

# The Fullness of Christ - Eph 4

by Phil Beach Jr.

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life worthy of the calling you have received, being completely humble and gentle, and making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

**Duration:** 42:16

**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:1

**Topics:** "Fullness", "Unity in the Body of Christ", "Spiritual Maturity"

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## Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the importance of experiencing the fullness of Christ as outlined in Ephesians 4, urging believers to pursue spiritual maturity and unity in the body of Christ. He explains that while believers are justified by faith, they must also strive for a deeper relationship with Christ, which is facilitated by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Beach highlights the role of church leaders in guiding the congregation towards this goal, stressing that their purpose is to serve the church and help members realize their high calling in Christ. He calls for a balance between the Word and the Spirit, warning against legalism and mysticism, and encourages believers to run the race of faith with intention and purpose.

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## Transcript

Having been commissioned by God, he was also given grace by God, found in Colossians Chapter 1, you don't have to turn there, you can go to Ephesians 4, we'll go there momentarily. Colossians Chapter 1, verse 28, we proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom. So what? The intent of Paul's teaching, the intent of Paul's admonishing, the intent of Paul's encouraging, the intent of Paul's instructing, the intent of Paul's entire ministry is summed up in this entire verse here that we read this morning, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

It is the will of God, it is the intent of the Holy Spirit, it is the supreme desire of Jehovah our Father in heaven, that every single true born again believer who has received the gift of salvation by faith in Christ, repentance from sin, it is God's will for every single believer to press on after getting on the road, running the race, we'll go into that scripture tonight in 1 Corinthians Chapter 9, once we get into that race and begin to enter, it's God's will for all to see Christ himself as the supreme goal and desire for the believer to obtain. That we have obtained Christ, that we have received him by faith, yet it is God's desire for us to experience in a very real intimate way that which has been brought for us the moment we believe in Christ. We use the example this morning of how when we study the Reformation that began around 1500 with Martin Luther, the church began to experience a restoration of the life of the word of God, as you said

God chose you, that the word of God is quick and powerful.

When the word of God is only a dead letter, it doesn't do a thing to bring partridge, it exposes our sin, it is incapable of bringing righteousness to those who hear it without the aiding and quickening power of the Holy Ghost. This is why God gives us the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost takes the written word and transforms it into the very impartation of the life of Christ into our spirits, into our minds and into our lives. He transforms the word of God, the written word of God into our very spirits and it becomes quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword.

This is what Paul meant when he said God has given me the ministry of life, not the ministry of death. The ministry of life is that ministry which the word of God imparts to people who have the Holy Ghost. When someone does not have the Holy Ghost, they read the word of God and it exposes their sin, it shows them how unworthy they are, it shows them how far they have fallen from God and therefore it leaves them.

That's why God gave the law to Israel, Paul said God gave the law to Israel, the written word of God, so that Israel could see their sinfulness, so that the whole world could stand guilty before God. So when the word of God is alone outside of the power of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, it turns into that which exposes our sin. But when the Holy Ghost gets a hold of our mind, gets a hold of our hearts and imparts the very life, the very power of Christ himself into us, into our spirits, then suddenly the veil is removed.

As Paul taught in Corinthians, and when the veil is removed, the word of God is no longer a book of codes and laws and regulations that bring us into captivity, but it becomes a book of life that imparts the very life of Christ himself. This is why we must give emphasis to communion with God, as well as communion with the word of God. You can't emphasize one and de-emphasize the other.

We ministered on this months ago. When we have Holy Ghost with no word, we end up with mysticism. We end up with spiritual experiences that are not grounded in the word of God.

Or we have the word of God with no Holy Ghost. We end up with legalistic, dogmatic, orthodox religion. With absolutely not enough life to raise up alive.

It's dead, dead, dead. So when you combine the two, the word of God with the spirit of truth, you've got dynamite. Dynamite.

So we say that God's word became life in 1500, which started the barren earth. And there's been people ever since that have gone from blowing to doing, from faith to faith. They've been brought from where justified by faith into the place where we're at now as a corporate body.

Experiencing and enjoying the mighty blessings of Pentecost. The worship, the praise, the singing, the dancing, the gifts, the fruit. But now God is saying once again, in his confounding word of God, let us move on unto perfection.

Let us move on unto maturity. Let us press on that we may win Christ. That we might be found in him.

That we might realize through experience that which has been brought for us through faith in Jesus Christ. That is the ultimate. That is the absolute ultimate.

