to keep the unity of the Spirit when we know this is His ultimate purpose? "Through all" means He works through us with great energy to accomplish His plan. "In you all" means that we are His habitation (2:19-22, Jn. 14:23).

The Giver Of Gifts (verses 7-10)

He's been talking about unity, but now he's going to address it from a different angle and talk about the diversity within the church. Unity does not mean uniformity - it is through a diversity of gifts that God preserves unity. In the church, there is a true unity in diversity. The Lord Jesus Christ sovereignly gives each member of the church a particular measure of grace. "Grace" in this verse does not refer to saving grace; rather, these are gracious gifts given to the members of the body for the proper functioning of the church. He determines who gets what gifts, at what times, and in what measure. There are many implications to this reality:

- Every member of the church, without exception, is important and has a function. You might not think you're important to the church, but you are. Every gift, no matter how big or small, is from Christ, and is valuable to the body. Remember, the gift was given to you, not for your own benefit, but for the benefit of the body, and for the glory of God.

- You can't force someone to have a gift that they don't have. You can't have unfair expectations or make unfair comparisons. You can't assume that whatever gift you have is the best gift and then judge other people by that standard, setting yourself up as the prime example. You can't domineer over people with an attitude like "you better figure out what your gift is, and if you don't, I'll figure it out for you."
- You may not see how another person's gift is particularly helpful. But these are sovereign gifts distributed by the ascended Christ! He didn't check with you before He assigned the gift; you don't see the whole picture across time and space, but He does.
- There is no room for pride or envy. You must recognize that it is not a product of your own skill or intellect. Nor should you arrogantly claim gifts that were never given to you.
- Each child in the family is different. Irrespective of differences, each is still a child.
- Your gift is one among many gifts. You aren't the only one with a gift. Your gift is limited to whatever measure Christ has given you; don't overestimate yourself. You have a responsibility to do your part, but also a responsibility to not think you have to do it all.
- There is a real danger of redefining your sins to be "gifts." A good example is zeal. Jonathan Edwards: *"there is nothing that belongs to Christian experience that is more liable to a corrupt mixture than zeal."* You might justify and excuse a lot of your sins by rebranding them as the gift of "zeal" and you being a "zealous defender of the truth."
- Instead of starting off with "what is my gift?" and going on a quest for it, a better approach might be to interact with and minister to the body. Whatever grace the Lord Jesus has given you will come to light, whether or not you're even able to identify it.
- Beware of using diversity of gifts as a cloak to cover laziness or to fly under the radar.
- Just as bodies grow and develop, gifts may change over time to suit present circumstances. That could be in the individual, or in the whole body. Ex: there is a completely different set of gifts in the young adults in the body than when I was a young adult. I don't have any right to say "back in my day..." But I can plead with you that your duty is to exercise your gifts to the full measure that Christ has given you.

After laying down this principle of Christ giving each one of us grace, Paul launches off into a discussion of the ascension of Christ. He refers back to Psalm 68:18: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them." He is telling us that Christ is the fulfillment of what is said in this Psalm. When He ascended, He received gifts in order to give them. Leading captivity captive is a reference to a triumphal march – it is the Lord Jesus Christ, in His ascension, leading a train of vanquished foes behind Him (sin, Satan, death, hell). Paul tells us that in ascending, Jesus must have "descended first into the lower parts of the earth." The eternal Son of God left His place in glory to be incarnated and born of a virgin - an unborn baby is "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." (Psalm 139:15). He descended to take care of all the enemies that stood between His people and eternal life. He descended so that

He might die (another way that the term “lower parts of the earth” is used in scripture – Psalm 63:9). There was no other way to redeem us. And having risen victoriously, He ascended back to where He came from, far above all heavens. The picture is utter victory – victory over everything from the lower parts of the earth, to the highest height above all heavens. And why? So that “he might fill all things.” At a minimum this means that He sovereignly fills us with gracious gifts and blessings (where we lack, He supplies), and by extension fulfills His purpose through His church. The main point is that because of the work that He did on this earth, He is now in a position to sovereignly distribute gifts as He sees fit.

