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Forerunner Church
The Charge to Function in Your Gift

Alright, good morning everyone. Go ahead and turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 4. We going to be doing part two of what we talked about last week, growing in friendship together and the necessity of that, the glory of that, the challenge of that.

Well, my hope this morning is to inspire courage within our hearts to engage in the promises of God and why He brought us there together. And not just to give us courage to keep showing up or sign up again, but to provoke us a little bit and get us out of some of the, kind of, slumber that is easy to fall in to.

And we're going to talk about this passage in Ephesians 4, specifically verse 16, but I am going to read a little bit before that this morning. What I feel is this: is that the Lord is inviting us into friendship to engage in a deeper level in friendship, harmony, unity with one another even though it's challenging.

And that one of the reasons why isn't just so that we don't feel lonely. That's not the primary reason that we need friendship and relationship. We are going to talk about that this morning. One of the main reasons why we need friendship and relationship is because we can't express and grow and walk in what God has called us to if we are just on our own. We must learn to relate to one another and to bring our gifts, our spiritual gifts to the body so that the body can be nourished and grow up into the fullness of God and to all that He desires for us.

You know, the older you get the more you begin to understand the importance of harmony within the body. You know when I read the New Testament I read about Paul and all the times that Paul the Apostle, he's emphasizing unity and harmony in the body, just over and over and over and it's like Paul, "We get it." I think that the older he got, the beatings he got, the more his body began to break down, he was beginning to understand all the more the unity of the body and the harmony of the body. Like this thing needs to work together. And not be at war with itself. Right?

One guy described it like this, he said, "You know, it's like the older you get the harder things get. When you're 15, if you get hit by a car your body will heal but the older you get, if you get hit by a car, your body will stay broken the rest of your life. That was a joke.

No, it's serious man. The older I get, when I get hurt, then I get banged around, you know I did youth ministry for years and playing basketball and playing anything, I've fallen out of gold carts, I've been knocked over by people that I thought we were playing football and we weren't. I've been ninja attacked from behind by over zealous kids that have been watching too much YouTube. I mean your body starts to break down after a while. It doesn't heal like it used to. It's not like you're 18 anymore. You know? And all the more I just, I'm beginning to understand the importance of unity and harmony within the body. Because it's hard to function when your body is telling you eight different things that are going wrong all at the same time, it's just

challenging. It's challenging in the natural, it's challenging in the Spirit. The Lord goes, "I want my people to walk in unity together as one body to accomplish my plans and my purposes."

So, I'm gonna read this. Ephesians 4 and verse 15, Paul says, "Speak the truth in love that you would grow up in all things in Him." Hallelujah. Hallelujah that God has called us to grow up. Glory to God we would grow up into Him who is the head, Christ. That's who we're becoming. We're becoming a person. We're not trying to just become a well oiled machine of, you know, community and mission. It's not about an organization. It's about relationship. It's about relationship with God and relationship with one another. That's the primary goal. We want to grow up into these things and become mature in Christ.

Verse 16, Paul says, "The whole body is joined and knit together by what every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does its share." And that's what I want to just have that as the backdrop in your mind this morning. Every part does its share. You're a part of this spiritual body. Are you doing your share? Are you walking in what it is that God has called you here for? Are you doing it in the marketplace? Are you doing it in your family? Are you doing it in ministry? Are you doing it wherever it is that God has you and positioned you? Are you walking in your part? Are you that joint what's bringing supply and causing the body to grow? We don't just grow as a body at weekend services.

We don't just grow on Sunday mornings. Actually, as a matter of fact, the majority of growth happens through the normal experience of human relationship, friendship groups, family dynamics, bumping into one another, bumping into people that we disagree with and don't see eyes to eyes with at our job and our workplace. That's where we grow and we come into mature love before the Lord. And I like weekend services but this is not primarily who we are and what we are supposed to be about. It's not just about getting a little bit better weekend services and some more people in the room and a little bit more, you know, zippy preaching and worship. You know?