There's nothing greater than for the ministry of Christ himself and the life of Christ himself to have free course within the corporate body. We know as a fact that a believer can understand the doctrine of

justification and be justified, but not allow Christ to have free course. And this can be traced all through the move of God from 1500 to 1700 with John Wesley, with the revelation of holiness.

John Wesley trumpeted to a generation of Christians that not only are you justified by faith, but that same faith can free you from captivity. Can free you from the bondage of sin. That same faith can enable you by the power of God's word to live a holy life once separated unto death.

Amen. That's a good message. The message of sanctification and holiness.

Let me not be an idiot and be outpouring of the Holy Ghost. The restoration that Jesus is a healer. And that not only does Jesus heal the soul, but he can heal the body.

And God gradually began to restore back to the church the truth about Christ and what he's brought for the church. And now I believe we're standing at another day, at another hour. When God is calling us, let us go on unto perfection.

And according to Paul's own testimony, all of his admonishing and all of his teaching and all of his exhortation was intended to produce within the believer this cognizance, this consciousness of I must press on. I can't plant where I'm at. I've got to go on.

You know the song Higher Heights? Higher ground. Thank you, Norman. Higher ground.

That's what he wants. That's what he wants. So Paul said, to this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

So having understood this, that the very energy of God is working for this intent, then we need to understand properly what this intent is. What is this that the energy of God is working to accomplish? What is this that the power of God was enabling Paul to accomplish? What was it that God wanted that caused him to place within the apostle Paul such an energy, such a power, such an ability to endure? You know God must really have an intent. God must really have a desire.

God must really have an intense, an intense prayer for his people or else he never would place within one of his vessels, Paul, such an energy to enable him not to faint. How good to know that you and I can perfectly understand why God puts this great energy in Paul. Let's go to Ephesians chapter 4. Ephesians chapter 4. Now Ephesians 1, 2, and 3. Ephesians 1, Paul talks about the glorious work that God brought in Christ.

Ephesians chapter 2, Paul talks about the glorious work that Christ brought in the believer and that we are partaking now and sharing in the resurrection power. The death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, we share in that as believers. Ephesians chapter 3, Paul talks about how he was commissioned by God to be a minister to the Gentiles.

To reveal to the Gentile nations that they can become part of this great body of Christ. And after, in Ephesians chapter 3, after praying for the Ephesians, he opens up Ephesians chapter 4 by saying, As a prisoner for the Lord then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Now, this has nothing to do with your actual vocation.

This has nothing to do with a profession. This has nothing to do with a secular profession. Although God wants you to do your best at any particular profession that you may be called into, this scripture has

nothing to do with it.

When Paul says, As a prisoner for the Lord then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. He is specifically talking about the calling that he identifies in Ephesians chapter 1, verses number 20 and 21. And on through to 23 where he talks about Christ having been raised from the dead.

And then in Ephesians chapter 2, he tells us in verse number 6, And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realm in Christ Jesus. This is the awesome call that the believer has experienced upon receiving Christ Jesus. It is a call to be delivered out of hell and translated out of the kingdom of darkness.

Being placed into the kingdom of God's dear son, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a call to be loosed from the sin that has bound us, that has held us captive. That basically was the death sentence that we were under.

It is a high heavenly calling. This is what Paul referred to in Ephesians chapter 4. And Paul is here saying that you are to live a life worthy of that calling you have received. A life worthy of that calling implies a life of faithfulness, of humility.

A life where we walk trusting in God. Now let's continue on here because Paul once again, see Paul can't get away from this ultimate revelation. It's a desire of his heart for the Ephesians to comprehend this.

Like I mentioned this morning, the Ephesians understood their justification. They understood the baptism in the Holy Ghost. They received it in the book of Acts.

We find that the Ephesian believers received it. We find that they understood the blood of the lamb. They understood these things.

But Paul is pushing for them to understand and comprehend the fullness of what God brought for them. In so much that they can realize it and experience it. And this is the burden of the Holy Ghost in this day that we live in.

Now Paul describes in a practical way how to be worthy of this high calling. Verse 2. Be completely humble and gentle. Be patient, daring with one another in love.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Now the Bible says to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit. The unity of the Spirit is not uniformity.

The unity of the Spirit is not uniformity. We all become the same people, the same personality. Unity of the Spirit is not agreeing on a whole splitting doctrines.

That is not unity of the Spirit. But unity of the Spirit is a body of believers allowing God to knit their hearts together in love. That's what the unity of the Spirit is.

