

W279_Unity_Of_The_Spirit_11.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book and is number 11 of the series. The Unity of the Spirit. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of Scripture together. And this evening we are reading Ephesians chapter four so that if you are listening, care to switch off for a moment and join with us? We will do so. Ephesians Chapter four. In our last study. We. Passed from the consideration of the unity of the Spirit to the preparation for considering the unity of the faith. This is all an outworking of the first thought that we should seek to walk worthy of the calling. And in this chapter three, we have three steps in that direction. First of all, we have something to keep, but that can be a code if it's left like that. So the next thing is something which has to do with faith, which is personal. The unity of the faith. And then faith must eventuate at last into life. And so we have the new man. We have, first of all, entrusted to us the unity of the Spirit. Then we should seek to go on to attain unto the unity of the faith. And then we should understand that now. Having reached that point, we put off the old band, we put on the new band and that is the way in which we shall walk worthy of our calling. You may remember that last time we touched upon the introduction to this element of the unity of the faith.

[00:01:52] And I just would link it on again without spending too much time at verse seven, the Apostle says, But. And that means to say, Now I am changing my subject. I have been dealing with the unity of the Spirit, but I don't forget that each one of you are involved. You cannot belong to a unity if you have no units. So each one of us have a share in a place. And then for strangely enough, at first. Feelings straight away with the Ascended Christ. Far above all heavens. And goes on to say that the Ascended Christ gave some apostles. Now, I don't know whether you could rattle off the names of the 12 apostles as they are given in Matthew ten. Doesn't matter if you can't. You know, there's Peter and James and John. And Philip. And Bartholomew and Thomas and I forget the others. So I say and others like that. But the point is that it's in Matthew ten and surely Christ wasn't ascended up far above all heavens when he appointed those men. So if the Bible is true, there's another set of apostles with an S on the end. Not only Paul, who were given by the Ascended Christ in his capacity as far above all. Well, that leads us to our subject this evening. What was the work that those men had to do? All you say go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature? Oh, yes, if they had the opportunity.

[00:03:20] But they were given a special injunction, a special work to do. And that's where our interest focus is for the moment. So we're going to pick up our study this evening at verse 12. He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints. Now, it would be excusable for anyone who didn't come to the Chapel of the Open book to jump to the conclusion that the word perfected in verse 12 and the perfect man in verse 13 were all one and the same. But they're entirely different words, having no relationship and no connection except in the English version. You may sometimes read if you're considering the history of the New Testament about certain philosophers and others. And you may come across the name of Galen Jagiellon, who was a physician and a writer on medical things long, long before the Apostle Paul. And in his writings, he uses the very word that we have in front of us, the word perfecting for the resetting of a fractured limb. Now, we needn't go outside the Bible to discover its meaning. So I'll give you two passages. Galatians Chapter six. This is the same word perfecting Galatians Chapter six. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault ye which are spiritual, restore such an one. Resetting back, reset that fractured limb. Or if you want another example.

[00:05:03] Matthew the fourth chapter. And when our Lord called his first disciples. And you remember the first two were fishing and the second two were mending their nets. Verse 21, that word mending is the word perfecting. So the English idea of perfecting there is to bring back to an original state to perfect bring it back again. But as the word perfect, the other word perfect is such a key word in scripture. It would be wise if we could invent some other translation, especially as we get them into adjacent verses. Well, now suppose we we come back to verse 12. For the readjusting of the Saints. Well, had there been a break? Oh, yes, we know there had been that the 28th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Israel as a nation were dismissed. The salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles. And blindness has been the characteristic of Israel as a nation ever since. And we are living in the days that Hosea said would come when they shall be lo ami not my people, and I will not be their God. Well, now, if you read the Acts of the Apostles, you will find that the Gentile was coming in in association with Israel all the time. Even the epistle to the Romans says the Jew first and also the Greek. That the Gentile believer was warned that although he was justified by faith in exactly the same way as Israel.

