

PRISON LETTERS

EPHESIANS



PRISON LETTERS

Fill in the blank:

"I am most like Jesus when _____."



PRISON LETTERS

“I am most Jesus like when I defer my preference for unity.”



¹ 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.

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;
⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

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.)

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

¹¹ 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 ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature,

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

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.

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

¹⁵ 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.

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did
as they saw fit.”

JUDGES 17:6 & 21:25

There is no mistaking absolutes when
Jesus is king of your life and when
Jesus is head of the church

1) DEFERRING TO MENTORS



¹⁸ Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila.

Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchreae because of a vow he had taken. ¹⁹

They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila.

ACTS 18:18-21

He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.²⁰ When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined.

²¹ But as he left, he promised, “I will come back if it is God’s will.” Then he set sail from Ephesus.

ACTS 18:18-21

⁸ Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them.

ACTS 19:8-12

He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

ACTS 19:8-12

¹¹ God did extraordinary miracles through Paul,
¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that
had touched him were taken to the sick, and
their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits
left them.

ACTS 19:8-12

These three traits are humility,
gentleness, patience

2) DEFERRING TO THEOLOGY



⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;
⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

EPHESIANS 4:4-6

We typically view the church as “many”
(the local church), but we must return to
a more traditional view of the church as
“one” (the universal church)

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God,
the LORD is one.

DEUTERONOMY 6:4

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the
Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in
heaven and on earth derives its name.

EPHESIANS 3:14-15

We must ask ourselves,

“Will this strengthen the oneness
of the church?”

3) DEFERRING TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS



⁷ 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.”

EPHESIANS 4:7-8

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us
with him in the heavenly realms in
Christ Jesus.

EPHESIANS 2:6

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6

We might enter church with our preferences, but we must leave church with deference to the Holy Spirit

4) DEFERRING TO SPIRITUAL LEADERS



¹¹ 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 ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature,

EPHESIANS 4:11-14

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.

EPHESIANS 4:11-14

The office gifts are not just special abilities, but specific roles and responsibilities

² Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

2 TIMOTHY 4:2

Do the work of an evangelist.

2 TIMOTHY 4:5

¹⁷ Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account.

HEBREWS 13:17

Membership at a local church matters

5) DEFERRING TO THE BODY OF CHRIST



¹⁵ 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.

EPHESIANS 4:15-16

³ But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:3

For too long, believers have focused
on a “me” Christianity, instead of a
“we” Christianity

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,”

1 CORINTHIANS 12:15-17

it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

1 CORINTHIANS 12:15-17

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“We are most like Jesus when we defer
our preference for unity.”



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PHILIPPIANS

