

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 4:17-19

Message 67
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INTRO: This is the last message on the first part of the practical section of the book of Ephesians which is 4:1-16. It deals with the unity of the church. God provided some very crucial people to bring about this unity. Verses 11-12 say:

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

I believe the apostles and prophets of the Church, those that provided the NT for us ceased when the NT was completed. From there, evangelists, pastors and teachers have continued, having been supplied with the complete NT. I was going to give you a history of what happened to the early apostles and prophets, but my message got too long. Let me just say almost all of them were martyred. I'm not sure we would so readily call ourselves apostles or prophets today if premature death was the most likely outcome.

We are in the last message on the first part of the practical section of the book of Ephesians. We have been looking at the call to walk in unity. I believe that what is viewed as unity among churches today is far from the unity expressed in this passage. Only when individual believers are matured spiritually can there be any real unity between churches.

In the last message we looked at the purpose for edifying believers negatively and positively in Ephesians 4:14-15 which says. The negative is in verse 14:

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

The positive is in verse 15:

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ -

A mature believer will not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. He will recognize the trickery of men and their cunning craftiness and deceitful plotting. Those who are not matured properly are always in this danger. Because the teaching of doctrine has been downplayed in the Church for so long that we have become susceptible to the seeker friendly way of doing church and from there many have morphed into the emergent church.

With regard to the words, 'speaking the truth in love' we said it was more like 'holding the truth' in love or more literally, *truthing* life; living in truth. And when we learn the truth and then live the truth we will not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but we will grow up in all things into the living Head of the Church, Christ.

And now, having looked at this purpose negatively, we will look at it positively. So let me read the negative and positive together now to get the flow. Here is the negative:

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

And now here is the positive:

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ -

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

4) The purpose 4:14-16

b) Positively (15-16) cont'd

We had looked at verse 15 in the previous message and we now go to verse 16. It says:

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the

body for the edifying of itself in love.

To begin with let me give a quote from D. Martyn Lloyd Jones. He was a medical doctor and our passage has to do with the body. He says of our passage: "This is undoubtedly one of the most complicated statements the Apostle Paul ever wrote. It is interesting to note that some of the commentators of the past, indeed some of the Fathers of the early church, had the temerity to suggest that Paul became somewhat muddled for once, and that his heart or imagination ran away with him as he piled phrase upon phrase until he forgot what he had written at the beginning of the sentence" (257).

I gave that quote partly because you may have a difficult time following the message this morning. You will not be able to think of other things and be able to understand what Paul is giving here. Our text is hard to simplify. So I encourage you to think this morning. I see this verse as a summary of this whole idea of unity in the Church in the previous verses.

We go to the beginning of the verse. When it says, 'from whom' it is speaking of Christ, as it is connected to the previous verse. He is the head and the whole body is joined to Him. On December 3, 1967 the first human heart transplant was done. I was 16 years old. I would have had very little understanding of the Bible, but at that time I wondered how a person who had somebody else's heart would think. I guess I understood from the Bible that a person's heart is where the mind is because of the way the Bible speaks of the heart. Well, to my surprise, they were still the same person.

Later I learned that the Bible uses the term "heart" to express the most vital part of our spiritual being. Both God and the devil want our heart, and that means our mind. Now the mind functions by the physical brain, not by the heart. There are various claims of head transplants, although I do not know how much is true and did not have the interest to study it out. But if this can ever be done, it will not truly be a head transplant, but a body transplant. Why is that? Because the head is the head of the body. The head does not belong to the body, the body belongs to the head. Christ is the Head of the Church. Every Christian belongs to Him.

Now notice the connection between verse 16 and the previous verses. The believer is to be edified, verse 13 till we come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. We are to become Christ-like. This is so that we should no longer be tossed to and fro, meaning we should not fall for all kinds of doctrines; but rather, by living the truth in love we may grow up in all things into our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole body grows through that which every joint supplies for the edifying of itself in love.

Christ is the head, and all the rest of believers make up the body. It is not quite clear where the shift takes place from dealing with the local church and then the universal church. But it seems to me that here, at least, the subject is the universal church. Christ is the head of every local church but in the larger sense He is the Head of the universal Church,

and I think that is what is referred to here. The whole body is joined together and it is knit together.

