

# LIVING ON MISSION TOGETHER

*John 17:20–23 | Ephesians 4*

Series: **Made For This**

**Bottom Line:** *The unity of the church is not incidental to the mission — it is the mission.*

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## READ

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- John 17:20–23
- Ephesians 4:1–16
- Acts 2:42–47

## DISCUSS

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1. Jesus prays for unity in His final moments before the cross. What does it tell us about Jesus' priorities that this is what He was asking of the Father as He faced death?
2. The sermon says that division in the church is not just an internal problem — it is a missionary problem. Where do you see division in the church hindering the witness of the gospel — in your local church, in the broader church, or in your own relationships?
3. Paul says in Ephesians 4:2 to be completely humble and gentle. What's the difference between unity that requires uniformity and unity built around Christ as the source?

## COME AND SEE

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### Jesus Is the Source

In John 17, Jesus prays not for His twelve disciples alone, but for everyone who would ever believe through their message — including us. The heartbeat of that prayer is unity. Not as an organizational value. Not as a strategy. But as a testimony. Jesus says the world will know He was sent by the Father when His people are one. Unity is a declaration of the gospel.

**See also:** *1 Corinthians 12:12–27; John 13:34–35; Galatians 3:28*

### A Life Worthy of the Calling

Paul opens Ephesians 4 by urging believers to walk worthy of the calling they have received. That word *axios* carries the idea of a scale in balance — the weight of our calling on one side, our daily lives on the other. Chapters 1–3 describe who we are in Christ. Chapters 4–6 describe how we live in light of that. The calling comes first. The walking follows.

**See also:** *Colossians 1:10; Philippians 1:27; 1 Thessalonians 2:12*

### Gifted for the Body's Growth

Paul teaches that Christ gives gifts to every member of the body — not just the professionals — for the sake of equipping others. Pastors and teachers don't exist to do all the ministry. They exist to equip the church for works of service. Every believer is a minister. Missions is not a department. It is the calling of the whole church.

**See also:** *Romans 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–7; 1 Peter 4:10–11*

### Maturity Is the Goal

Paul's vision for the church is not mere attendance or activity. It is transformation — attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Spiritual immaturity produces instability. Maturity produces stability, strength, and the capacity to carry one another. And maturity doesn't happen in isolation. It happens in a body, together, underneath Christ the Head.

**See also:** *Hebrews 5:12–14; Colossians 2:19; 2 Peter 3:18*

## FOLLOW ME

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### 1. What Jesus Prayed For

Jesus looked across history and prayed for you by name — or at least by category. And what He asked for was unity. Not sameness. Not agreement on every secondary matter. But a oneness rooted in His relationship with the Father.

- What would it mean for your relationships in this church to reflect the kind of unity Jesus prayed for?
- Is there a relationship in the body — someone you've drifted from, avoided, or written off — that Jesus' prayer is calling you back toward?

**Reflect:** *Where do you experience the church most as a body, and where does it feel more like strangers sharing a building? What's the difference, and what role do you play?*

### 2. The Kayak Problem

The sermon described two kinds of kayaking: the kind where you paddle in sync and glide, and the kind where everyone does their own thing and you end up soaking wet on the side of the river. Division in the church often looks like the second kind — shared rope, shared space, but pulling in opposite directions.

- What tends to pull churches (or individuals) off course — away from Christ as the center?
- Where in your own life do you bring your own agenda into the mission, rather than aligning with what God is already doing?
- What would it mean to paddle like your Dad — to orient your rhythms, relationships, and priorities around Christ rather than your preferences?

### 3. You Are a Minister

Paul says Christ gives gifts to each one of us — not so we can build personal platforms, but so the body can grow. The shape of your gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experiences is not accidental. God has intentionally placed you where only you can go.

- Where are you currently using your gifts in service of the body? Where are you holding back?
- Are there places pastors can't go that you can? School, workplace, neighborhood, family system?
- What parts of your story — including the painful parts — might God be redeeming for the sake of others?

**Reflect:** *If you took seriously that you are a minister — not just a member — how would that change the way you show up on a Sunday? In your neighborhood? At work?*

#### 4. Elsie's Song

The sermon closed with the story of Elsie — a woman in a leper colony in the Philippines who, having lost her legs and been disfigured by disease, raised what remained of her hands and sang over a nineteen-year-old worship leader: Let the weak say I am strong, let the poor say I am rich, because of what the Lord has done for us.

- What does that story expose about how we typically think about mission — who does it, who benefits, and what success looks like?
- When have you gone somewhere to give and come back the one who received?
- How does Elsie's posture reorient the way you understand living on mission?

**Reflect:** *The mission of God is not fundamentally about what we do for God. It is about what Christ has already done — and our response together. Where do you need to move from performing mission to participating in it?*

## GO AND BE

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This week, take three steps toward living on mission together:

- **Pray for the body:** Identify one person in the church you've been disconnected from — through conflict, distance, or neglect. Pray for them by name this week, and consider whether God is calling you to reach out.
- **Discover your SHAPE:** Reflect on your Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, and Experiences. Consider attending the Discovering My Gifts class and begin one honest conversation with a trusted friend about how God has wired you.
- **Take your place in the boat:** Pick one concrete way to serve the body this month — not as a consumer, but as a contributor. It doesn't have to be large. Show up. Paddle. Let the whole boat move.