Jesus has in mind something very different than just cool gatherings together. He has something different. He's looking at His Bride. He's looking, you know the Father's looking at His Son, He goes, "I'm raising up a compatible partner for Jesus the most righteous godly wholly beautiful man, He goes, "I'm raising up a people that will look just like Him. And the way that I'm going to do that is by the body of Christ functioning in her gifts and her calling with the grace of the Holy Spirit resting upon her." He goes, "And I'm gonna establish this all across the nations of the earth before my coming." The church, the body of Christ, friendship and relationship, that is the catalyst for how God is going to have a bride that is pure and blameless at the day of His coming. I mean something as simple as relationships, something as simple as a friendship group where you spend time with a group of people hearing their stories, sharing meals together, ministering our gifts to one another, participating in ministry together, adopting a mission, discipling one another, discipling people that are younger, I mean it is the simple things, God says, "I seems so simplistic, it seems so base." He goes, "But these are the things that I have chosen that will be the most wise things that will prepare my people for the coming of my son."

Often times we imagine that it's the huge gatherings and the anointing of the Holy Spirit blowing across the room and you better believe that I want that. But you go home at a certain point and

it's just you and it's just your family and you get together with your small groups on a Monday night and it's just us. Most of our experience in Christ is not overly exciting, overly anointed, we mostly feel normal, a little bit dull and we want to give up. That's the normal experience.

I'm not trying to say that that's normal as in like we just give up and we go "Wow, this is miserable." But I'm just saying the Lord uses the most simple basic things in our life, human relationships, friendship group, family in order to purify and establish His people in holiness, blameless before Him.

Well, in Genesis 2, verse 18. By the way the teaching notes are available online on the church website if you want to go there. You can download those. In Genesis 2:18, God says a pretty staggering thing. After He creates all of the order, the heavens and the earth, the stars and the trees and the planets and here's Adam. And the Lord is saying throughout the course of history or as He is creating (that's what I mean) He's saying throughout His creation process He's going, "It's good. It's good. It's good." And He gets to Adam and He sees that Adam does not have a suitable companion and He says, "It's not good." He says it over (I think) six times that creation is good and He looks at Adam and Adam is alone except with God and He says, "This is not good." This is a staggering statement to us because what it means is the human being, the human heart is not created to live alone. There's certain dynamics, there's certain things that God has instilled into us naturally by His Spirit. He's hard wired us for relationship. Further it implies something a little bit offensive to you this morning. We will see how awake you are.

Could God be implying that actually, God Himself and just man, one on one was not enough? How awake are you this morning? Some people focus so much on the Lord at the neglect of others. And they just want to go off on their own, they want to be, you know, the Lone Star Ranger. They want obe, you know, live off in silence, "Just, all I need is God and da da da da." And many of the people that are doing that, they are actually running from the issues and the pressures that human relationships create.

There are people that are called to live in solitude and in silence. I just don't know any.

And often times it's see as this, like, like badge of honor. "I'm just called. I don't need people. It's just me and God and some candles and essential oils and I just got my diffuser going. Um come to me. And we're just going to live in this way." And often times, and I have met a couple of people, you know, like that. And often times they're doing that because they are so wounded from human relationships. And when we talk about loneliness and the issue of loneliness, it's like we all resonate with that. We don't like to be lonely. We are like, "We totally get that."

But then when you actually talk about relationships, friendship, true spiritual family, it brings up a whole other host of problems and challenges that you're saying yes to. For example, people love the idea of spiritual family. It's like, "I'm home. This is my family." And we like the feel good feeling of belonging and being there and being understood and being supported and all those things. That's great.

But there are issues of family that we don't like. For example, not everyone thinks the way we do. Now everyone acts the way we do. Not everyone cleans the house the way we do. Not

everyone wakes up in the morning at the time that we do. You know, I don't consider myself a morning person. It takes me a couple of hours. I'm actually afraid, ashamed to say how long it takes me, but it takes me a long time to warm up to walk to talk to another human being. No offense. And I have met many beautiful children that that is not the case. They are ready walking into the room, very, very, very early and having deep conversations. I've had so many conversations with my children when I am not awake. I'm asleep on the couch. I'm like passed out because I am so tired. I'm just laying there and they will come and have a full conversation with me. I will not recall it at all. They will get me to agree to all sorts of things while I'm in that in-between state. It's kind of dangerous.