The Purpose/Result Of The Gifts (verses 11-16)

This same Christ, this one who has triumphantly ascended, is the one who “gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.” Those distinctions have been addressed in other sermons, but the big picture is that this is a representative sample of the types of gifts that Christ has given at this or that time as He’s seen fit. It seems that He’s given particular gifts to these men, and the men themselves have been given to the church to shepherd and teach. The main point is that it is the ascended Christ who appoints these men to perform these functions, and the ultimate goal is the growth of the church as a unified body. Christ did, after all, say, “I will build my church.” (Mt. 16:18).

These men were given “for the perfecting of the saints.” This word “perfecting” appears only here in the NT and means “equipping” or “preparing.” It was used historically in medical contexts for the straightening or setting of a broken bone, and elsewhere for furnishing a room or preparing the weaving materials to create a garment. I understand this to mean that a primary function of the elders in the church is to preach and apply the Word so that the body is mended and aligned and equipped for something. There is similar language here:

**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word...
(2 Timothy 3:16-17, 4:1-2)**

And what is the “something” that the saints are being equipped to do? “The work of the ministry” and “the edifying of the body of Christ.” The word “ministry” simply means “service” and the “work of the ministry” means that it requires action on your part. The word “edifying” means to “build up” as when a building is erected. To build up the body of Christ means to cause the body to grow and develop spiritually. So, these men are given to the church so that they might equip the saints to do the work of serving one another with the intent that the

body would be built up. Do you see what your membership in the body of Christ means? You're part of a body. You have great privileges and responsibilities to serve and edify.

So, this perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ will be a continual process until we come to (i.e., arrive at, attain, reach) three things:

1. *The unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.* Here we are back at unity. "The faith" here is talking about the doctrines that we believe, particularly what we believe when it comes to Christ. We have not yet attained this unity. There are certainly some foundational truths that a person must believe before they can be called a "Christian." (Don't make the fatal error of substituting knowledge in your head for grace in your heart). But there are many areas where we do not have the same level of understanding or clarity, and that reality requires a heavy dose of humility and patience. Likewise with knowledge of the Son of God. We know Him by experience to different degrees. A complete "unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God" is a thing that is yet future, but it should still be our aim, and the more mature we become the more this unity is there. But even Paul himself hadn't attained a perfect knowledge of Christ! (Phil. 3). So be careful about judging whether or not a person is saved by using your current level of understanding and knowledge of Christ as the standard.
2. *A perfect man.* The reference is to an adult man (as opposed to a child; see v. 14). A fully grown, mature, fully developed man. This is talking about the church reaching completion. Only God knows the number. We're not there yet, but there is a day coming when He will "present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:27). Remember, the church is a temple that is currently under construction.
3. *The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* This can be summarized as "Christlikeness." We will continue to be edified and grow until we attain Christ's full height, so to speak. Christ in all His fulness is the standard of measurement. This ties to the previous "perfect man" because it's only when each of us has grown to what God has appointed us to be that the body will be completed, and it is only at that time that the body will measure up to the fulness of Christ. Another aspect, remember, is that the church itself is the "fulness" of Christ – Christ has determined that He, as our Mediator and our Head, will not consider Himself to be complete until the church is complete.

Moving on, the rest of the passage expounds those three things. Verse 14 expresses things negatively, and the implication is that we, even now, are like children in many ways. Paul even includes himself by using the word "we." Children often overestimate their ability and underestimate their weakness and ignorance. The more the church is edified (built up) the more mature we become. But there remain elements of instability ("tossed to and fro" by waves) and gullibility ("carried about with every wind of doctrine"). Paul piles up many words

here to represent false teachers as deceitful, well organized and intentional, just like their father, Satan. The word translated “sleight” means “dice playing” and references someone playing with loaded dice. They’re tricky, subtle, crafty, malicious, etc. These winds of false doctrine have been blowing from all directions for thousands of years. They seem to repeat themselves, repackaged under different names. Time would fail to try to address all of it, but I’ll say two things. First, it seems to be universal that the false teaching will attack Christ in some way. It takes the attention away from Him and makes it man-centered, redefines Him, robs Him of His glory, replaces Him, etc. Second, the way to be armed against a counterfeit is to intimately know the real thing. Given the current state of the world and the hostility at every level, and the fact that this sermon is about unity, one example that seems relevant is to beware of Satan’s counterfeit unity. This would be the kind of thing you’d find in church ecumenicalism or school/work DEI programs. They have in common that they’ll kick Christ to the curb, because He divides; they’ve found a better way to unify people than His way.

