



## OPEN

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This past Sunday we celebrated several individuals coming into membership. What does the Bible say about people being members of the Body of Christ? In Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul tells us. The Body of Christ, Paul says, is the spiritual community a person is born into and made a part of upon belief and faith in Jesus – what we call ‘church.’ Paul reminds us here in this text and other places in scripture, such as 1 Corinthians 12, that every believer has been made a part of Christ’s body of believers, and it’s in the Body that believers grow and become spiritually mature through the giftings and service of others.

Paul also reminds us that it is in the Body of Christ that we are to practice a new kind of life together that reflects God’s love and holiness. In the Body, we learn to leave our old way of life behind. God has intended that our life in his Body serve as a kind of spiritual greenhouse. Like a greenhouse, the Body is to be the environment where we begin to grow and bear fruit in our walk with Christ. This week we want to look at the various ways God intends to grow us as we commit to being an active part of his Body and help others do the same.

## REFLECT

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- In verses 1-6, Paul talks about unity. What kind of unity? And how does he suggest maintaining it? What attitudes are listed that help keep unity? What is ‘bearing with one another’?
- In verse 11, how would you describe in your own words each of the 5 ministering roles Paul lists?
- In the bottom half of the chapter, Paul lists a number of ‘old self’ sinful attitudes or actions. What are some of them?

## DISCUSS

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- Church membership expresses commitment to a local Body of Christ. What are some common excuses people make for not joining or committing to a church and how would you answer them?
- What could our Connect Group do to help protect and promote the unity of the Spirit here at Wellspring?
- In this chapter, Paul talks about holiness by putting on the ‘new self’ of Christ’s righteousness. Is this kind of emphasis on holy living needed today? Why? Why not?
- Being a part of the Body of Christ is a spiritual reality. According to Paul in this chapter, how does this unseen spiritual reality get ‘seen’ and lived out in the Body?
- In thinking about the 5 ministering roles Paul mentions in verse 11, how much do you see these in play at Wellspring? Which roles do we maybe need to see more of and pray for?
- In verses 29-32, what kinds of things ‘grieve’ the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit?

## APPLY

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- 1) Is there a relationship you have with someone in the Body you need to forgive or build a bridge with? Without naming the person, ask for prayer for this.
- 2) Consider taking the step of becoming a formal member of Wellspring to express your commitment to Christ’s body. Approach a pastor to take the next step.
- 3) What gifts or abilities do you believe God has given you? What is one way you could use them in the Body?

## PRAY

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- Pray for the Holy Spirit to move us as a body to greater place of unity.
- Pray for the strengthening of one another to live a life of holiness in putting on the ‘new self.’
- Pray also the 5 roles of ministers in our Body.