Now we note that the whole body is joined, and knit together by that which every joint supplies. We will look at the word "joint" later. I think what is in view here is ligaments, and not joints. But both have to do with connecting bones. So consider now the bones of the body. Take the bones out of the body and the whole thing crumples together a useless blob. The bones are the framework. But if they were all solidly fused together, it would be one rigid body that is not going to move. Let me recommend the book, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*. If you study each part of man, say the skin, or the bones, you will be brought to marvel again and again.

Now the bones are the framework of the body. So let us look at the word translated "joints." To quote Jones again and to add to what I quoted earlier, he says: "We come now to ask how all this is brought into being and how it is maintained. The answer is found in one of the most difficult of the Apostle's phrases, namely, 'by that which every joint supplieth'. The difficulty arises in the word 'joint', because we instinctively think of the word *joint* in the way in which I have already been using it, as a ball and socket fitting together to form a joint. But this new term has a somewhat different meaning and could well be translated 'band' or 'connecting link'. In other words Paul is saying that these bands not merely unite us together. They do so, but they do something much more important; it is through these bands or connecting links

that the supplies of life and energy pass to every part of the body. Actually it is misleading to read 'which every joint supplieth' because the phrase gives the impression that it is the 'joint' which does the supplying. But that is not so. The supply does not come through the joint but through the 'band'" (259-260).

It was reading his comment that caused me to do a lot more research, even researching some of the anatomy of the body, and through that study I came to think he missed something that is not a medical issue. It is a grammatical issue. When I work on these passages I diagram them grammatically and seek to put each word in its grammatical function. I believe the words of our text, '...according to the effective working by which every part does its share...' do not connect to the verb 'supplies' as the wording order of our text wants to suggest, but to the verb 'causes'. This makes a total difference in how the verse is interpreted and clears up a huge difficulty.

Here is how the verse reads: "...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." It sounds as though what every joint supplies is according to the effective working of every part. That causes a very big problem for interpretation.

I recommend the prepositional phrase, 'according to' should be attached to the verb 'causes' rather than to the verb 'supplies'. The verse would then read like this: "...from whom the whole body, joined and knit

together by what every joint supplies, causes growth of the body according to the effective working by which every part does its share, for the edifying of itself in love."

The Question is this: Does the supply of what the body needs for growth come through these bands, or does it come through every part of the body doing its share? And I believe it is the latter. The whole body causes growth of itself according to the effective working by which every part of the body does its share, thus building itself up in love.

So Jones connected it to the verb 'supply' and then interpreted like this: "The supply does not come through the joint but through the 'band'". He also says, "In other words, the bands to which Paul refers are the channels through which the supply of life and nutriment and energy passes to all the various parts of the body." Maybe some medical doctor will listen to these messages and correct me. However, the bands, or ligaments, which is what I understand Paul meant here, do not supply the energy. They give stability. But the energy is supplied by all the other parts doing their fair share.

But also, from a grammatical point of view, that does not seem to me to be the point Paul is trying to make here. So note our verse. It says that the body is joined and knit together. I understand we are born with somewhere around 270 bones at birth and eventually we have only 206. That is because some of our bones fuse together as we grow older. So bones are both joined together by fusing.

But if all the bones fused we would not be agile any more. So

the rest are joined by bands or ligaments. I understand that bones that have moving joints are held together by strong bands called ligaments. So tissue unites to bones and that is what knits and holds the bones that need to move at joints together. The joints make the body versatile. But the bones must be knit together at the joints by tissue. And when you study any part of this, it is most amazing. We simply take it all for granted, but it is extremely complex. Now our whole body depends on the framework of the bones in order for us to function.

I checked what ligaments are on the internet. One article said:

Ligaments and tendons are both made up of fibrous connective tissue, but that's about where the similarity ends.

Ligaments appear as crisscross bands that attach bone to bone and help stabilize joints. For example, the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) attaches the thighbone to the shinbone, stabilizing the knee joint.

Tendons, located at each end of a muscle, attach muscle to bone. Tendons are found throughout the body, from the head and neck all the way down to the feet. The Achilles tendon is the largest tendon in the body. It attaches the calf muscle to the heel bone. The rotator cuff tendons help your shoulder rotate forward and backward.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/ligament-vs-tendon>

Now it says the ligaments appear as crisscrossed bands that attach bone to bone and to stabilize joints. That, it

seems to me, is the idea of the word of our text translated as *joints* but which are actually bands.

