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Walking Together in Unity
4: 1-6

Walking together in unity DIG: What do you think are the main factors that contribute to the success of a sports team? Why is unity so important? How does humility aid unity? How do the attitudes and actions identified by Sha'ul in these verses serve as a demonstration of the Gospel? How do they help us share the Messiah with others? Who can you tell this week?

REFLECT: Why is pride and disunity (squabbling, cliques, power struggles, sniping about other denominations) unworthy of our calling? How do patience and bearing with one another aid unity? How can a personal struggle or crisis bring us into a relationship with another person with whom we would not have connected under normal circumstances?

Believers demonstrate the truth of the Gospel by being unified in their actions.



The persistent danger of the Church throughout the ages has been to reverse the proper order of sound doctrine and good works. Some think you can get to heaven because of good works. But nothing could be further from the truth. You get to heaven not because of what you *do*, but because of what you *believe*. We do good works because we are saved, not *in order* to be saved **(James 2:14-24)**. The

command to **lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called (4:1c),** should be interpreted in this manner. This is true of every person; we are broken by sin. Here is what **ADONAI** wants to see as true about us – that we **walk** in **unity** with other believers. At the cross, we all stand in need of **the Lord's** forgiveness. Thus, our **unity in Messiah** demonstrates the very essence of the Gospel: **all have sinned (Romans 3:23)**, and salvation is available to all through **faith** in **Messiah (Romans 10:9-11)**.[140]

The **"therefore"** of **Ephesians 4:1a** marks the transition from positional to practical truth, from doctrine to duty, and from principle to practice. **Paul** makes a similar transition in the book of **Romans**. After laying down eleven chapters of doctrine, he devotes the rest of his letter to urging believers to live in accordance with that doctrine. In **Galatians**, **the Rabbi** devotes the first four chapters to explaining our liberty in **Messiah** and the last two chapters to encouraging believers to live in that liberty. That sort of division is found in many of **Sha'ul's** letters (also see **Philippians 2:1-2; Colossians 3:5; First Thessalonians 4:1**). Right practice must always be based on right principle.[141]

Before giving **his** appeal, **Paul** once again refers to **himself** as **the prisoner of the Lord (4:1b).** We are again reminded that **Sha'ul** is not giving this teaching from the comfort of **his** home or rabbinical academy, but from the confines of a Roman prison. **His** practical urgings therefore are not merely religious clichés, but heartfelt lessons refined within the harsh reality of the real world. The recipients of his letter would no doubt pay extra attention to this apostle who did not just talk **the walk**, but also **walked the walk**! **Ephesians** is often joined with **Colossians, Philippians** and **Philemon** which were written by **the Rabbi** during **his** years of confinement and called, "The Prison Epistles."[142]

The apostle made no apology for **begging** with **the Ephesians** to do what **he** knew was right. **He** was not giving suggestions, but giving divine standards, standards apart from which **they** could not live in a way that was fitting for children of **God**. **He** wouldn't rest until all those given to **his** spiritual care were **walking in a manner worthy of the calling to which you had been called (4:1c).**

Walk is frequently used in the B'rit Chadashah to refer to daily conduct, day-by-day-living, and it's the theme of the last three chapters of **Ephesians**. In the first sixteen verses of **Chapter 4**, **Paul** emphasizes **the unity** and in the rest of the chapter the uniqueness of **the walk** of the believer. In **Chapters 5** and **6 he** stresses the moral purity, the wisdom, **the Spirit** control, the family manifestations,

and **the** spiritual **warfare** of the believer's **walk**.

Worthy has the root meaning of balancing the scales – what is on one side of the scale should be equal in weight to what is on the other side. By extension, the word came to be applied to anything that was expected to correspond to something else. A person worthy of his pay was one whose day's work corresponded to his day's wages. The believer who **walks in a manner worthy of the calling** is one whose daily living corresponds to his high position as a child of **God** and fellow heir with **Yeshua Messiah**.[143] In other words, they are to practice what they preach and have their experience measure up to their standing in grace.