[00:06:39] Yet from another point of view, he was grafted contrary to nature, like a wild olive into the true olive tree of Israel. But if the olive tree has been cut down and removed and Israel are off the scene, well, there's a rupture, isn't there? There's a break. And so this ministry was to tie that over to explain the new thing that had come in. And so the apostle Paul, particularly as the prisoner of the Lord, tells us that by revelation it was made known unto him. The secret part of God's purpose that is now obtaining and running and possibly, as far as we know, running out near to its end. So that's the first thing to remember. This is all bearing upon our fate. Remember the unity of the faith. And unless you are conscious that here is a new move, that something has come in, if you're not conscious that the Christ who is now brought before us is ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. If you haven't got those things in mind, your conception of the unity of the faith will be different from what the Apostle Paul has. These are all preparing us to understand what a magnificent thing it must be to have a faith that comprehends this. Or we go on for the readjusting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up, the edifying of the body of Christ. Now this all is leading up to till we all come in the unity of the faith.

[00:08:14] Now the margin puts you wise. It says unto not in why they put in. I don't know. Because they knew full well it was unto. We are arriving unto something. But first of all, let us notice the word till we all come, because there's quite a number of words that could be translated come first of all, it's a word that is used, particularly of going on a journey. I'll give you one out of many references. Acts 20, verse 15. And we sailed it and came the next day over against chaos. And you will find it repeated many times in the Acts of the Apostles for a journey. But it also has another connection and rather an important one. In the 26th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We are still on a journey, but this is what we remember. Oh, yeah, sorry. The 27th chapter, verse 12. And because the haven was not commodious to winter in the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means we might attain to fancy that word attain is the word come. It's not the ordinary verb to come. It's to arrive. Now they never got there. And when the Apostle wrote the epistle to the Philippians, he used the identical words that we have in acts. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection that which is out from among the dead.

[00:09:57] But he said there's a possibility I may not and even connection with Israel. The 26 chapter which I was going to refer to by the estate just now, verse seven and

two, which promise our 12 tribes instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. Well, they haven't come there yet, friends. It's been held up. So you see, here are three references which tell you that it's not one of those things that you can take in your stride. You may not arrive at the unity of the faith. You've got to watch the scriptures. You've got to seek. You've got to understand and say, Teach me, Lord. And then again, we are going to find that the way in which this faith is described are read verse 13 Now till we all arrive or attain unto 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 fullness of the Christ. This unity of the faith must comprehend Christ in His fulness. Now you see, that again is something that's waiting for us in chapter. And. Chapter one of this same epistle. Christ is spoken of as being in verse 21. Far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named. Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come and hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, the church is the fullness of him who in his turn fills all.

[00:11:43] That's got to be a part of our faith. It's a staggering part of our faith. But we dare not lessen it because we think we are unworthy or because we quite can't quite comprehend it. So you see, we've got very wonderful terms to use and we must keep them prominently in their right place. While we're looking at that, I think we must include Colossians because Colossians very often picks up a word that Ephesians has said and enlarges upon it. It says in chapter one. 18 and 19, and he is the head of the body, the church, which is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence for it pleased the father that in him should all the fullness dwell. A related to the church. Then in chapter two. Verse nine for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, bodily and ye are filled to the full in him, which is the head of all principality and power. So you see the heavenly side, the Ascended Christ, the Father above all position is intimately related to whatever he's going to turn out to be, the unity of the faith. So it doesn't mean here just the faith that believes that all scripture is given by inspiration of God that belongs to all callings, or that in Him we have redemption that belongs to all callings, whether you're Jew or Gentile, whether your kingdom or church, this attaining to something which is over and above our salvation is set before us as a part of the work that is worthy for the readjusting of the saints.

[00:13:24] Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, the unity of the faith, the faith somehow is focusing. And we want to know on what it is focusing. Well, I think I should be very disappointed if some of you friends didn't want to remind me that there's no argument about that so far as we are concerned. Whatever our calling, we can be sure of this, that it will focus on Christ. So it's no new story there, but the Christ in this new capacity as head of the church, as the one in whom all fulness dwells. As the one who is far above all heavens and far above all principality and power. Now, it wouldn't do us any harm to observe the seven references in the Epistle to the Ephesians, to the faith. There is one that I've not included because that's the faith of Christ himself. I'm referring to the seven references that belong to the Believer. So would you like to take note of them? I'm going to give you the first one, chapter 115, and then I'm going to give you the last one so that you can get the balance.