You know when we're talking about family and here's another thing we don't like: accountability. We like the idea of accountability, but we don't like actual accountability. Accountability is someone calls us on something that we're doing that's wrong un-thoughtful, not thought through, whatever, it's like, "Hey, why are you doing that?" We're like, "Why are you so mad at me? Why are you so offended at me? Why are you judging me? Why are you labeling me? Just let me be who I am." That's not family. Family involves accountability. It involves discipline. Hello.

We're not ready for that. We're like, "Throw me on the family train, throw me on the friendship train." Like, "I'm in." It's like the Lord chastens those whom He loves. I mean, this is just real. We don't need to choose God or people. We don't have to pick one. You know He gave us the First and the Second Commandment. What God cares about is that we have them prioritized in the right way. Prioritized doesn't mean you through out one in the name of the other. You stand up and preach a message, you go tell your family back home and you go preach the First Commandment somebody will email you about the Second Commandment.

It has happened so many times. Anything that I have preached on over the years or taught on somebody comes up with their idea of the counter point. And I just want to say, I just want to state for the record, "We don't have time in 30 minutes to cover the entire narrative of the Holy Scriptures. We don't have time to give everything nuance and every opposing view and like present this balanced smoothie of whatever that we are so desperately craving. Okay? I just want to talk about prayer sometimes. And then other times it's like, I want to talk about loving my neighbors. But I don't want to have to talk about both at the same time. So can we just resolve that?

I'm serious, it's like you talk about prayer and people are like, "What about preaching the gospel brother? You can't pray all day." It's like you talk about preaching the gospel people are like, "You forgot your prayer life, you dull Christian." It's like man, let's just give Dale a break guys.

The Lord wants us to have it prioritized. The Lord wants to establish something in this city that is going to, in some way, touch the nations of the earth. The Lord said, "It would be a grand view of the kingdom from Grandview." A grand view of the kingdom. A mean I have thought of that phrase many times. The grand view of the kingdom is a full manifestation and operation of the gifts of the Spirit. I mean, not a full manifestation of them, that would be Jesus, but you know, operating in all the gifts of the Spirit in one little geographic location together. I mean preaching and healing and signs and wonders and discipleship and miracles and the Lord told us

this way before we were even in Grandview. At the time the church was over in Overland Park. It's nice over there.

Lord goes, "You're going to Grandview because I'm going to give you a grand view of the kingdom. You're going to be by Harry Truman's property." And we are like "What, what are you, what is going on?" And 35 years ago, that was such a far and distant idea that there would be a grand view of the kingdom, that we would be in Grandview. Here we are in Grandview. Harry Truman's house is just right across the road and, you know, the missions based purchased Harry Truman's farm property that's undeveloped in Grandview. One day we are going to move there. We're going to build the house of pray there. And we are going to do unceasing day and night worship on that land. We are going to meet there as a church. I mean there are so many things that are happening, such bizarre ideas. The Lord goes, "I got this hodgepodge group of people from all over the earth that I'm sending there and I am going to give you a grand view of the kingdom." The Lord wants to strengthen us. He wants to encourage us. He said that you're going to be a Zechariah 4 to Ephesians 4 people. You're going to be built, the church ministry of Ephesians 4, the apostolic ministry, the gifts of the Spirit, all this flowing together as one body and joins and encouraging and nourishing and it's going to be built on day and night prayer.

It's going to come from the foundation of day and night prayer and the Lord insisted that we would build it in that way. He made it really had to do anything else, actually. He goes, "I want it founded and built and bathed on day and night prayer. I want there to be a foundation of prayer, prayer, prayer, prayer, prayer, prayer." That why we talk about prayer. That why we do prayer. We want our kids to grow up thinking that a radical prayer life is normative in the body of Christ. The Lord said in 1982, He spoke to Mike in Cairo Egypt, "I'm gonna change the understanding and expression of Christianity in the whole earth in one generation." The Lord insists that the people of God are a people of prayer and a people that prioritize that First Commandment to love Him with all of their heart, their soul, their strength, their mind. The Lord insists upon this. He gave us signs back in those days. He said, "There's going to be unplugged TV sets." He's prophesying smart phones. That's didn't exist back in 1983. He said, "Your going to be on Harry Truman's land, believers throughout Asia, they are going to connect with you. They're going to come here and connect with you." These are things 35 years ago. He said, "There's coming a time when there's gonna be five thousand full time intercessory missionaries, singers and musicians that for their job the Lord had said, "Do this as your job. You're not going to give Me rest.""