The calling to which you have been called is the sovereign, saving **calling** of **ADONAI (1 Thess 2:12). No one can come to Me, Yeshua** said, **unless the Father who sent Me draws him (Jn 6:44-45).** On another occasion, **He** said: **And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself (Jn 12:32). Paul** tells us that those whom **God predestined, He also called, and those whom He called, He also caused to be considered righteous, and those whom He caused to be considered righteous He also glorified (8:30)!** As **the apostle** mentioned in the opening of **his** letter: **Messiah chose us in love before the creation of the universe to be holy and without defect in his presence (1:4).** No person can be saved without accepting **Yeshua Messiah** as their **Savior** out of their own free will. But no person can choose **Messiah** who has not already been chosen by **the Father** and **the Son**. **You did not choose Me, Yeshua** explained to **His apostles**, **but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain (John 15:16).**[144]

As mentioned earlier (**to see the link click Ao – Chosen in Messiah**) this is called an antinomy. An antimony in the Bible is two truths, both of which are capable of being demonstrated in Scripture, but cannot be reconciled from a human perspective. In other words, both are true. We don't have to choose one or the other. For example, **the Trinity** is an antinomy. **God is one** (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Bw – Sh'ma Isra'el**), yet the Bible consistently teaches that there is a plurality in **the Godhead** from **Genesis** to **Revelation**. It is hard to reconcile this in our finite minds. So, picture a house with its roof slanted on two sides. We are standing on one side looking up at the roof and there is a sign that says: **You have the free will to choose or reject Yeshua (Romans 10).** That is the election viewed from our standpoint. We can't see the other side of the roof. But **YHVH** stands on the other side of the house, and as **He** looks up and **His** side the

roof says: **Chosen before the creation of the world (Romans 9).** That is election from **God's** standpoint. Both are true, and like **the Trinity**, we must accept it as such.

Always be humble, gentle and patient (4:2a). The call to **humility** should be a natural response to the truth of the previous verses. The believer in **Yeshua** has so many blessings, all gifts from **the Father**. If all spiritual blessings come through **God's** grace then one must strive to live with this perspective. The urging to be **gentle** echoes back to the teaching and example of **Yeshua Himself (Matthew 5:5)**. The biblical concept of **gentleness** is often misunderstood to mean meek, or even weak. Yet, it was **Messiah**, the manifestation of **YHVH**, who was the epitome of **gentleness**. A correct understanding of the word shows that it means a strong person who is in control of his spirit. The word for **patience** implies long suffering and endurance in difficult times. **Rabbi Sha'ul** was evidently learning many of these lessons during **his** unjust imprisonment. **He** appealed to **his** readers to cultivate this **patience** in the midst of some of their own difficulties as they lived in the pagan city of **Ephesus**.

Bearing with one another in love (see the commentary on **Romans Af – The List of "one another" Commands**)**.** If **God** has shown so much mercy to us, how much more should we bear with the frailty of others? Once again **the apostle** points out the centrality of **love** as the fulfillment of the Torah and all the Scriptures **(Romans 13:10)**. It is significant that **he** does not use one of the common words for **love** found in Greek, such as *phileo*, or *brotherly love*. But **he** uses the word for the unique, unselfish **love**, or *agape love*, that is now to be central in our lives as Messianic believers. While the TaNaKh often speaks of **walking in love (Deuteronomy 6:5)**, the teaching of **Yeshua** in the B'rit Chadashah indeed rises the standard to new heights.[145] It is the sphere of love that **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** produces in the heart of the believer **(Galatians 5:22)**, that we are to be **patient** with each other when quarrels arise, as cutting words are said, as unkind actions are done. The **love** shown at the cross was a forgiving **love**. Ours should be the same.[146] As noted before in this commentary, not only is the experience of personal salvation **a gift** from **God (2:8-9)**, but also the indwelling of **the Ruach**, which enables us to have the adequate power beyond our own ability **(4:2)**.

