God of Love

Creator and holder of my heart,

You've held nothing back!

You have loved me with all of You, more than I can comprehend!

But You don't wait for me to fully understand before You come and take my hand.



God of Love

Your powerful, tender love encircles me, it draws me, it captures me, it unravels me... I'm tangled in a love that can set me free.

I can't help but kneel before You in gratitude, to think that You, Jesus, my KING, would die for me, would dwell in me!



God of Love

Your love roots me.

Your love establishes me.

Your love invites me to be honest with You.

I lack nothing – You want to fill me with Your love in every way.

So, I breathe deep.

I thank You.

I receive.

I rest.



07

Unity in the body of Christ

Ephesians 4:1-16

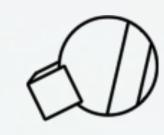




Paul writes to Ephesus encouraging them in:

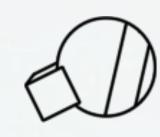
1-3 The **Heavenly Calling** of the Church

4-6 The Earthly Conduct of the Church



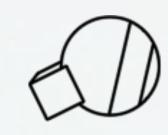


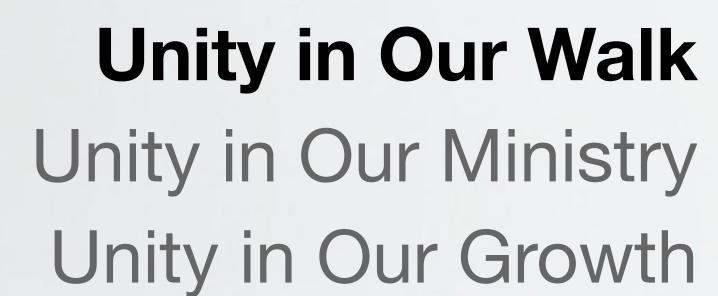
Because God has saved us and made us one new humanity in Christ, our lives must preserve the unity the Spirit has created (Ephesians 4:1-16).



Unity in Our Walk
Unity in Our Ministry
Unity in Our Growth

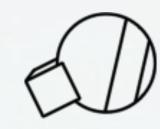
Life Together in Christ ^{4:1-6}
Serving Together in Christ ^{4:7-13}
Maturing Together in Christ ^{4:14-16}





Ephesians 4:1-3 NIV

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.





Age Culture Ethnicity Political Persuasion Education Sexuality Socio-Economic Status

Dividing Wall

of Hostility

Ephesians 2:14

"Them"

Unity, not Uniformity

Division in the church breeds atheism in the world.

"Us"





Unity in Our Walk

Unity in Our Ministry
Unity in Our Growth

Ephesians 4:4-6 NIV

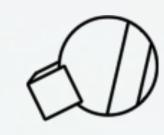
There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.



Unity in Our Walk
Unity in Our Ministry
Unity in Our Growth

Ephesians 4:7-10 NIV

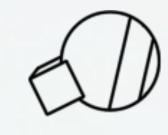
But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸ This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." ⁹ (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)



Unity in Our Walk
Unity in Our Ministry
Unity in Our Growth

Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...

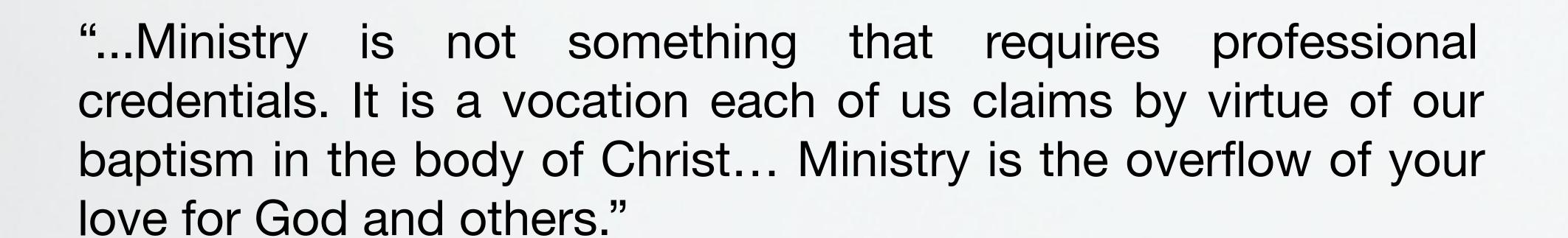


"All followers of Jesus are called to ministry. That's the whole

concept of the Christian church: we are the body of Christ. Each one of us is a member with special gifts to share. Jesus's mission on earth was to call a community together and empower them for ministry in the world..."

Henri Nouwen, Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith





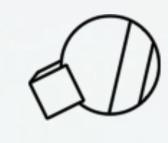
Henri Nouwen, Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith

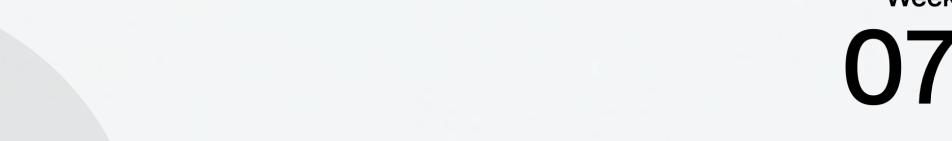


Ephesians 4:13-14 NIV

until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and **become mature**, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Unity in Our Walk
Unity in Our Ministry
Unity in Our Growth





"Crafty Cunning & **Deceitful Schemes**"