[00:14:34] Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love and all the saints. Faith and love. And while we are here, I remind you that as a very peculiar expression here, which is almost untranslatable. Wherefore I also, after I heard of the faith, which is according to you, in the Lord Jesus. The very strange expression. But it means that the faith, which is according to you in Christ Jesus, is not necessarily the faith that everybody has. It's already pointing out a peculiarity in this faith because of the new situation, the new calling, the new position of Christ, the new relationship, head and body. So we have faith and love. And you anticipate me when you know that the very last words in Ephesians Chapter six Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ, or in verse 23, peace be to the brethren and love with faith from God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love, our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. So we have love with faith. We have in the beginning, faith with love. And then we come back and we read in chapter two. That well-known verse. For by grace are ye saved through faith. Here we have salvation. And the second one from the end is in chapter six, where we read in verse 16, above all, taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

[00:16:08] So you're saved by faith that's from your sin. And you're saved in your fight and your service by the shield, which is also faith. That's bringing us nearer to the centre. Chapter 317. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. And in the parallel to that, we have Chapter four. Where we have in verse. We just wait a minute, verse 13 till we all come in. The unity of the faith. I

suppose we can see there is a relation between Christ dwelling and a unity, for there can be no faction if he's dwelling in your heart and dwelling in mine. And you remember the symbol of the Old Testament that the faces of the cherubim, we are told, looked towards the mercy seat and looked towards one another. They couldn't help themselves, could they, if they were both looking at the mercy seat. So if Christ is all to you and he's all to me, what a lovely pair we should be, shouldn't we? You see, so we have Christ dwelling in your heart and the unity of the faith. And then right in the centre, Chapter four, verse one. Well, it speaks about. I, therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation with your called with all lowliness and meekness, and goes right on until it says in verse five one faith.

[00:17:44] So there we have the way in which the word faith itself is distributed in the epistle to the Ephesians, and I think it's worthwhile giving that little time to it in order to see that the Apostle has spoken about it rather distinctly. Now we come back to Chapter four. Till we all arrive. Attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. Now you can turn to scriptures immediately, where the Scripture itself urges us to add to our faith knowledge. You will turn to the epistle of Peter to find that. And elsewhere we find the same thing. Doesn't the Apostle pray in chapter one Having heard of your faith in the Lord, I do not cease to pray for you that He may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. Add to your faith knowledge. But on the other hand, there's a possibility it's even richer than that. First of all. The word end. Can be translated in some cases and should be by the word even. The one instance I'll give you in chapter five, verse 12 of this same epistle. It is a shame even to speak. And you couldn't translate it. It is a shame. And to speak. Because we never use the word end in that way. This conjunction even not only adds the two things together, but gives a little bit of a further light on it.

[00:19:23] So I'm coming back to this passage and I say, first of all, do we all arrive in the unity of the faith, even the knowledge of the Son of God? That is to say, I'm not giving you something extra. I'm explaining it a little bit that the unity of the faith Son is summed up at long last in the knowledge of the Son of God, even the knowledge of the Son of God. Well, now what do we mean by this word knowledge? Oh, well, now we got to do another bit of care. Careful looking. Because this very self-same word is translated many times in the New Testament by the word acknowledge. And you agree with me, there's a little difference between knowledge and acknowledging. I've likened

knowledge to one of those rooms that some people have. I'm not saying we've got one. I'll leave that for you to guess. Sort of an attic. Well, it's an absolute junk room. Fu And possibly up there in that attic. There's a whole list set of encyclopedias. Now, that's knowledge. But if you were downstairs and never read them, that's not any good to you. But if you go up there and bring one down and study an article, then that becomes yours. And then you have an understanding which is deeper than merely knowledge. You're acknowledging. You're recognizing. You're seeing. So will you turn to 1 or 2 passages where this self-same word epignosis is translated as knowledge? I'd like to give you chapter and verse in order so that you will not think this is a mere private opinion.