And making every effort to preserve the unity the Spirit gives through the binding power of shalom (4:3). The Rabbi does not encourage **the Ephesian** believers to **walk** in **unity** because they were already modeling that in **their** community. What **he** did feel the need to write was a reminder to protect **the unity**

that already existed. **The apostle** had commended **them** earlier on one of the greatest pictures of **unity**; the **unit**y between the **Jewish** and **Gentile** believers in **Yeshua (2:14-22)**. Such spiritual **unity** does not require uniformity. In fact, the manifestation of the peace between diverse groups of believers is a strong testimony to the power of the Good News. Here, **Sha'ul** reminds **the Ephesians** that such **unity** must not be taken for granted, but must be actively strived for to maintain.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as when you were called you were called to one hope (4:4). If people have a problem walking in **unity** with fellow believers, they are missing a basic truth of our **faith**. We are all part of the same **Body of Messiah**. **Paul** uses an informative analogy to communicate this truth. We are not merely members of a certain congregation. Nor are we merely followers to the same religious philosophy. No, when a person puts personal trust in **Yeshua** as **Messiah**, he is said to become part of a living organism. If the fingers are not in **unity** with the arm, there will be trouble. Add to this fact that, when people receive **the Messiah**, they receive **the Spirit of God**. It should be easier to preserve **the unity** when we realize that we are actually spiritual brothers and sisters, born of the same **Spirit** (see the commentary on **First Corinthians Cr – Unified and Diversified**).[147]

And there is one Lord (4:5a): It would be natural in **Rabbi Sha'ul's** mind to speak of **Yeshua** as the **one Lord**. The term is so common that many today simply talk of **Yeshua** as **Lord**, that is, **the King**. While this is true, the term **ADONAI** is much deeper in Jewish thought. The personal name of **God**, or **YHVH** (see the commentary on **Exodus At – I AM Has Sent Me to You**) was known and used in the priestly service of the ancient Temple. **The Talmud explains** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ei – The Oral Law**)**, "In the Sanctuary the Name was pronounced as written; but beyond its confines, a substitute Name was employed (Tractate Sotah VII.6).** Even without the vowel sounds, which were not added until 900 AD, the correct pronunciation of the Name was known only because of its daily use. However, with the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, the priestly service ceased, and several hundred years later, the exact pronunciation was lost to the **Jewish** community.

Contrary to what some religious groups say today, no one can say with confidence how to pronounce **God's Name**. The "name" Jehovah, for example, is a made-up word by a Franciscan monk in the dark ages. He took **YHVH**, and inserted vowels between the known letters to invent a new word: **Y**a**H**o**V**a**H**. Jews never, NEVER, use

this made-up word. The last book of the B'rit Chadashah tells us that when **Yeshua** returns to the earth, **He** will reveal **the Name that no one knew but Himself (Revelation 19:12)**. It seems best to leave this lost pronunciation unresolved until the **Messiah** comes. **Jewish custom dictates that instead of trying to guess at the correct pronunciation, in deference to the third commandment, Jews use a substitute term like Ha'Shem (the Name), or ADONAI (LORD).** Since **Sha'ul** here is referring to **Yeshua**, **he** attributes to **Him** the divine nature of **YHVH**. The term **ADONAI** is not just **Lord**, but the substitute term for **God Himself**. This is just one of the many times where the B'rit Chadashah equates **Yeshua** with the divine revelation of **YHVH** (see **John 1:1** and **14; Philippians 2:6-11** for example).[148]

One faith (4:5b): There is one settled body of truth deposited by Messiah in His Church, and this is **one faith. Jude** called it **the faith which was once and for all passed on to God's people (Jude 3b).** The early Messianic community recognized a body of basic doctrine that they taught, guarded, and committed to others **(Second Timothy 2:2)**. Believers may differ on some matters of interpretation and church practice, but all true believers agree on **one faith** – and to depart from that **one faith** is to bring disunity to **the Body of Messiah**.[149] Where there is **the same Lord (Romans 10:12)**, Jews and Gentiles, black and white, rich and poor, great and small, are yoked together. Neither personal ambition, nor party spirit, nor disputes about non-essentials should be allowed to break such **unity**, if **Messiah** is served and honored as **Lord**.[150]

