

July 17, 2026

## Protect What God Is Building

*July Series: Stronger Together*

*Week Focus: Building Healthy Relationships*

**Scripture – Ephesians 4:3** - *"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*

---

## Devotional Reflection

Unity is one of God's greatest gifts, but it is also one of our greatest responsibilities. It is easy to assume that healthy relationships will naturally remain healthy, but Scripture teaches otherwise. In Ephesians 4:3, Paul urges believers to **"make every effort"** to preserve unity. Those words remind us that unity does not happen accidentally. Like every healthy relationship, it must be intentionally protected.

Every relationship will eventually face challenges. Misunderstandings will occur. Expectations will go unmet. Feelings will be hurt. Opinions will differ. The question is not whether conflict will arise—it is how we will respond when it does. We can allow small offenses to grow into major divisions, or we can address them with grace, humility, and wisdom. Healthy relationships are not those without conflict; they are those where people are committed to working through conflict in a Christlike way.

One of the greatest threats to unity is allowing small problems to remain unaddressed. A careless word, an unresolved misunderstanding, or an unspoken offense may seem insignificant at first, but left unattended, they can quietly damage trust and weaken relationships. Just as a homeowner performs regular maintenance to protect a house, we must intentionally care for our relationships before small issues become larger ones. Protecting unity requires consistent attention, honest communication, and a willingness to extend grace.

Paul's instruction to "make every effort" reminds us that unity is worth the work. It takes effort to forgive quickly. It takes effort to assume the best instead of the worst. It takes effort to listen before speaking and to seek understanding before drawing conclusions. These choices may not always be easy, but they honor God and strengthen the relationships He has entrusted to us. Every effort we make to preserve unity reflects the heart of Christ.

Today, ask yourself if there is anything threatening the unity of one of your relationships. Is there a conversation that needs to happen? Is there an offense that needs to be addressed? Is there a misunderstanding that needs clarification? Don't ignore what God is calling you to protect. Healthy relationships are built intentionally, and unity is preserved when people are willing to make every effort to keep it.

## Focus for Today

**Unity is a gift from God that must be intentionally protected.**

## Practice

- Ask God to reveal any unresolved issues that may be affecting your relationships.
  - Pray for wisdom before addressing a difficult conversation.
  - Refuse to participate in gossip, assumptions, or unnecessary criticism today.
  - Take one intentional step to strengthen peace and unity in a relationship.
- 

## Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of healthy relationships and the unity You desire among Your people. Help me make every effort to protect what You are building. Guard my heart against pride, gossip, resentment, and division. Fill me with wisdom, patience, and grace so that my words and actions strengthen unity rather than weaken it. May my relationships reflect the peace and love of Christ and bring glory to Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.

---

## Reflection Question

**What relationship in your life needs intentional care today, and what "every effort" is God calling you to make to protect the unity He desires?**