That is a historic anomaly. What has happened the last 20 years is a historical anomaly. We're a weird people. And we can't be every single thing in the body of Christ. We can do our thing and we can play our part but we can't do what the church down the road is supposed to do. We can't play their part. I only got one right hand. I don't need two right hands. I need a left hand. I need a left leg. Right?

The primary call of the church is that we would build the great commission and the part that we play in it has a distinct and unique feature just like every other ministry in the entire earth. Every ministry plays a distinct part in the grand scheme of the storyline of God.

Matthew 28, verse 19 and 20, the Lord says to go and make disciples in all the nations. Jesus says in Matthew 16 verse 18, He says, "I'm going to build my church, the gates of hell will not prevail against it." But the church is built through many people, many congregations and many nations. He goes, "I'm gonna take weak and broken people, I'm gonna stick them together in communities. They're going to love Me. They're going to pray together. They're going to live together. They're going to work together. They're going to cry together." And He goes, "And I'm gonna shame the principalities and powers." And whatever schemes the devil cooks up in his devilry kitchen, He goes, "I'm gonna bring those schemes to ruin through My people."

Think about this.

The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He didn't say, "I'm gonna send Michael the Arch Angel to kick down the gates of hell." He didn't say, "I'm gonna release all of my angelic hosts, the hosts of heaven to come and just destroy the gates of hell." He says, "No, I'm going to do it through my church, my people that live in unity together, that live in community, that value friendship, that value relationship, they put the first commandment in the first place." He goes, "I will destroy every scheme of the devil." When the Church is the Church the plans of the evil one over our cities, over our families, over our jobs, over our health, when the Church is the Church the schemes of the devil cannot prevail.

Beloved, this verse either means what it says or doesn't. And sometimes we get so bogged down with the pressures of life and just how everything looks in the natural, we forget that there's a God who holds the keys of hell and the grave. He goes, "No, I have the keys and I'm giving you the keys of authority to walk out and build my kingdom on the earth." He goes, "You're going to do it in the most simple dorky way, it's going to blow your mind, actually."

Cause we are like, "Keys to the kingdom, ya." We're charismatic's. That kind of stuff gets us pumped up. It's like there's another keys to the kingdom conference, we're like, "Whooooooo!"

It's like what the key to the kingdom? I don't know but some guy had it in a dream and we go this big prophetic key we're going to give to some leaders on the stage, we're gonna unlock some stuff.

Sometimes the keys to the kingdom are as simple as show up Sunday night to friendship group and ask people how they're doing. Find out who in the church is hurting or suffering or has been in the hospital, take them a meal, pray for them and bless their kids. Sometimes it just simple but we make it this grandiose complex thing. And that's what happens is that when the prophetic time actually breaks in on the people we're expecting somebody to be flying around levitating and on fire riding a chariot in the air. And then it's just like simple. Like that just meant like they were to love people more and cry when their read the word and love their wife. This is the stuff. These are the keys to the kingdom that He's talking about. He goes, "I want you to live together. I want to build my kingdom and establish my church and My promises are yes and amen."

Every ministry in the body of Christ serves a distinctive part. Not one ministry is supposed to do it all. The Lord gives us specific assignments. And here's the trick: Do that assignment. If the Lord has given you an assignment, here's what you do: The assignment.

And if you don't have like a specific thing and you're like, "Hey, I just wandered in here." Then do the assignment of the people you are with. What's the corporate assignment? Do that. And some need to remember the assignment that the Lord gave them because life is really hard and God calls us to perseverance and I'll talk more about that in a second. But sometimes we forgot what the Lord spoke two years ago but we're not even walking in what He told us to do two years ago. We're going, "Why is everything so hard? I need a dream. I need a prophet, an angel." No, you need to be obedient. Do what God called you to do and don't quit and don't do someone else's assignment because the Lord told them do the assignment the Lord called you to do. And then whatever corporate people you find yourself in, see how your assignment fits into that assignment and serve and love and bring your gift.

