

Unity of the Faith?

**Eph 4:1** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

Eph 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

Eph 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Eph 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;*

Eph 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Eph 4:6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Eph 4:8 Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."

Eph 4:9 (Now this *expression*, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?

Eph 4:10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.)

Eph 4:11 And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers,

Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

Eph 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

Eph 4:14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

Eph 4:15 but speaking the truth in love,  
we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him  
who is the head, *even* Christ,

Eph 4:16 from whom the whole body,  
being fitted and held together by what  
every joint supplies, according to the  
proper working of each individual part,  
causes the growth of the body for the  
building up of itself in love.

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Paul said that the unified faith was coming.

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Jude said that the faith had come.

Jud 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

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I Corinthians chapters 12 and 13 closely parallel what is written in Ephesians chapter 4.

→ Consider the parallel of miraculous gifts given

*“for the common good”* (1Co 12:7 )

and

*“for the building up of the body of Christ”*. (Eph 4:12)

Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

1Co 12:7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1Co 12:8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

Take note of this miraculous gift of the “*word of knowledge*” mentioned here. It will be important later in this lesson.

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Consider the parallel of miraculous gifts given.

→ Consider the parallel of the roles described.

*“for the equipping of the saints for the work of service”*. (Eph 4:12)

*“for the common good”* (1Co 12:7)



Eph 4:11 And He gave some *as* apostles,  
and some *as* prophets, and some *as*  
evangelists, and some *as* pastors and  
teachers,

1Co 12:28 And God has appointed in the  
church, first apostles, second prophets,  
third teachers, then miracles, then gifts  
of healings, helps, administrations,  
*various* kinds of tongues.

Christ gave His apostles the power to perform miracles.

Mat 10:1 Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Peter, Andrew, James, John,  
Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James  
the son of Alphaeus, Simon, Thaddaeus, and  
Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.

Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would guide His apostles.

Joh 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

Christ promised that, the apostles would spread the one faith.

Act 1:8 ... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Matthias replaced Judas Iscariot.

Act 1:26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

Act 2:43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

Paul was also an apostle of Jesus Christ.

2Co 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother,  
To the church of God which is at Corinth  
with all the saints who are throughout  
Achaia:

Through the “laying on” of the apostle’s hands, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were given.

Act 8:18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money,

Timothy the evangelist received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit through the “laying on” of the apostle Paul’s hands.

2Ti 1:6 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.



The apostles in a sense “made” evangelists and teachers by bestowing miraculous knowledge and abilities on others.

This was done while the faith was in its infancy.

This was done while the body was in its infancy.

Consider the parallel of miraculous gifts given.

Consider the parallel of the roles described.

→ Consider the parallel of the analogy of a growing body.

*“for the equipping of the saints for the work of service”*. (Eph 4:12)

*“for the common good”* (1Co 12:7)

Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints  
for the work of service, to the building up  
of the body of Christ;

Eph 4:13 until we all attain to the unity  
of the faith, and of the knowledge of the  
Son of God, to a mature man, to the  
measure of the stature which belongs to  
the fullness of Christ.

1Co 13:9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part;

1Co 13:10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

1Co 13:11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

1Co 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

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When the body attained to “*the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man*” , it was time to do “*away with childish things*”.

The childish things were those miraculous gifts given to the body to help it grow during its infancy.

Two miraculous gifts are specifically mentioned, “*knowledge*” and “*prophecy*”.

These miraculous gifts, “*knowledge*” and “*prophecy*” are to go away when the perfect comes.

1Co 13:9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part;

1Co 13:10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.



The word “perfect” means complete or whole.

When the pieces or parts of knowledge and prophecy come together to form the whole, the pieces disappear into the whole

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The question is... when?

**1Co 13:10** but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

Consider once again the parallels in Ephesians 4 and I Corinthians 12 & 13.

The body acquired the whole or perfect “*knowledge of the Son of God*” simultaneously when the faith was unified and knowledge and prophecy was complete.

The key word is knowledge.