[00:20:57] Colossians two. Verse two that their hearts might be comforted being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ. So they are the authorized version is recognized that he doesn't merely mean knowledge, but it means acknowledging. And shall we take another instance? Two Timothy Chapter two, verse 25. A verse 24 The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men apt to teach patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves. If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, not merely the knowledge of it, but the acknowledging of it. And Titus while we have this about us, the next page, Chapter one, verse one. Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledging of the truth, which is after godliness. And I'll give you just one other passage, two Corinthians chapter one. Two Corinthians chapter one, verse 13 and 14. So we write none other things unto you. Then what ye read or acknowledge. And I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end, as also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

[00:22:41] So there's no doubt about it. You see from those references that the word that we are looking at can mean and sometimes should mean not merely knowledge. That's one thing, but acknowledging which is another thing. Now, that's sometimes where the difficulty comes in. That's where sometimes a certain shadow comes over the heart, where a certain element of myopia not seeing a far off begins to come. Because you've listened to the teaching of the word. You begin to see the truth. And then. The test comes, will you acknowledge it? And then you say, Well, if I do. What's going to

happen. Perhaps the home visit is antagonistic. Perhaps the association you have in Christian work or antagonistic? And you begin to draw back. So here's an important feature. That's the reason why I asked you to notice that the word till we all attain unto is so many times in the New Testament a possibility that you won't. Oh, yes. What a dreadful thing. But it's wise, isn't it, to have the warning. So here we have now. Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and the acknowledgment of the Son of God. Automatic weapon. Quarrel with that, friends. If I can acknowledge the Son of God. Increasingly, in all his wonderful fullness that this book presents, I've got the focusing point, as it were, all the points pointing to the. The unity of the faith, all pointing to him.

[00:24:21] So Rebecca got into the same story that we had in the Unity of the Spirit. It's the one Lord who is in the center that links them all together, and it's the Son of God in the center, which is the supreme meeting point of all these items of truth. Now, he goes on to say further, and to a perfect man. Now, most of you know that there are two words or there are more than two words in the New Testament, but there are two special words in the New Testament which are translated man. One is anthropos. That is common knowledge and it means mankind. It means men, women, children. Anthropos. But the word which is used here is not anthropos. The word here is. And in chapter five, the very self-same word occurs in these passages. Chapter five, verse 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. That's the word which the apostle has already used in chapter four, verse 23. The husband. And every time it comes in this chapter, the word husband is exactly the word that's already been used in chapter 413. It is used, you remember in Matthew when it says there were. I think we'll get the passage. Matthew 14. 21. So that you can see for yourself that there is this distinction intended. Matthew 14:21. And they that had eaten were about 5000 men besides women and children. That word men is this word.

[00:26:16] So there's no doubt the apostle meant what he said. He didn't really say a perfect man that that could include all. But he meant a perfect husband, a perfect adult male. But he say why? Emphasizing that? Well, friends, there are so many who tell us that the church of the present day is the bride of Christ. In the first case, there is no such title ever found in the New Testament. The Bride of Christ. The only title in the New Testament is The Bride of the Lamb. And the only place where you find it is in the book of the Revelation and its associated with the Heavenly Jerusalem, where you have the 12 Apostles of the Lamb. But I do not believe that the Scripture would permit the

Apostle Paul to say that the church, which is the Bride of Christ, is looking forward ultimately to becoming the perfect husband. That is such a monstrous mixture that we cannot tolerate it. So there is a company which is the wife that was divorced. That will be restored that Israel as a nation. There is a company of the overcomers who will not be a wife restored, but will be the bride in that day. And there is a company which is the body of Christ, who will represent on the other side of the story the perfect husband. Do you see what's happened in the emphasis on the bride? They forgotten their husband? All you say.