Some of our assignment includes keeping a 24/7 sanctuary. I mean that thing never closes. It just keeps going on and on and on and on. I mean it's 20 years. I mean the demon's got to be worn out. They're like, "We can't get a vacation. Give me a break, something." And we're going, "No. Jesus is worthy. He's beautiful. He's awesome. He's magnificent. We won't let you rest."

Some people don't like that we keep a 24/7 sanctuary. They want us to stop. They want us to do something else. They want us to do a different assignment. They're going, "It's weird that you guys just keep that thing going." And we're like, "I know."

Like, we don't have to answer them. Like, "Theologically, here's why you're wrong." We don't have to answer. We just be like, "I know it's weird. And it wouldn't make sense accept God said do it so that's what we're trying to do."

And we need all the churches and all the different ministries in Kansas City, we need them all to do their part and their function. We can't do what the church down the road does. And we're not supposed to.

And you're not supposed to do what someone else's ministry is. Like, sometimes I feel like a golden retriever puppy when I hear people like passionately talking about their ministry. It's like, "We got this thing and we're like going in and we're like blowing things up (like in a good way) like people are getting saved and healed and disciples and the Lord is just on this." And I am like, "Sign me up." And I am like, "Wait a second. That's not what I'm supposed to do. That's not my assignment before the Lord. We have to do our assignment before the Lord as a people."

Anyway, there is more listed there. Here's an important part of the assignment that the Lord has. The grace of God rests upon you when you're doing your assignment. Whatever He calls you to do, He'll resource you to do. When He looks at the disciples and He looks out at the five thousand that are hungry, He goes, "Hey, you guys go feed these dudes. Go feed all these people." And they're like, "What?" And they are like, "Lord, we don't have what it takes to do

it." And then He goes, He tells the disciples, "What do you have?" And they go, "Well, we got this kid's lunch."

See the Lord was going, "No, no, no I want you to actually feed these five thousand people." And they were going, "We don't have the grace to do it." He goes, "You have a lunch, that's all I need."

Sometimes the call seems so big and powerful and praise God it is and we can't get in a board room and scheme it out and do through human wisdom. The promises have to be bigger than what we can accomplish with a retreat with the Shiloh retreat center. They have to be bigger. They have to be beyond what we can do and if we just, "Well, we got these ministries in order and got these people rallied and dut, dut, dut, dut, dut, then we could just do it." And if you can do that then you're not hearing the promises of God.

There's a realm of impossibility in terms of what God wants to do to release a grand view of the kingdom is an impossible thing in Grandview. I don't know if you've driven through it recently. It's an impossibility. He tells Abraham, He goes, "Hey, you and Sarah, you're gonna have a baby." He's like, "He ha, I don't think so. I mean I know how stuff works. You know? It's not happening." The Lord is like, "Oh, it's happening."

See, there's an impossibility. There's an impossibility of Jesus walking on the water and going, "Peter, get out of the boat." Without the impossibility without the faith, without the 'I can't do this without you, I'm gonna die.' Then it's not a real promise. He goes, I want to really there are so many promises that God wants to release. He goes, "You can't make these things happen but you can seek Me and you can keep coming again and again and again. Keep the sanctuary, raise up forerunner messenger, do what I called you to do."

Some people are going, "I'm not about that." Then I want to urge you to find where it is that you're supposed to do what God has called you to do. That's okay. We need you. We need you badly. We need every believer walking and functioning in their gifts and in their assignments.

That's what I want to call us to do today. Early on we were told the journey of these promises would be long. The journey is long. And comrades having friendships around us to sustain us through the journey is not just optional it's critical. The Lord calls us to persevere. You know if you don't quit, you win. All the things that we've heard over the years, don't quit, sign up again, don't give up. You know what that is? It's perseverance. I want to tell you something, perseverance doesn't make for a great prophetic fortune cookie word. You upon up a fortune cookie and it's just like, "You need perseverance." What do you think is coming? Trouble, pain, difficulty.

