



Division

Multiplication or multiplication in reverse?



4/28/2024

Dan Fisher - Division

Volume 2

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500 yr or 2000 yr history

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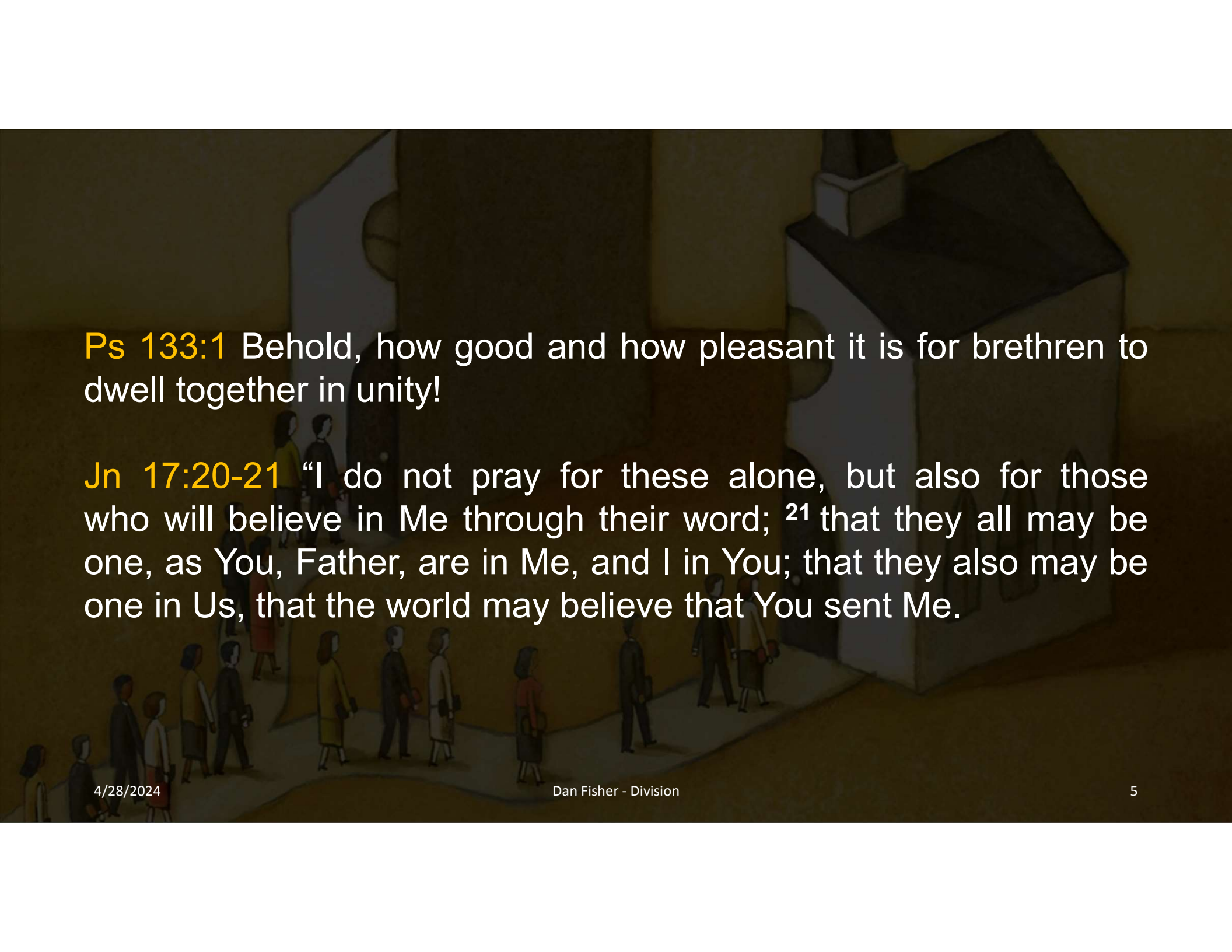


1. Unity is preferable

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Ps 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Jn 17:20-21 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