See there's three conditions in the New Testament that people want to qualify for if they want to be a part of a local fellowship. These conditions differ from accepting someone who's a Christian. Let me explain myself.

Three conditions. The Bible teaches that there must first of all be unity of the Spirit. That is, a body of believers must allow the Lord to knit their hearts together in love.

This is done by the Holy Ghost, shedding the glory of the love of God in our hearts. Romans 5. Number two, not only must there be unity of the Spirit, which is love, but there must also be people that speak the same thing and say the same thing. So not only must there be unity of the Spirit for a local church, but there must also be unity of the essential doctrines of the Bible.

If you are to fellowship with a group of people, there must be agreement. There must be speaking the same thing. Paul exhorted the Corinthian believers to speak the same thing.

To say the same thing. That means that you must be a part of a fellowship that believes in the life, the death, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you want the fullness of God, you must believe.

You must fellowship with people who believe in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the infilling of the Spirit. So you have to speak the same thing. So you have the love of God.

You have this agreement on the essential doctrines of the New Testament. There is one more condition that must be met if we are to be a local fellowship and have unity. And that is, we must have the same purpose.

The same purpose. And of course, this is what constituted the condition in Acts chapter 2, when they are all one accord and of one mind and of one heart. So a body of believers must have unity in the Spirit, which is produced by God's love leading us together.

Secondly, they must have the agreement of the essentials of the Word of God. And thirdly, they must have the same purpose. They must desire the same thing.

The ultimate purpose for a local body is the desire to glorify Christ. That Christ might be made manifest. That Christ might truly operate for us in our lives.

And of course, that purpose can be extended to whatever. Now, many Christians misunderstand this and they use these conditions as the basis to reject or accept someone as a Christian. That is incorrect.

Listen, this is the basis for close fellowship. It is not the basis for accepting someone as a Christian. There are many Christian brethren that I've met here in Hackenstock that I could not fellowship with in an intimate way.

Such as go to their church and be a part of their fellowship. Because we differ. We differ in speaking the same thing.

I believe God wants to raise up gifts in this church. I believe God wants to use many of you in the gifts. But these brethren wouldn't accept that.

So we couldn't have fellowship. We don't speak this. Our purpose is different.

Our purpose is different. But guess what? That doesn't mean I can't go up to him and give him a big hug. And say, how you doing brother? And go out with him for a cup of coffee and fellowship with him and talk with him.

And there's many young Christians who reject other Christians because they have different beliefs in regard to what God's doing. But they're both Christians. You should never reject anyone if they're truly a Christian.

And this is what this church stands for. We accept and receive anyone who is a true Christian. And anyone can come here who believes in what we believe.

Who speak what we speak. That's essential. So you've got the three essentials for close fellowship in a church setting.

And then the only essential to fellowship outside of the church setting is, are you a believer? Are your sins washed away? There's a lot of Christians that I have enjoyed being with who would not agree with the ministry here. But hey, that doesn't mean they're not part of the body of Christ. So don't ever misunderstand these things.

Don't ever reject somebody because they don't accept the fullness of the Spirit. They don't believe that God performs miracles. Don't reject them.

God hasn't rejected them. You ought to reject knowing that God hasn't rejected. See? So Paul's saying here, be completely humble.

Verse number three, may every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Now there is one body and one Spirit just as you were called in one hope when you were called. Now again, he's talking about this calling to apprehend, to attain, to realize, even experience what has been brought forth through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

There's one body, that's the body of Christ. Did you know there's not going to be denominations in heaven? There's only going to be one body and that's the body redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. One Lord, and that's of course the Lord Jesus.

One faith, and that's the Savior faith. One baptism, and I believe Paul here is referring to the baptism that places us into the body of Christ. Because in Hebrews chapter six, that writer says there's many baptisms, Paul.

So there's one baptism that places us into the body of Christ, but the Bible speaks also of water baptism, and the Bible speaks also of Spirit baptism. So while it's true there's one baptism here that places us into the body of Christ, we are all by one Spirit baptized into one body, Paul said. That's the baptism that places us into the body of Christ.

Then there's a water baptism that identifies us with the death and resurrection of Christ. Then there's a Spirit baptism that comes to us and fills us and calls us to be enlightened and opens up our understanding to the things of God. So there are three baptisms, but of Paul's putting us into the body of Christ, there's one baptism.

One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given, as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says, when he ascended on high he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.

What does he ascended mean except that he also descended to the lower earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all others in order to fill the whole universe. It was he who gave son to the apostles and prophets, evangelists and pastors and teachers. So when Paul mentions in verse number 7, to each one of us grace has been given, he's talking about a gift.