Over and over again, Paul is calling the body of Christ to perseverance. We are reading through the New Testament, we're like, "Persevere, long suffering." We're like, "Amen God. Amen. You called me to persevere." Perseverance doesn't feel good. If you go up to somebody and give them a prophetic word, "Brother, you need perseverance." They're like, "I'm over it." You go up to somebody, you're just like, "The Lord says over you divine love." You would be like, "Yes, I'm gonna feel God's love for me. I'm gonna love other people. Life is going to be, it's

gonna stir my emotions." Perseverance doesn't stir your emotions. Perseverance is grit your teeth. Perseverance is don't give up. And I'm gonna there's gonna be so many reasons why you're gonna wanna give up, your gonna wanna quit, your gonna wanna eject. I want to tell you in your individual assignment before the Lord, you need friends to keep you in the game, to persevere. And they've got to know your story. So that when they come to you and they're like, "Hey man, I'm thinking about, you know, going and doing this other thing or whatever. " You go, "Wait, wait, wait, you just told me two weeks ago that you had a dream that you were supposed to do this thing, now you're saying, what are you doing?" See without friendships, you don't have that. You're left up to your own whims and journeys. And we got this whole, just whole generation out there just floating around place to place on whims, emotionally driven. No. What has God called you to do? Do it.

Stay steady. Be faithful before Him. When God evaluates his servants at the judgment seat in Matthew 25, He's looking for faithfulness. He's not looking to see if they had a little pizzazz, if they had a little edge on their ministry, if they had a little zing, a little zip. Marketing strategy and great social media, He's not looking for any of that. He doesn't care how big the services were. He doesn't care how effective it was, how many this, how many that. He doesn't care, He goes, "Did you persevere? Or did you not quit." Don't quit.

One reason that we need small groups, and we read it at the beginning, and now we're going to look at it, Ephesians 4:16, it's the place, small groups is the place where your spiritual gifts are grown and function. It's the place. We can't, we got all these people in this room right now, not everybody in a 40 minute window can all go, you know, operate in your spiritual gifts. You can't do it. You can't do it in a weekend service or a church gathering. You can't do it. It's impossible. And we're going to see the necessity and the call that you would walk in your gifts before the Lord. What do you bring?

How can you strengthen and bring nutrients and life to the body? It's critical that you do. Because if you don't then you're not a part of the body or the body is malformed, or the body is weak. Do you follow?

I want to say it strongly this morning that I am charging us to get into a small group where we can function in our gifts, where you can walk in your ministry assignment, you can bring the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given you and you can strengthen and encourage other believers with them. It is necessary that you do this. And I am not just talking about like a department or like a ministry endeavor or we got lots of people on worship teams. I'm not talking about that. It's got to be more than that. It's got to be more than that. It really does. You have to share stories about life, you got to know other people's prophetic stories and journey and what brought them here and what makes them tick and what makes their heart come alive. You got to know those stories because they're going to need perseverance and you're gonna have to tell them their story back to them and say, "Don't give up."

Don't give up.

Think of a wedding. When you're at a wedding, you know what's supposed to happen? Everybody that's watching the wedding is supposed to hold the bride and groom accountable to

their vows. When they vow at the front, if you're there, you know they used to say, "blah blah blah, hold your peace if you disagree." Or whatever it was. We don't say that anymore because it's too wild, too afraid of confrontation and too many mad people out there. Let's just do it. Anyway.

But when you're there and you're hearing those vows, you're supposed to hold that couple accountable to their vows. You're, you know, the groom, the best man, the matron of honor, the bridal party, they're there with the covenant entering into the covenant and going, "We're not going to let you break those vow that we heard. You need perseverance. You're gonna want to break those vows. I guarantee it." There's no marriage that exists on the earth that people are not wanting to break their vows at one time or another.

We got to hold each other accountable. You need family. You need to walk in your gifts.

Listen to what Paul says, he goes, "You're gonna grow up in all things into Him who is the head Christ." I'm saying like a prophetic declaration because that's what it is. This chapter is a prophetic declaration about what God is going to do with His people. Because you will, you are going to grow up into the head. The bride will be made ready in the nations of the earth.