[00:27:50] But Christ is the husband. But wait a minute, friends. If a million people or millions of people who are believers represent the bride, then you would feel that the millions of people would represent the husband with Christ as the head of the not. So if you want the bridal element that it might be there. God is preparing for paradise to be restored. But when that day comes, he's not going to say I forgot all about the husband. I've got the bride there in paradise. No, No friends. No. John's gospel is going into the highways and making sure the wedding shall be furnished with guests. The overcomers in the book of the revelation will be the bride and the church of the one body associated with the same. Christ is the perfect man. The perfect husband. Any objections to that? That looks as though it's perfect. You're going right back to the Garden of Eden that foreshadowed the whole thing. And now each one in his own calling. So our Faith Odyssey is focusing upon our calling, the ascended seated Christ. The present period after the disruption and the perfecting and putting us back into a right position. And so what you need there is that we should follow the emphasis, keeping the unity of the spirit and attaining unto the unity of the faith. As one one little piece more that we have to put in till we all arrive unto the unity of the faith and or even the acknowledgment of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure.

[00:29:37] Now, you'll notice in this context, we have three measures. Let's go over them again. They're on purpose. Chapter four, verse seven. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And then we have it in verse 16, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies according to the effectual, working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. And the other measure in verse 13, the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. Now this word stature. Not only means height as it can mean, but it means maturity. Will you look at two passages?

John nine verse 21. A verse 20. The badgering, the parents and the man who was born blind. We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But by what means he now see it. We know not or who have opened his eyes. We know not. He is of age. Ask him. But they didn't say. He's six foot tall. Ask him. They said he's of age. That's the word stature. So you see, it means more than height in inches. It means development and growth to adulthood. He is of age or to get another one, which I think will be more incisive.

[00:31:13] Hebrews, Chapter 11. We are told in the Scriptures, The Age of Sarah. And that's the only age of a woman that's made known in the scriptures from one end to the other. And there's a reason for it, because if her age were not known, you couldn't finish the chronology of the Book of Genesis. So she had to have her age put down for everybody to know. But here it says in Hebrews 11, verse 11, through faith also, Sara herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age. Well, they couldn't possibly say delivered of a child when she was only four foot six or something, you see. So it's not inches its maturity having reached. What? Full grown adulthood. The perfect man is. There should be no longer children. Oh, that's what it says here. Isn't that remarkable? As though the Apostle Paul didn't know it. And I've just discovered it. That we henceforth be. No more babies. Children. Well, that's a favorite. Example with the apostles. Look back with you at the classic example in one Corinthians chapter three. Mm. And I brethren could not speak unto you as unto spiritual. But isn't a carnal even as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk could not be meat for hitherto you were not able to bear it neither yet now are you able. And while we're dealing that, notice how the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, which some people they don't know who wrote it, but they're sure Paul didn't.

[00:33:06] How the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses the same example. Chapter five of Hebrews. He says there in verse 11, some of the things he has to teach them are hard to be uttered because they are dull of hearing. For when? For the time ye ought to be teachers. Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God and are become such as have need of milk and not strong meat. For every one that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. Now the full grown man comes in the next verse, but you don't quite see it, you see. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age. The margin is the word perfect. So we've got the perfect men in Ephesians four and we've got the perfect one in

verse 14. And this gives me an opportunity to remind you I'm a better read verse 14 first I. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age or are perfect. Even those who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. What does it mean when it says a person is perfect in that sense? Our word perfect has picked up a meaning which you must not introduce into the scriptures when you're dealing with this word perfection.

[00:34:37] A For instance, it says that Christ was made perfect by the things that he suffered. Does that mean to say he was lacking somewhere before? Well, if that's the case, what about our savior? And he said less integrity. In what way was he perfected? Well, supposing I tell you the same word that gives us a word. Perfect. Gives you the word that he said on the cross when he said it is finished. This is the root of that word is the common word, tele that everybody speaks about when they speak about television. And tele means distance. So we've got a group of words. Telephone, telegram, telescope. They all mean seeing, hearing, writing, viewing at a distance. So when it says perfect, it says you've you've touched the tape, You've gone to the end, you've finished. So as I've said before, in other context, I must say it again that if you lived in the days of the Apostle Paul, you may have received an invitation to go to a banquet to celebrate the fact that the eldest son of a family had come to the end of his life. Well, of course you wouldn't be upset over that because you knew that the end of his life was to grow up and become 21. Of course, we say a person reaches the end of his life and he's dying. And this is to reach the end of your life. That's to become full age 21.