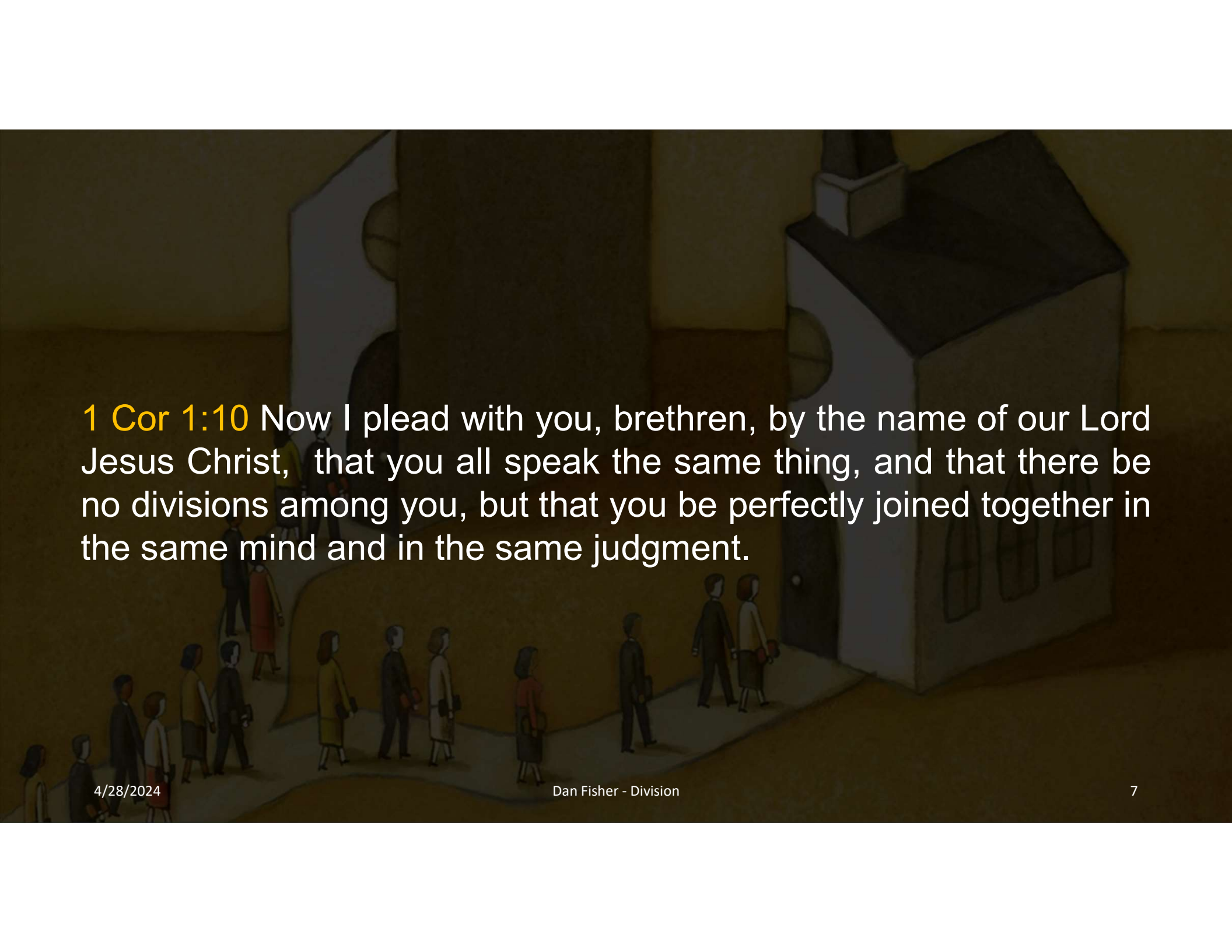
A dark, stylized illustration of a town. In the foreground, a large, light-colored building with a dark roof and a chimney stands on the right. Several windows are visible on its side. To the left, a large, dark, arched structure, possibly a tunnel or a large doorway, is partially visible. The ground is a mix of light and dark brown tones, suggesting paths and shadows. Numerous small, stylized figures of people in various outfits are walking along these paths, some carrying bags or briefcases. The overall atmosphere is somber and quiet.