He is not limiting anyone's access to Christ. He's not limiting anyone's access to coming to the full realization of who they are in Christ. This doesn't limit anyone.

This doesn't take anyone and put them up here and someone down here. Paul said, listen, God has given many gifts to the body of Christ. He gave apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers.

But why did God give the church teachers and apostles and prophets? So that the church can serve them? So that they can build kingdoms for themselves and write their name in neon lights? Absolutely not! God gave the church gifted individuals for one reason and one reason only. And Paul showed us the reason in Colossians chapter 1. That they might struggle and labor day and night. Pulling themselves out into the church so that the church can realize their high calling and fellowship with Christ.

So that they as a corporate body can come into the fullness of Christ. I say that God has given gifted men to the church. Not so the church can serve them.

But rather that they can serve the church. And point them and lead them and guide them to the shepherd of their soul. The bishop and overseer of their spirit.

So that they can realize in an ever increasing basis in an ever increasing revelation of the glory of the inheritance. And what God has invested in each little land. So that they can enter in by faith into this fullness.

And thereby walk with Jesus Christ and experience his continual victory and glory from day to day. At any time leadership raises itself up for any other purpose than this. They are in error.

Error. That we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus and him crucified. The true acid test of any leader is whether or not he is dedicated to hide behind the cross of Jesus Christ.

And point men and women to Christ himself. And lead them to the word of God. And labor day and night not to build themselves a kingdom.

But to pour themselves into the lives of the church. So that the church can raise up and reign with Christ now. Experiencing all of the benefits, all of the precious great and mighty prophecies.

That they brought for them the moment they aged. Hallelujah. The day of plain church is over.

The day where men build personal kingdoms is over. Peter said that judgment of God shall begin at the house of God. And that's where it's beginning.

And God is sending forth his spirit. And he's purifying and purging his house. And he's bringing down the shepherds.

The gifted men who have used their gift. And who misused it. And used their power.

And used their influence. And used the pulpit as a place to propagate their own pet peeves. Rather than to pour themselves out into the word of God.

And help the church grow up in Christ. God is doing all of that. And he's raising up an entire new generation.

Entire new generation. Who refuse. Who refuse.

To refuse the high call of God. Who refuse to build themselves a personal kingdom. But rather who are called groups of Christ.

And because of the mighty grace brought to them. They labor day and night for the sake of the church. This is what brings joy.

To the Savior's heart. Verse number 12. Why did God give to the church gifted individuals? To prepare God's people.

I love it. Doesn't that sound like Paul in Colossians? I admonish. I labor.

I exhort. To present every man perfect in Christ. To prepare God's people for works of service.

So that the body of Christ may be built up. Edified. Encouraged.

Strengthened. Made strong. Until.

Now here's the goal. Here's the goal. God gave gifts to the church.

So that. We can be encouraged and strengthened. Edified and built up.

But that's not it. See it doesn't stop there. We're building up and we're strengthening up.

The building blocks. Building stones. But they consummate.

Into something. This is the something. That the Holy Spirit.

Is bringing upon this day. That we live in. Now see we're built up and strengthened.

Through all the restoration. Of the word of God. We're built up and strengthened.

But we understand we're justified. We can be sanctified. We can be filled.

We can be used by God. To minister one to another. See all of these things build us up.

And strengthen us. But they're not to be kept on. Or to go on.

Here's where we go. Until we reach unity. In the faith.

And in the knowledge of the Son of God. And become mature. Listen.

Attained to the whole measure. Of the fullness of Christ. Wow.

There it is. There's Paul's cry for himself. In Philippians chapter 3. There's Paul's cry.

For the Colossians. In Colossians chapter 1. There's Paul's cry. For the Galatians.

In Galatians chapter 4 verse 19. That Christ might be formed in you. Here.

Paul cries out again. Here he says. That you might reach unity in faith.

And in the knowledge of the Son of God. And become mature. Attained to the whole measure.

Of the fullness of Christ. Now see can you understand this? So many sincere preachers. I've heard about many of them.

God bless. God bless them. I've even heard Dr. J. Vernon McGee.

You know he's gone to be with the Lord. He's gone to be with the Lord. What a homecoming huh? Boy I tell you.

I think he's letting Jesus speak now. Over in the law. But so many preachers have said.

You know. You know we don't need anything. We've got it all in Jesus.