Now the Greek language is much more versatile in how the order of the sentence may be arranged. English usually has this order; subject, verb then object. But in the language of the NT the order is often arranged according to that which is most important in the sentence put first and so on. There is not a preferred grammatical order as in our language.

So here is how the text reads in most English versions: *...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every band supplies according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."*

But if it is rearranged like this, I think it expresses the original much more clearly: *...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every band supplies, causes growth of the body according to the effective working by which every part does its share, for the edifying of itself in love."*

That is all rather complicated, and I only give it to give support to the interpretation I think Paul had in mind. When the text is read as I recommend here, that which causes the growth of the body is not the bands, but every part doing its share. It is not the bands that cause this growth. The growth is caused according to the

effective working by which every part does its share.

Now, the word translated by our two words "effective working" is *energia*. We get our word *energy* from this word. It is not the bands that cause the growth, but it is the whole body that causes growth, how? It is according to the energizing by which every part does its share. The entire body is involved in its own growth. That is a picture of the Church. Christ is the head and all believers and churches do their share in causing this growth.

Let me now draw a picture of the Church as I see it from this text on unity. In Paul's day, when he wrote to Ephesus, up the road from Ephesus were a number of other churches. Revelation 2-3 deals with 6 others, Ephesus being the first. But there were even more than the six. Now they are all part of the body of Christ. But they are not all the same. Each one adds its part to the body. All the bones attach different bones to the whole. But the bones all perform different tasks. So churches are not all the same. They are not all the same but they all do their task in the whole.

Today we have denominations of churches. I recommend that if they are true Christian churches they all have a different task in the body. We need not seek to make ourselves all do the same thing. That is not the kind of unity the body experiences or that Paul had in mind here.

In our day, much time and energy is spent today on trying to bring different denominations and churches into unity. Let me recommend

that as the body has many different bones connected by ligaments, some parts are more important than others. Some are bigger, some smaller. But none are unimportant. I recommend that that is how it is in the universal church, not all the churches have the same function. Some denominations or churches stress different things. So let us say one denomination represents from the shoulder to the elbow. What ties the shoulder to the trunk of the body? The bands. What ties the upper arm bones to the lower ones? The ligaments and tendons and muscles.

What ties churches together? What joins and knits the different parts of the body together? It is that which every band supplies. I recommend from the previous verses that what ties the body of Christ together is those who have matured in the true faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, who hold the truth in love.

So let me take us back to verses 11-13 once more. Paul says:

11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

12 *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

13 *till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;*

Pastors and teachers are, according to the English translation, to equip the saints. I believe to translate that word as 'to perfect' or 'to finish' the saints would be better. The saints are to be matured by pastors and teachers. This is to take place

until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

What causes the growth of the physical body? Well, at its very beginning it is food! What are pastors to do? Jesus said it like this to Peter, "Feed my sheep." To finish sheep, feeding is the most important. We have seen that already. And what is this feed that causes the Church to grow. Verse 13, coming to the unity of the faith. And what is that? Being fed the right kind of spiritual food brings true unity of understanding. And second, gaining the knowledge of the Son of God. This is edification. Edification, spiritually, is the same as eating is to the physical body.

Now what does this right food do for the body of Christ? It strengthens the joining and knitting together of the bones so that the Christian is not blown about by every wind of doctrine. Take out the ligaments that connect the bones and the body becomes totally unstable. You could hardly even comb your hair.

But then when you get the right kind of spiritual food, now the body causes itself to grow according to that which every part supplies. And all of that is to take place so that Christians should not be tossed to and fro by wrong teaching. Instead it should cause the to hold the truth in love, or live the truth in love so that they might grow up in all things into the Head, which is Christ.

When we are babies, we have more bones. Our little bodies can take quite a beating and still be OK. But as we grow older, some of these bones join. Others stabilize the joints that need to be able to move. What does

this have to do with not being tossed to and fro? Well, without fusing some bones and stabilizing others with ligaments, the body can be tossed to and fro.