One baptism (4:5c): Likewise, the Messianic believers of **Ephesus** experienced the same **baptism**. There is only **one baptism** in the water in **the name of Yeshua (Matthew 28:19)**. There is also **a baptism of the Spirit** at the moment of salvation (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Bw – What God Does for Us at the Moment of Faith**). Both of these baptisms emphasize the reason for the **unity** among all believers. Believers, irrespective of their different denominations, all have the same **Father**, **the God of Isra'el**. **He** is the only **God**, **the Creator** of heaven and earth, who rules over all. We have every good reason to preserve the wonderful **unity** purchased by **Yeshua Messiah**![151]

Another meaning of a "second blessing" is rooted in the Pentecostal doctrine of the baptism in **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh**. This is described variously as the crucial blessing to be sought, the ultimate experience to strive for, and the greatest achievement of the believer. According to Pentecostals, the initial evidence of the

baptism in **the Ruach** is speaking in other tongues as **the Spirit** gives utterance. The Assemblies of God website states, "All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of **the Father**, the baptism in **the Holy Spirit** and fire, according to the command of our **Lord Jesus Christ**. This was the normal experience of all in the early church." They further teach that this experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth."[152] However, this is unscriptural because the Bible clearly teaches that there is only **one baptism**, not two. In addition, you cannot use the book of **Acts** to establish doctrine. **Acts** is a historical book; you can only establish doctrine by theological statements in the letters of **Paul**, **Timothy**, **Peter** and **John**.

And one God, the Father of all, who rules over all, works through all and is in all (4:6). The basic doctrine of Judaism has always been **ADONAI our God, ADONAI is one** (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Bw – Sh'ma Isra'el**), and **God's** oneness is just as foundational to Christianity **(First Corinthians 8:4-6; James 2:19)**. Yet, the B'rit Chadashah also reveals the progressive revelation that there is plurality in **the Godhead** as expressed in three **Persons** – **Father**, **Son**, and **the Spirit (Matthew 28:19; John 6:27, 20:28; Acts 5:3-4)**.

God the **Father** is often used in Scripture as the most comprehensive and inclusive divine title, though it is clear from many B'rit Chadashah texts that **He** is never separated in nature of power from **the Son** or **the Spirit**. **Paul's** point here is not to separate the **Persons** of **the Godhead**, but to note **their** unique roles and yet focus on **their unity** in relation to each other and in relation to the universal Church – revealed in the several different aspects mentioned here. Our **one God and Father,** along with **the Son,** and **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh, rules over all, works through all, and is in all.** That comprehensive statement points to the glorious, divine, eternal **unity** that **the Father** gives to believers by **His Spirit** and through **His Son**. We are **God** created, **God loved**, **God** saved, **God Fathered**, **God** controlled, **God** sustained, **God** filled, and **God** blessed. We are one people under one sovereign (**over all**), omnipotent (**through all**), and omnipresent (**in all**) **God**.[153]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for the perfect unity that **You** model, being three yet one! Praise **You** that **Your** unity is so perfect that **Yeshua** prays for a unity like the one **He** has with the father, for all to have.* ***Holy Father, keep them in Your name that You have given Me, so that they may be one just as We are . . . those who believe in Me . . . that they all may be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, so also may they be one in Us, so the***

world may believe that You sent Me (John 17:11.20c-21).

*How wonderful the comfort that **You** choose to live within those who love **You**. It is great that **You** adopt those who love **You** into **Your** family by **Messiah's** redeeming blood **(Ephesians 1:7)**. It is amazing that **You** are always with me, living within me. **Yeshua answered and said to him: If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him (John 14:23).** What a joy it will be to live in unity in heaven, a time of peace and praise and eternally worshiping you our Awesome Heavenly **Father**. **I in them and You in Me – that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them as You loved Me (John 17:23).** In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*