These people that are seeking more of God. Or more of the Holy Ghost. They're just misled.

They don't understand it. Well if anyone had experienced salvation. The Ephesians did.

But Paul suggested that there was a sense of maturity. Which brought an attaining of the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. So though in Christ we are complete positionally.

Yet there is a completeness. That God wants to see experientially. And this is the completeness that Paul is talking about.

In this scripture. And then verse 14. Describes what will happen.

When the church. Can come to the fullness of the measure of Christ. And understand experientially her position.

As being seated down with Christ in heavenly places. Here's what's going to happen. Then we will no longer be infants.

Tossed back and forth. By the waves. And blown here and there.

By every weird doctrine. And by the cunning and craftiness of men. And the deceitful scheming.

Instead. Maturity. Causes us to speak the truth in love.

We will in all things. Grow up into him. Who is the head.

That is Christ. To grow up into him. Is to.

Become a vessel. Where everything he wants. And longs for.

Can be expressed through us. See to grow up into him. Is to have a body and a head at a reunion.

You know what I'm saying. Wouldn't it be a bummer. And aren't there some diseases.

That prevent the body from obeying. The head. What's one of the common diseases.

Multiple sclerosis. You say I want to get up. And your body doesn't respond.

To grow up into Christ. Is to have a body. That immediately responds to the wishes of the head.

This is what Christ is looking to realize. In his body. And you.

You you. Me. Quite frankly speaking.

Christ is looking. To wish. And the body and the head.

What bliss huh. We are his body. Flesh of his flesh.

Bone of his bone. Know ye not that you are the Holy Ghost. And that it is God who dwells in you.

By the Spirit. We are no longer foreigners and aliens. But fellow citizens.

With God's people. Members of God's household. In him the whole building is joined together.

And rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together. To become a dwelling.

In which God lives. By his Spirit. If God lives in us by his Spirit.

Then God wishes. That Christ who is the head of the church. Will have such free course in the body wherein he dwells.

That every wish he has. Every desire he has. He can fulfill it through the body.

And this is the ultimate desire. Of Christ. Verse number 16.

From him. The whole body. Joined and held together.

By every supporting movement. Grows. And builds itself up in love.

Notice what builds us up. We build ourselves up in love. As each part does.

It's work. The astounding revelation. That Christ wants us to realize as his people.

Is that it is his desire. For us. By faith.

By seeking. By yielding. By responding.

To grow you too. The fullness. Of him.

And he might have free expression. In our lives. I'm going to read one more scripture.

1 Corinthians chapter 9. 1 Corinthians chapter 9. How many here want to be free from running aimlessly. From beating in the air. From doing a lot but accomplishing nothing.

Again. You can be free from this snare. By properly understanding.

Christ's ultimate intention for you. Which is. Attaining to the fullness of the statue of Christ.

And letting everything you do. Help you. Obtain that goal.

If God can make that real in your life. You'll never be guilty of running aimlessly. And when you stand before him.

No matter how many mistakes you've made. You'll hear these blessed words. Well done.

Thou good. And faithful. Servant.

1 Corinthians chapter 9. Beginning in verse number 24. Do not know that in a race. All the runners run.

Only the. Only one gets the prize. Run in such a way.

As to get the prize. Now Paul says the prize is Christ. Right? We obtain that prize.

By earnestly seeking after it. Verse 25. Everyone who competes in the games.

Go into strict training. They do it to get a crown. That will not last.

But we do it to get a crown. That will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly.

I do not fight like a man beating the air. No. I beat my body.

And make it my slave. So that after I preach to others. I myself.

Will not be disqualified. For. The prize.

It is my personal belief. And I can substantiate it by scriptures. But I will not go into it tonight.

That to be disqualified for the prize. Is not to live one's salvation. But to be disqualified from the prize.

Is to fall short. Of what. Christ.

Would have wanted us to accomplish. And consequently. Fall short.

Of the possible reigning with Christ. In the life to come. You'll notice in the book of Revelation.

You'll find to him that overcometh. To him that overcometh. Seven times.

I believe the ones. Who overcome are those. Who have not entered the race.

Only. But have entered it. Intending to win Christ.

And this is the ultimate desire. That God wants for every true believer. Well.

We have a race to run. And we have a goal. We have a prize to win.

So. We can ask the Lord to help us. In this race that we're running.

Anyone have any questions? We're going to let you go. We'd like to. If we could.

Guys and girls. If you would like to give us a. A few minutes of your time. To help us.

We have to carry everything back over. If you would sign up.

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