2. Division is not inevitable

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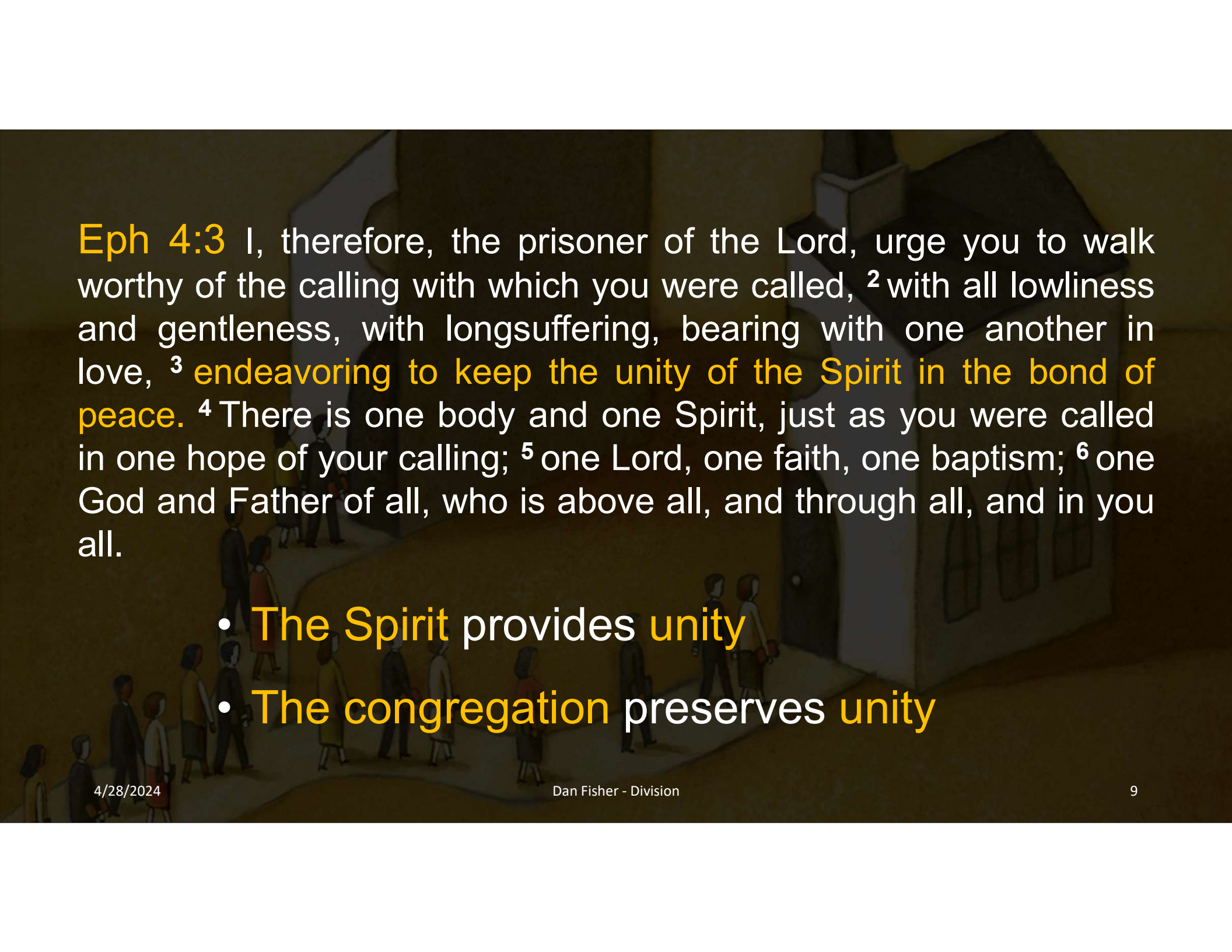
1 Cor 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.



If God has removed the division between Jews and non-Jews, can He not deal with our divisions?

1 Cor 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,



Eph 4:3 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ **endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were 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.

- **The Spirit** provides **unity**
- **The congregation** preserves **unity**



3. Division can be acceptable

God hates division and acts of divisive people


Prov 6:19 And one who sows discord among brethren.