Gospel of Upward Mobility Gospel of Self-Help Gospel of Identity Politics Gospel of DIY Spirituality

orthodoxy correct beliefs

orthopraxy correct living

orthopathy correct affections

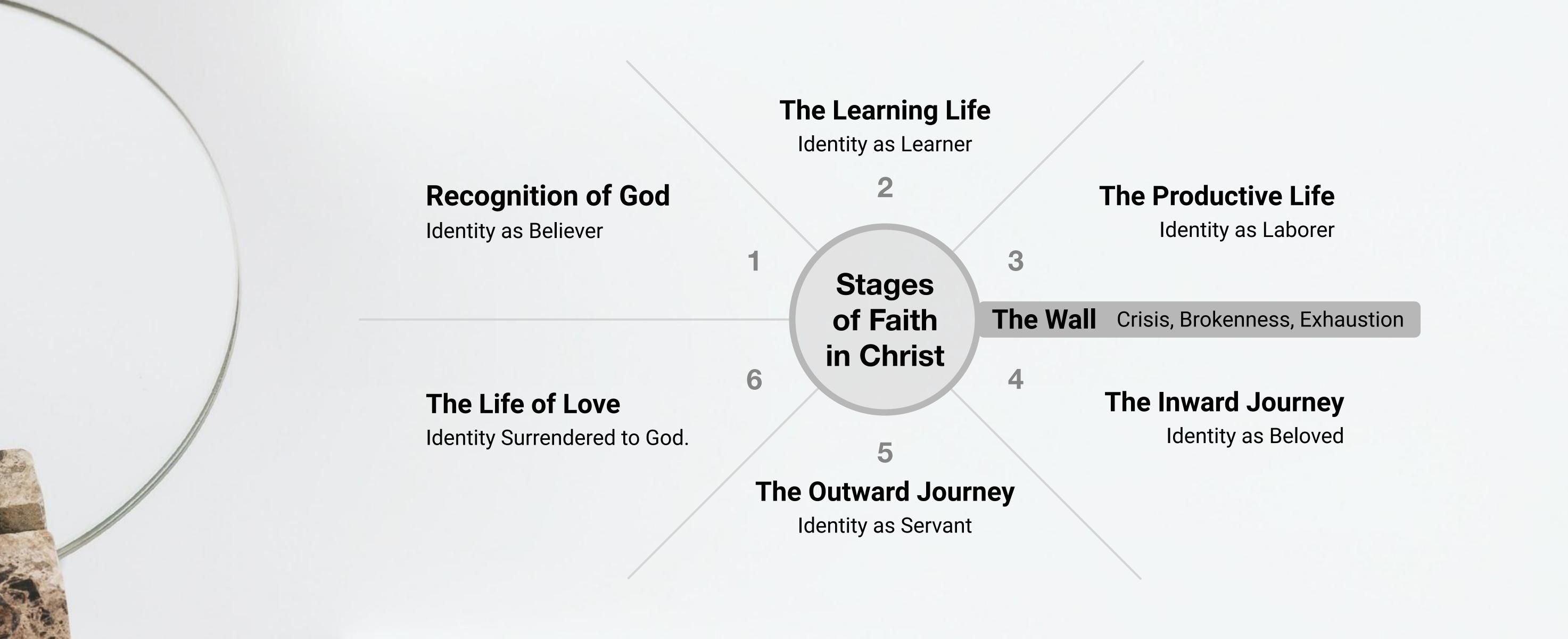


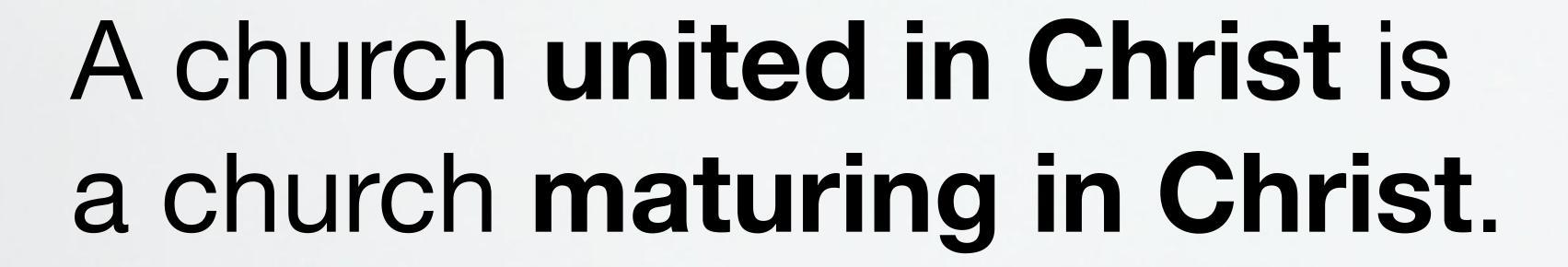
Unity in Our Walk
Unity in Our Ministry
Unity in Our Growth

Ephesians 4:15-16 NIV

Instead, **speaking the truth in love**, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.







Two Practices:

Community - following Jesus with other followers of Jesus.

Confession - agreeing with God in proclaiming what is true.





Nicene Creed 325 AD

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father.

Through him all things were made.

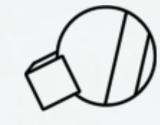




Nicene Creed 325 AD

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead.

His kingdom will never end.





Nicene Creed 325 AD

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to life in the world to come.

Amen.

