

Ephesians 4 – 18 September 2022

“A Vibrant Unity”

Introduction

*Ephesians Outlined

*Chap 1-3 – **The Position of the Christian**

*Chap 4-6 – **The Practice of the Christian**

*Our Position = Not a new job, but a new identity

*Christ Jesus has invited us into a new life, a new position, a new identity

*Now Chapter 4:1 is the linking verse for whole book

Read Chap 4:1

1. In light of the great blessings of the amazing position that we're in, we should walk worthy
2. Live appropriately in unity in the position that God has called us into

*How do we live appropriately? Live in unity w/ God & His Church

***Here's 3 ways we grow in unity in the Christian life**

1st way to grow in unity is to accept God's design for unity (Vs 2-6)

Read Vs 2

1. Humility of mind, gentleness, patience, bearing with each other b/c of and with love
2. This is tenderness, even when we have the ability & right to dominate

Read Vs 3

1. Unity by the H.S. is source of peace w/ others
2. We don't make peace, Jesus did that
 - a. We just keep the peace, not quenching the peace that the H.S. has brought

Read Vs 4-6

1. The unity of the Trinity
 - a. Vs 4: Place, Power, Purpose (Holy Spirit)
 - b. Vs 5: Messiah, Method, Marker (Jesus)
 - c. Vs 6: One God to rule all aspects (Father)
2. There is no closed communion, or not accepting another church's baptism

2nd way to grow in unity is to enable the whole church to exercise their gifts (Vs 7-16)

Read Vs 7-8

1. When Jesus led us forth from bondage of sin, He blessed us w/ the H.S. & His empowerments
2. Every Christian is blessed with spiritual gifts

Read Vs 9-10

1. This's a parenthetical discussion to demonstrate why it's *now* that we received gifts from God, different than how God operated in the OT.
2. "All heavens" b/c there are three (II Cor 12:2)
3. Read Matt 12:38-40 - Jesus said, I'll be 3 days in the earth
4. In Acts 2:22-27, Peter quoted David's prophecy of Jesus not being left in hell
5. Luke 16 (Lazarus & the Rich Man Story) tells us there used to be a separate compartment of hell for those awaiting Christ

Read Vs 11

1. These offices are each given by Jesus Himself and they're different
 - a. They each require a calling (of God), character & confirmation (of men)
2. Purpose of the church isn't evangelism
 - a. Purpose of the church is to glorify God thru the gifts that He's given each one of us

Read Vs 12

1. From foundation of Jesus & then the apostles (Eph 2:20) working down to the pastor-teachers for bringing the church into maturity & completion

Read Vs 13

1. There's a building process here
 - a. Each believer learns from the apostles right down to the pastor-teachers
2. Intrinsic to the verse is we're all growing & changing thru life to be united in likeness of Christ
 - a. Think of a triangle with Christ at the top

Read Vs 14

1. There are devils within the church seeking their own gain (Read Rom 16:18 & Read II Pet 2:1-3)
2. Are we being tossed to & fro or are we growing?
 - a. Don't mistake movement for growth
3. We need to get rooted deep in God's Word
 - a. Matt 13: Sower & Seed & Read Col 2:6-7

Read Vs 15

1. We help the church grow & deal w/ deceivers by speaking the truth in love
2. The direction of maturity is toward Christ
3. When every member of the church is maturing, THEN we're growing in *all things*

Read Vs 16

1. Every member of the church uses their gifts to edify the whole church
2. "Compacted" = united in mind
3. This is love to help each member grow to become like Jesus

3rd way to grow in unity is to put away the selfish, old nature (Vs 17-32)

Read Vs 17-18

1. Before we knew Christ, we just went about to amuse ourselves (to not think)
2. We weren't interested in growing in knowledge & faith in God our Creator
 - a. But now He's gifted us a new heart (Eze 36:26)

Read Vs 19

1. Old nature is epitomized as being callous/greedy

Read Vs 20-22

1. Selfish, greedy lusts are opposite of life in the Spirit by Jesus
2. Jesus taught us sacrificial giving
 - a. Read John 15:13 & Read I John 3:16

Read Vs 23-24

1. The primary battlefield is the mind
2. 3-D (Body, Mind & Spirit) – Choose w/ mind to serve Spirit, not flesh
 - a. Read Rom 7:25 & II Cor 10:5

3. We'll either choose God or be pressed into the mold of this world (Read Rom 12:2)

Read Vs 25-27

1. The new spiritual man seeks peace & resolution, but how? (Read Isa 26:3)

Read Vs 28-29

1. There is a way to do all things right
2. It's not just avoiding evil, but doing it godly

Read Vs 30-31

1. We can *sadden* the H.S. within so much that we actually *quench* the fire Itself (I Thes 5:19)
2. Having H.S. but trying to live your way against Spirit is like grinding gears of a car's transmission
 - a. Grind enough & you can burn out the clutch

Read Vs 32

1. Cannot have unity where there's unforgiveness
2. We tenderly give forgiveness, which is not deserved, to keep the unity of the Spirit
 - a. Like Christ forgiving when we came to Him

Conclusion

So how do we live appropriately, in a God-honoring manner? It begins with unity & peace!

1. **Accept God's design for unity**
 - a. He has brought peace and unity by the cross
 - b. Now we just keep it
2. **Enable whole church to exercise their gifts**
 - a. Get firmly entrenching in God's Word
 - b. Activate the calling in your life to serve
3. **Put away the selfish, old nature**
 - a. We used to "amuse" ourselves in the empty entertainment of this world
 - b. Now we muse on the riches of God's life in us taking us back home to be with the Lord