Instead of being children, we are to grow up into Christ in all things. The manner in which we do that is by speaking the truth in love. This would be as opposed to the false teachers in v. 14. They speak lies in craftiness and deceit. We are to speak the truth in love. Note the context – it is especially important that we do this when addressing false teaching. Ofttimes, truth is sacrificed for a so-called “love” or love is sacrificed for a truth that might be doctrinally precise, but is chillingly arid, uncaring towards the people you’re talking to, and devoid of love. The latter of these, incidentally, is where the Ephesians ended up – “thou hast left thy first love” (Rev. 2:4). Both truth and love are essential. To speak the truth in love is not some vague “be nice to everyone.” There’s nothing “nice” about what Paul just said about the false teachers in v. 14. But he didn’t say that out of spite or hatred or indifference to peoples’ souls. Love is not weak, and sometimes it hurts. Sometimes it requires you to rebuke someone. One other aspect of this that I want to drive home is that the bare act of stating a fact is not love! Wrangling with someone because you want to be right and win an argument is not love...even if every word you’re saying is true! How often have you justified a sinful interaction with someone by saying something like “if they were one of God’s elect, they wouldn’t be offended at the truth”? Hold to the truth but watch your spirit! Remember the four attributes from the beginning of the sermon (lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance in love) and let those color all your interactions, and you will be speaking the truth in love.

The goal here is to grow up into Christ, our Head. “Growing up” is a process. We are to grow more and more like Him. In one sense, we are already in Christ – in another sense, we need to grow more into Him. The message is: stop being children and grow up! This is to be done “in all things.” That means to grow up in all aspects of spiritual life – all the doctrines of the scripture (not just some of them), intellectually, emotionally, etc. A child is supposed to develop in all areas, and if he only develops in some, you have a problem on your hands.

The final verse tells us how this growth happens. We grow into Christ, but as our Head, He controls and directs the growth. He is both the source and the goal. He joins us together, as a master stonemason skillfully plans and assembles a structure so that every stone fits perfectly. We're compacted (knit together in unity). And how does God do this? He does it through the interaction of the members of the body with one another! It is done by "that which every joint supplieth." "Joint" means touch or contact or connection and refers to the points of contact in the body. We're all distinct, but we're all necessary to this process. It is through these connections that we have with one another that energy and vitality flow through the body. To translate this as "joint" is ok, but it might help you to think of it as a "connection" or a "path" like the nervous system. It starts in the head, and travels through these channels that connect the body together. It is the "effectual working in the measure of every part" which is supplied in superabundance through these connections. He's gone full circle now and is tying us back to verse 7 – "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." He's given each of us a unique and vital function and a particular measure of grace, and we exercise that grace according to the measure that He's given us when we interact and connect with one another. When we do that, we are involved in an effectual work – an energetic work that produces an effect. The effect is that the body is held together, and the body increases (i.e., it grows – this is the way that we grow into Christ). We grow as we are held together, as opposed to growing individually apart. Ultimately, the body grows unto the edifying of itself in love. That is, the body builds itself up in an atmosphere of love. All of this is done at the direction and by the power of the Head.

I hope you see what it means to be a member of the body, and that you'll look on the other members of the church with a bit more affection, understanding and appreciation. Remember that this is Christ's church, and it is He who distributes gifts among us. I also hope you see that everything that this chapter is talking about requires that you not be a lone ranger – you must be an active part of the body; the members of the church were never intended to sit by passively. Individualism might be popular in this society, but it's a sign of immaturity. The emphasis of this passage is on the growth and maturity of the body. Drifting away and separating yourself doesn't just hurt you; it hurts the whole body. Make sure you're not hurting the body. The church was designed to operate as a community of people who interact with and minister to one another. It is vital that we speak often one to another and exercise our gifts in service and edification of one another. It is how the body maintains its close-knit unity, but unity is not an end in and of itself - it is how the body grows up spiritually into Christ. The body won't grow properly if each member isn't working according to the measure of grace he has and doing it "in love." If you feel that a spirit of lethargy or stagnation has descended on the body, certainly pray that the Spirit would revive us again. But we're also responsible to walk in a manner worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called. "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever." (Psalm 28:9)