Now let's look at this. He says, "The whole body, that's joined and knit together." Paul is saying that the body must be joined and knit together in order to accomplish the purpose of growing up in to all things. Let me say it more simply. We can't be who God sees us as until we come together as a joint. Let's talk about what a joint is for a second. You have a piece of bone and then you have a cup over it. Alright? This is joint 101 school. You got a piece of a bone and a cup. There are two different parts, they are not the same part, right? They are two different parts but they work fluidly together. There's no friction when it operating correctly, there's no friction there. When this part moves this part understands what's happening and there's not this creaking groaning painful shooting blaaaah. Because we all know that when it creaks, when you kneel down and both your knees crack and your kids look at you like, "Are you okay dad?" You know something is wrong. The body's not operating in harmony together. He goes, "You're supposed to be closely knit, your close enough that you work together but you're not hte same person, you're distinct. You're distinct people but you can't be far enough away. Okay now we are talking relationally, you can't be far enough away because then it's dislocated and they can't work together.

He's saying so the body is joined and knit together when there's any pain or disruption in that it disrupts the purposes of God. Why? Because this function, us living, dwelling, being together in friendship, is what causes us to grow up into Christ.

Now you know when you get near to people, there's friction. Everybody wants to be near to someone until you actually are. You get near to someone then there's friction, why, because you're two different parts. But He's going, "I'm gonna help you." The Spirit does, "I'm going to be that fluid in between. Just right in between, it's not just the cup and the bone, it's the cup, the bone and my Spirit, the Spirit and the bond of unity." And in Christianity you are brought into a spiritual reality. He goes, "I'm going to help the relationship if you do it on My way and on My

terms. You love one another, you be humble, da, da, da, da, da." He outlines all the things that we are to do in the beginning of the chapter.

In the early days of this ministry the Lord spoke that our safety lies in drawing close together. There's safety in coming close together. It's from the blueprint prophecy. "I would have you draw close together. I say to you again, your safety lies in drawing close together. There will be the unity of the Spirit." Why? Because there is safety there.

But it's not just safety like, "I'm not alone anymore." That's not the safety. The safety is that (I think, this is my interpretation) the safety is that you don't give up on the assignment I have before you. If you give up on the assignment, you get off track, off course, you get weary, if you give up and there is not that unity there, He goes, "You're not going to be in a safe place."

Every joint supplies and every part does it's share. He says it right here, "What every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does it's share." What happens? It causes growth. If you are part of this spiritual family and this church community, you're to do your part. Lord has you to do your part. To bring what it is that you offer to relate to people in your gift but actually give the gift away. You don't give it away with a contract. Don't give it away with expectations. We're to operate in our gifts. What is the gift that God has give us? Some have a bunch, some have a few. It doesn't matter. Every believer has one. We are to take those gifts, we're to give them to other people with kindness and gentleness and encouragement.

Those that operate in the gift of faith are to bring the gift of faith. The workers of miracles, the healings, etc, all the gifts would operate in the body. That's what causes the growth of maturity in the body. That's really important that have that. Every person supplies something and he's not just talking about a joint supplying something because a joint doesn't actually supply anything. The word that he's using for joint here means a band of connectedness. That is the idea, a band of connectedness with other believers. And I believe the primary way to do that is in a small group setting. It have that band of connectedness with another believer. Where I bring you your gift, you bring your gift to me, I bring my gift to you and we are caused to grow and come up in maturity in Christ together. And the whole body benefits from that exchange. It's so simple.

And I want to give us just a minute to advise to operate in our gifts in a way of humility because a lot of people, they have strong gifts and they want to force their way in with their gifts and make other people do and behave in certain ways because of their gift. That's not being a giver. How many of you have received a gift and you're like, "This doesn't feel like a gift, it feels like a contract that I'm signing. I feel guilty, actually, receiving this from you because it comes with a whole bunch of strings attached." Bring your gift like Christ did. He gives, He gives, He gives. Bring your gift in that way. Relate to people in that way. See your gift as not fully developed or fully matured and be humble and go, "I'm in the process. I'm in the process of growing in the prophet. I'm in the process of growing in the gift of faith."

You get the idea. Let's pray and invite the worship team to come out. Let's all stand if you're able to.