1Co 13:9 For we know in part and we  
prophecy in part;

1Co 13:10 but when the perfect comes,  
the partial will be done away.

Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints  
for the work of service, to the building up  
of the body of Christ;

Eph 4:13 until we all attain to the unity  
of the faith, and of the knowledge of the  
Son of God, to a mature man, to the  
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We have the perfect knowledge of the Son  
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So, where is the unity of the faith?

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So, where is the unity of the faith?

...in the BIBLE!



If we go to the Bible, our faith will be the “*one faith*”, the same as what the apostles had.

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Timothy was an evangelist that evidently received his preaching ability through the “laying on” of Paul’s hands.

Listen to what the apostle Paul says to this man about the Bible.

2Ti 3:15 ... from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. *(King James Version)*

2Pe 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

2Pe 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

The Bible contains everything we  
need to know to be pleasing to God!

Can we understand the Bible?

Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet  
And a light to my path.

How could God's word light our path if it  
was not understandable?

Rom 10:17 So faith *comes* from hearing,  
and hearing by the word of Christ.

How could hearing the word of Christ help  
us if it was not understandable?



Eph 5:17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

If God to expects us to understand His will, wouldn't He did not make His will understandable?

**Eph 3:3** ...by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

Eph 3:4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

Eph 3:5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

Paul says that when we read, we can understand!

1Ti 2:3 This is good and acceptable in  
the sight of God our Savior,

1Ti 2:4 who desires all men to be saved  
and to come to the knowledge of the  
truth.

God wants us to be saved.

He gave us the Bible for that purpose.

We must understand it!

Can we understand the Bible alike?

We are suppose to understand the Bible alike.

1Co 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

We are suppose to understand the Bible alike.

**Php 2:1** Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,  
**Php 2:2** make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

Jesus is the author of our faith. We can all understand His words alike.

Heb 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1Co 14:33 for God is not *a God* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

Eph 4:3 ...preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Eph 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;*

Eph 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Eph 4:6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

When we do understand the Bible alike, we have the one faith.



Is the Bible difficult to understand?

Deu 30:10 if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul.

Deu 30:11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.

Deu 30:12 "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'

Deu 30:13 "Nor is it beyond the sea,  
that you should say, 'Who will cross the  
sea for us to get it for us and make us  
hear it, that we may observe it?'

Deu 30:14 "But the word is very near  
you, in your mouth and in your heart,  
that you may observe it.

God's *commandments* are not to difficult  
to understand!

There are some things in the Bible hard to understand.

2Pe 3:15 ...our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,

2Pe 3:16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

There are some things that we will never understand...

Deu 29:29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

...but we can understand what God has revealed to us.

There are some things in the Bible hard to understand... but not impossible.

There are some things in the Bible hard to understand... but not impossible.

There are some things that we will never understand.

There are some things in the Bible hard to understand... but not impossible.

There are some things that we will never understand.

God's will for us is not hard to understand.

God's commandments are not hard to understand.



Why is the Bible hard to understand?

We must have the right mindset in order to understand the Bible.

1Co 2:14 ...a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

We must have the right mindset in order to understand the Bible.

**Mat 13:10** And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

Mat 13:11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

We must have the right mindset in order to understand the Bible.

Mat 13:12 "For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.

Mat 13:13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

We must render obedience to God in order to understand the Bible.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains *will do so* until he is taken out of the way.

2Th 2:8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;

We must render obedience to God in order to understand the Bible.

2Th 2:9 *that is*, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,  
2Th 2:10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

We must render obedience to God in order to understand the Bible.

2Th 2:11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,

2Th 2:12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

Do you believe what is false, or do you believe the truth of God's word?



Do you believe what is false, or do you believe the truth of God's word?

Do you take pleasure in wickedness, or do you want to be saved?

Do you believe what is false, or do you believe the truth of God's word?

Do you take pleasure in wickedness, or do you want to be saved?

God's plan of salvation has been revealed in His Holy Word, the Bible.

It is easy to understand.