[00:36:00] Full age. Perfect man. Not babes more. So we're back again to Ephesians four. That we henceforth be no more children or babies. What a contrast to the unity, the face to be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. All. Dear, dear. We met the folks, haven't we? It just happens by accident. If you met them on Monday, they button all you and be telling you one yarn. And if you met them on Tuesday that enthusiastic over something else. And then the next day you meet them. Have lost both of them. Tossed to and fro. Every wind of doctrine. Is some stability about those who have reached a perfect man stage and have realized that the acknowledgment of a son of God anchors them and gives them a solid basis as they grow up into him, then adding more day by day, but not being blown about and changing their doctrine. And this is, of course, an antagonism from the evil one by the slyer men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and you'll find

that slighter men is repeated in the words the wiles of the devil in Chapter six. And in buried in this chapter, this verse 14 is the word playing at dice. They are playing a dice with a very truth of God. And that's the opposite side. Or what a difference between holding the face, walking worthy of the calling, standing firm and being tossed about and being sort of a sport of evil and cunning craftiness.

[00:37:43] And he goes on not merely speaking the truth in love. You notice the word is in the margin. It says being sincere. And it almost makes you wish that you could tolerate in the English language to truth, because there's no word speaking here. It's being the truth. Living the truth. The very atmosphere of your life is truth. You can't say truth in love, but there it is, surrounded, rounded, top, bottom and side with the truth of God. So he's leading on to that as the truth is in Jesus. And what the truth is in Jesus will be very opposite to the lie which you have to repudiate. But that's trespassing upon our subject, which will be before us next time. We have in this chapter Ephesians, as we've said just earlier, three stages. We have the unity of the spirit, which we are to keep with Christ in the center as the One Lord. We have the unity of the faith to which we must attain with Christ in the center as the Son of God. And we have now the truth as it is in Jesus, which is going to be exemplified by repudiating the old man and putting on the new. So that we'll look down just a few more verses in chapter four and then be prepared when we meet together next time to pick up the third stage and examine what it means to put off and to put on the new man.

[00:39:12] But speaking the truth or living and being 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. This is an echo of chapter two, verse 21, in whom all the building fitly framed together in the doctrine. It's a temple in the practice, it's a body. And the temple and the body are used both of Christ and of his people, from whom the whole body fitly joined together. Look at Colossians as a parallel to this, the emphasis upon the need to be fitly joined together. Colossians Chapter two, verse 19. And not holding the head for which all the body by joints and bends, having nourishment, ministered and knit together, increases with the increase of God. Join together, fitly framed together. Knit together. Unless that takes place. Well, then there's disunity instead of unity. And there will be lameness. There will be disease creeping into the body instead of health. So we want to watch that for all we are worth, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies. But you mustn't think that the joints supply

editing by our joints of supply. It's being supplied by the head through the joints that are joined together. And then he goes on to say, according to the effectual, working in the measure of every part, each one part, it used to be said in days gone by, but I don't think they say it so much now that we've got so many superfluous parts left over in our body that when the surgeon was going to have an operation, he cut a few of them out.

[00:41:09] But they've learned wisdom since then that they find that they do not. One part can be spared and it doesn't matter what part you play in the body of Christ, you can't be spared. The trouble is that because you've got a little job to do, you say, Oh, well, nobody, nobody loves me. Nobody thinks about me. Whether I do it or not, it doesn't matter. Oh, yes, Each one of us, not one, can say to the other, I have no need of you. And although one Corinthians 12 is dealing with the distribution of spiritual gifts, it's still focusing our attention upon the functions of one body. The eye cannot say of the hand. I have no need of thee, and so on. So we have brought it down to verse 16, where we touched upon this emphasis upon the unity of the body, the fitly frame, the unity of the faith. And now we leave it, God willing, till we pick it up again in our next study, where we'll bring this series of the unity of the Spirit to an end by considering the two references that we have in the close of this chapter. The old man and the new.