As I studied ligaments I read an article on the ten most important parts of ligaments. And number one was this:

"The main purpose of most is to passively stabilize whichever joint they span. They help guide the joints through an appropriate range of motion and protect the joint from overextending. The ligaments are also partially responsible for proprioception, the body's innate ability to sense the position of each body part, as well as the strength used to move them. Without proprioception, it would be incredibly difficult to perform many tasks, such as bringing food to the mouth or brushing hair. The ligaments provide this sense by creating neurological signals when strained."

https://facy.com/anatomy/muscular-system/what-are-ligaments/?style=quick&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=c-search&utm_term=%2Bligaments&utm_campaign=fhca-what-are-ligaments-desktop&gclid=CjwKCAjwwZrmBRA7EiwA4iMzBNvbbOldxPQ_OnV_rm-r8g6_EssvrKOTbbO8QxOc9gv53JKTM-P6yxoCakEQAvD_BwE

So let me read our verses once more:

11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

12 *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

13 *till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;*

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ -

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

When the body is stabilized by maturity, joined and knit together, and then when every part does its share, it causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. What I see that contributes to all this is sheep that are finished, or properly matured. The work in each local church contributes to the growth of the body, the Universal Church, for the edifying of itself in or by love.

Before we look at the words, '...for the edifying of itself in love', let me mention one other thing. I heard a preacher one time who said something that caught my interest. I don't remember his exact words so I will express it in my own words. I am indebted to him for the idea. Let me ask you first, how do you see the universal Church? What picture do you get of the Church today? Do you see a splintered, sick, weak Church, full of false teaching? How do you see the Church universal?

The Church is not like Israel of old. The Israel of old had many people who were Jews by blood, but they were not Jews by faith. Turn to Romans

9. Paul pores out his burden for his own people Israel in this chapter. We begin in verse 1:

- 1 *I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,*
- 2 *that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.*
- 3 *For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,*
- 4 *who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;*
- 5 *of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.*
- 6 *But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,*

What does this verse mean: they are not all Israel which are of Israel? Jacob's name was changed to Israel. Those who carry the blood of Jacob are part of the nation of Israel. But because they are of Israel's blood, that does not mean they are living by faith. And only those Jews who are truly born again are part of the real Israel, the Israel of God. Verse 7:

- 7 *nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."*

Isaac was the seed of promise. He was the seed of faith. Just because one is a Jew by blood does not mean one is of the true faith. So verse 8 explains further.

8 *That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.*

So among all the people who were Jewish by blood, only a small part were truly God's people. And this small part is called in Scripture, the remnant. But the Church is not like that. It has no remnant. Everyone who is truly born again is part of the universal church. You cannot be physically born into the Church, like a Jew was physically born into Israel. To become a true Christian one has to be born again. And if one is truly born again, one is part of the universal Church.

And so, let me draw a new picture of the Church for you. Here you see all these Christian denominations or independent Christian churches. And they have a membership list. But in many churches very few on the membership list are truly born again.

Listen to what Jesus said of the Church of Sardis in Revelation 3:4. He said:

4 *You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.*

Only a few people in that whole church were part of the universal Church. Do you get the picture? Now take all the Christian churches in the world, and the true Church is made up, not of all those members, but only of those in those churches who are truly born again people.

In the whole church of Sardis there were only a few who were part of the real Church. And here is

the picture. Only those who are truly born again make up the universal Church. The true Church is made up of only truly born again believers. Being born into a Christian family does not make one part of the universal Church. Being part of a local church does not make one part of the universal Church. Only the new birth makes one part of the universal Church. The universal Church is made up of only true believers. There are no false believers in the universal Church. There are only true believers. When the rapture happens, only the true believers will be caught up.

As I considered all this, the universal Church is made up of many local churches. For example, when Paul wrote to the Ephesians, if you followed the road inland you would come to the six other churches mentioned in Revelation 2-3. Those chapters only mention 7 churches but there were more. And all of these churches play a part in the whole Church.

I think we could say the same thing about denominations of churches today. To have denominations of protestant or evangelical churches is not wrong. All true believers in any denomination do their part in the universal Church. Each denomination has their strong points and their weak points and each contributes to the whole.

Just before Jesus was crucified He asked His disciples several questions. Let me read those:

13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and

others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

16 *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

17 *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

18 *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

The Lord is building His Church and it will be completed. As fractured and fragmented as the Church looks today, in reality it is only the true believers that make up the universal church. A.W. Tozer, who was a pastor in the Christian and Missionary Alliance church, and a magazine editor, and a writer of numerous books; said that he believed only about 10% of professing Christians were truly born again. And he said if he was wrong, his number was too high.

