

Keep the Unity

Ephesians 4:1-7

- Paul urges the Ephesian church to remain unified in our passage of the day
- This is an encouragement every church needs, every individual disciple needs
- Those who have faith in Christ, and Him alone, for salvation, are one
- The Apostle provides some explanation of how we are one in this text

- While we have our individual responsibilities
- And our individual relationships with Christ
- We need each other
- And we have a unity that cannot be changed
- Our assignment is to keep it

- That is really our theme today
- From the text: Ephesians 4:1-7
- We're urged to "Keep the Unity"

- Paul begins by talking about his own discipleship
- He describes a mindset and a current set of circumstances
- But he immediately transitions to the Ephesian church
- To their mindset and to their calling

- We get into the discussion of unity and the character required soon after
- Let's read the entire passage, then take a closer look...

Ephesians 4:1-7

- 1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
- 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
- 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
- 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
- 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
- 7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

- How can this "prisoner of the Lord" help us with our vocation and our unity?
- Further details as we explore verse by verse...

Ephesians 4:1

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

- The Apostle begins with something that is literally and figuratively true
- He is a prisoner of the Lord

- Locked up for preaching in His name
- And eternally connected to Him, serving without reservation at His command
- He beseeches the Ephesian church
- That is, he summons them to his side, on the matter of walking worthy of their calling
- He wants them to join Him in demonstrating their commitment
- To show a worthiness that is in no sense their own
- Rather it is Christ's showing through them
- In essence, he is encouraging them to have the courage to rely on Christ
- Because they have work to do that is impossible
- He was doing that same impossible work of reflecting Christ in the world
- Thankfully, both had the Holy Spirit within
- Making the impossible, possible, but only by His power
- That's why they had to do it in a certain way
- And he describes it...

Ephesians 4:2

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

- We have lowliness because of reality
- It is Christ in us that does the work
- Therefore we dare not think too highly of ourselves
- Our meekness is a gentleness
- It is a strength under control
- We go about the work with this disposition
- And we should have a patience and endurance that is called longsuffering here
- We will need it
- Paul could testify of this
- As we work together, we will need forbearance
- To hold one another up, to sustain one another
- Because it won't be easy
- And in order to do that, we will have to love one another
- All of this will be done in love
- For our Savior and our fellow laborers
- That is how we will do what comes next...

Ephesians 4:3

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

- To endeavor has two general meanings if you look it up in a Bible dictionary
- To make haste
- And to exert one's self

- In essence, we have to do both in regard to unity
- To exert ourselves in keeping it
- And to do it quickly

- There is no time to waste
- The work of preaching and teaching and reflecting Christ must go on
- And we have been unified by Him to do it
- It's going to take work

- But we share in one Spirit
- And have a bond of peace in Him
- So we can do it

- The unity isn't brought about by us
- It is Jesus who brings us into God's family
- But we work to maintain it
- For it can be disrupted

- Because our calling is so important
- And His name must be glorified
- We have the duty and joy of doing it

- The reality is described as we go on...

Ephesians 4:4-6

- 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

- As we can see, the unity of God's family is real
- He has brought us into one body
- And made us one in many ways

- We have been made His body, the church
- We have one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, living within each of us
- And we are called with one hope that comes from Him

- The only Lord we have is Christ, Lord over all
- We share in one faith
- And have all been baptized into Him

- He is One God

- One Father
 - And He is over all
 - Above all
 - Shines through all that trust Him
 - And in all who are His children
-
- It is key to understand this as we work
 - God gives us grace to do it...

Ephesians 4:7

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

- We have a calling
 - God has given this calling to each of His children
 - And it won't be easy
 - It wasn't easy for Paul
-
- But we are unified to do it
 - So we have to carry it out in a certain way
 - But God gives grace to accomplish it
-
- And each one of us, individually, have this grace

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2024