If he is right, think of our modern evangelical churches. What number among those may be the true Church? Someone has said that if the rapture happened today, Europe would hardly notice any difference. May I just encourage every person who will listen to this message, make sure you are truly born again.

Now note last in our verse that all the different parts of the true Church contribute their share, and this causes the growth of the body, for the edifying of itself in love. The body edifies itself, it builds itself up, in love.

So it is important here to define love. The word for love here is, of course, agapee. I have spoken to you on the four love words of the Greek language. I define agapee love as a mental attachment or attraction to someone or something. Agapee love is not an emotional attachment or attraction. But there is a difference between what love does and what love is. If you want to know what it does, you have to read 1 Corinthians 13.

When agapee love is related to another person it seeks the welfare of that person regardless of how one feels about the other person. The greatest commandment there is, is to love God. The second is to love one's neighbor as oneself. And what is love for oneself? I am attached to all that is related to myself, mentally.

Our body cares for itself in love. If we cut ourselves, inside our bodies, immediately, all kinds of things are set in motion to fix the cut. You can study this. It is fascinating how the body loves itself. I typed into omniscient Google, "What happens in our bodies when we cut ourselves?" And here is the first thing that popped up:

*For **your** immune system, this means war. As soon as the paper cuts into the cells of **your** skin, **your** body springs into action. First, blood cells called platelets join together at the paper cut and form a clot to stop the bleeding. **The** platelets then release chemicals called cytokines into **your** bloodstream, end quote.*

A healthy body loves itself. It builds itself up in love, that is, it genuinely cares for all the other parts. But our body belongs to us and we love ourselves. So when it comes

to our body, we care for it. For example, if a sound is too loud, we cover our ears. If a sight is too bright we protect our eyes. If our feet hurt because of our shoes, we seek to fix that. It is 'we' that feel the pain, so we protect ourselves.

Turn to Ephesians 5 for a moment. We begin in verse 25:

- 25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*
- 26 *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*
- 27 *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*
- 28 *So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.*
- 29 *For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.*
- 30 *For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.*

Verse 29 says that nobody ever hated his own flesh. What does that imply? Everybody loves his own flesh! What does that mean? That means you take care of it. If something hurts your body somewhere, you seek to fix it. If we cut ourselves, we look after that and so on.

Turn to Matthew 19. A rich young man wanted to know from Jesus what good thing he might do to have eternal life. We go to verse 16:

- 16 *Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what*

good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

17 *So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."*

18 *He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'*

19 *'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"*

In verse 19 Jesus said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." If we supply the elliptical words it says, "You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself." We all love ourselves and that includes our body, our soul and our spirit. When our spirit hurts, we are depressed. Soon we seek to alleviate that depression. When our soul hurts, say it experiences guilt, we seek to alleviate it. When our body hurts, we do whatever we can to fix it. We love ourselves.

Now listen to our text. I'll put the verse in the order I suggest it should be:

"...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, causes growth of the body according to the effective working by which every part does its share, for the edifying of itself in love."

Our physical body does all it can to build itself up in love. What the body can't do for itself, we seek to do for it. When we are sick, we take whatever we can in order that we will feel better.

The body of Christ is like that as well. And all of this requires pastors and teachers to feed the flock with the truth of the Word of God. If the Church is not fed right it will not be able to edify itself in love.

CONCL: Well, we conclude on this first section in the practical part of the letter to the Ephesians that deals with unity. This morning we have looked at verse 16. Let me read it once more:

16 from whom (i.e., Christ) the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

God has set up pastors and teachers to bring the believer to maturity to build up the body of Christ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of Christ so that we would not be tossed to and from by every wind of doctrine, but would hold the truth in love so that we would grow up into Christ, who is the head of the body. And from Him the whole body, which is joined and knit together at the bones, causes the growth of the body according to the effective energizing by which every part does its share for the building up of itself in love.

What is the key to church unity? In the local church, it is for pastors to bring believers to maturity. What is the key to universal Church unity? For pastors in the local church to bring believers to maturity. I interact with some aspect of the universal Church every week. I use Strong's Concordance. I use commentaries. I now use the internet. I sift out what I think is not right and use that which is helpful to me.

What can you do to help true unity in the church? First, make sure you are born again. Second, make sure you are spiritually growing.