Rom 16:17-20 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. ¹⁸ For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.



Marshall Segal, Christian teacher and author, “Some Conflict Is Healthy”:

“Over time, division in healthy churches produces unity, not division. ... Factions will come, and they must, but they come as catalysts to a deeper, more meaningful sense of family. ... Why has God allowed for conflict in the church? In part, so that we might see the gold he’s beautifying within her. How dull might the gold of genuine faith seem without a fire to refine and illuminate it?”



Paul and Barnabas experienced division

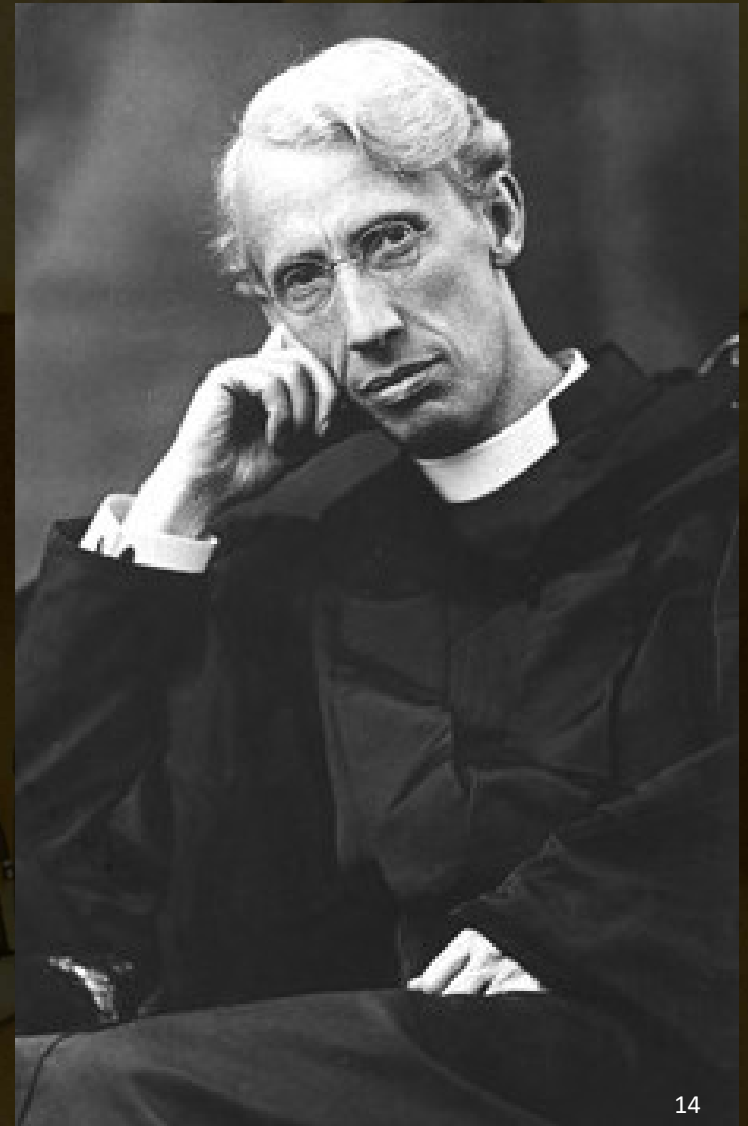
Acts 15:36-41

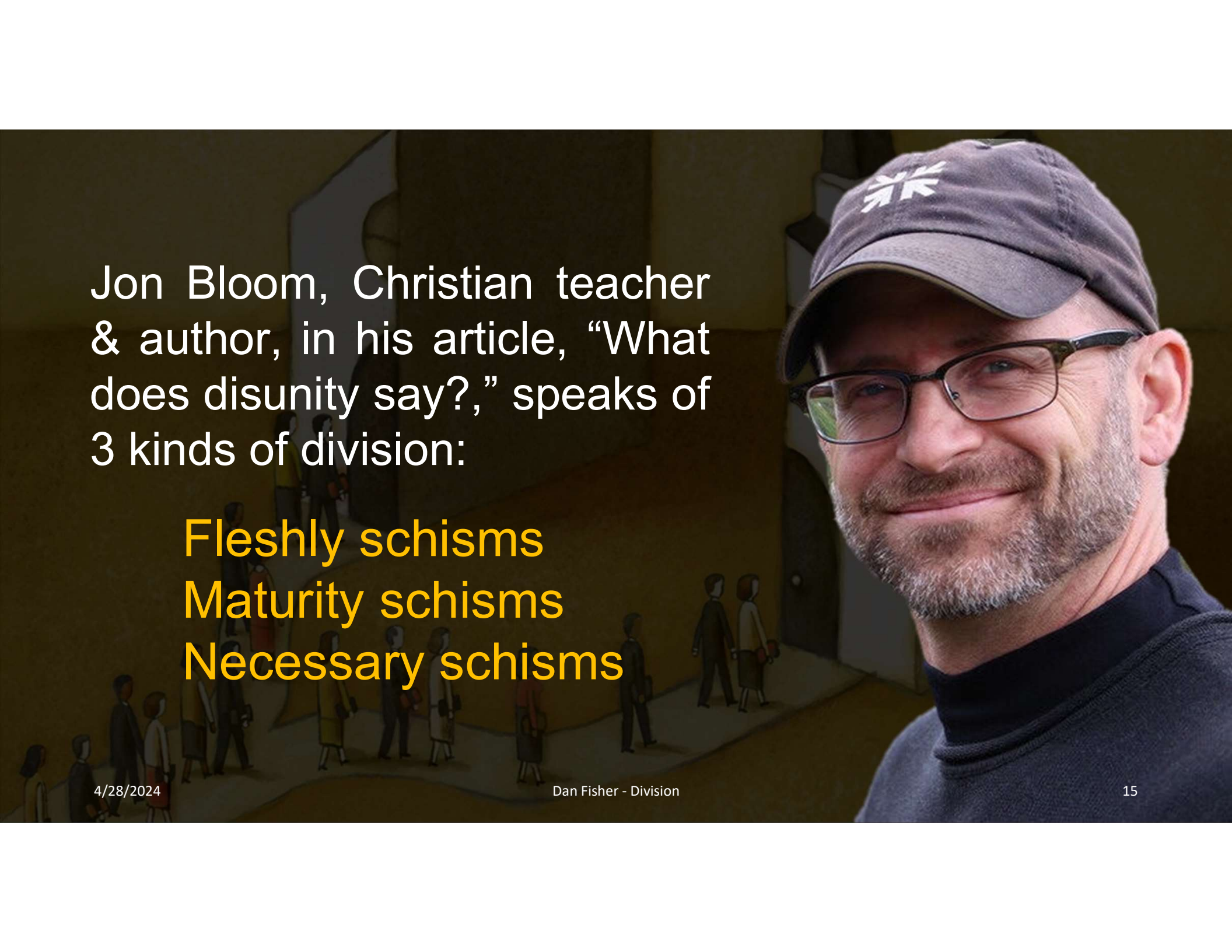
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“I am greatly comforted when I read this. I am thankful for the revelation of the humanity of these men. If I had never read that Paul withstood Peter to the face [Gal 2:11-14], and that Paul and Barnabas had a contention, I should have been afraid. These men were not angels, they were men.” G. Campbell Morgan





Jon Bloom, Christian teacher
& author, in his article, “What
does disunity say?,” speaks of
3 kinds of division:

Fleshly schisms
Maturity schisms
Necessary schisms

- **Maturity schisms**

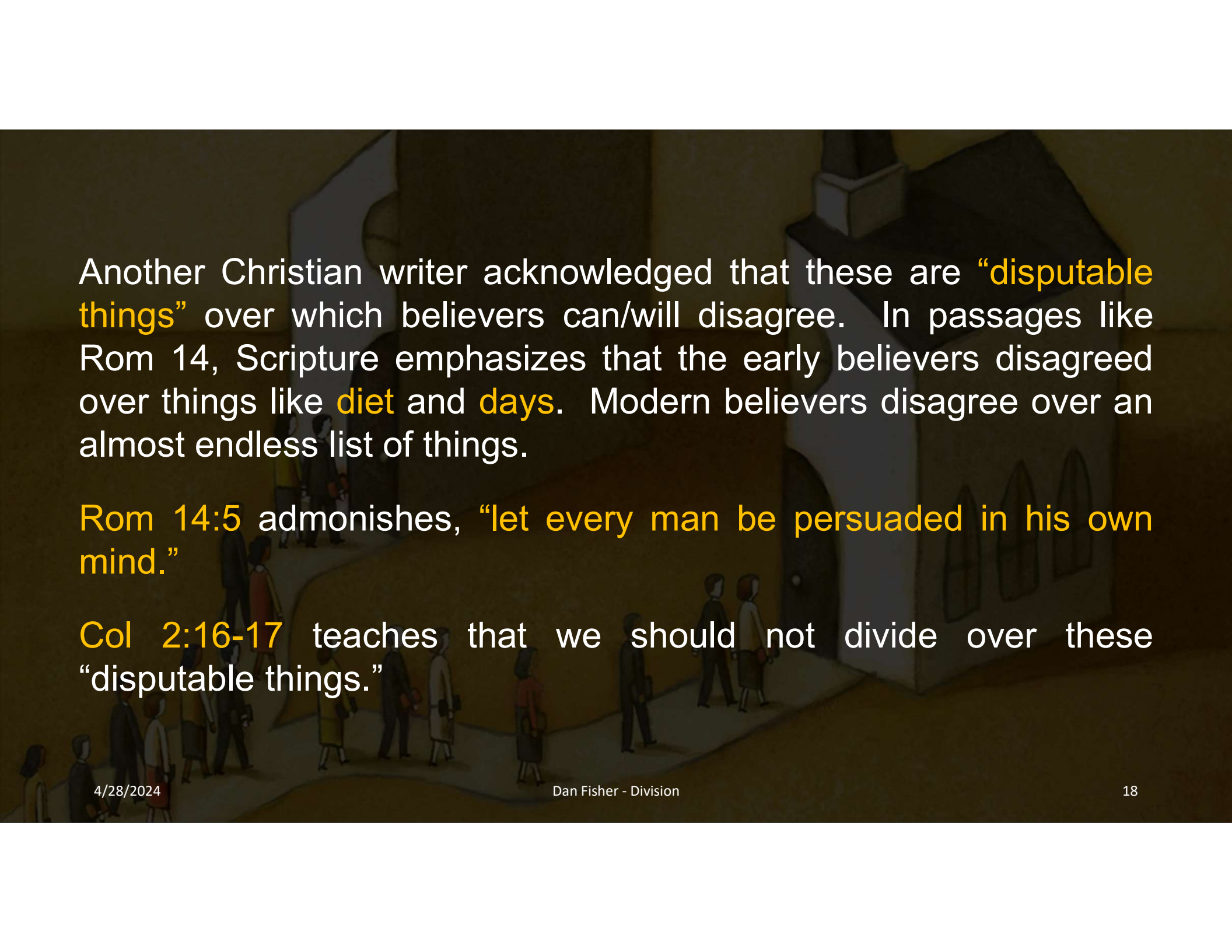
1 Cor 3:1-2 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. ² I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;

Heb 5:12-14 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Robert Deffinbaugh, Pastor, Community Bible, Richardson, TX:

“Because of our fallenness and also by divine design, there are going to be many differences among and between people in this life. Christian unity does not deny these differences, and neither does it attempt to change all of them. If we are to live in unity, we must, as Christians, agree on those few things which are essential to salvation, and on these we must have agreement.”





Another Christian writer acknowledged that these are “**disputable things**” over which believers can/will disagree. In passages like Rom 14, Scripture emphasizes that the early believers disagreed over things like **diet** and **days**. Modern believers disagree over an almost endless list of things.

Rom 14:5 admonishes, “**let every man be persuaded in his own mind.**”

Col 2:16-17 teaches that we should not divide over these “**disputable things.**”



- **Necessary schisms**

1 Cor 11:18-19 For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there **must also be factions** among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.



4. Division can be deplorable

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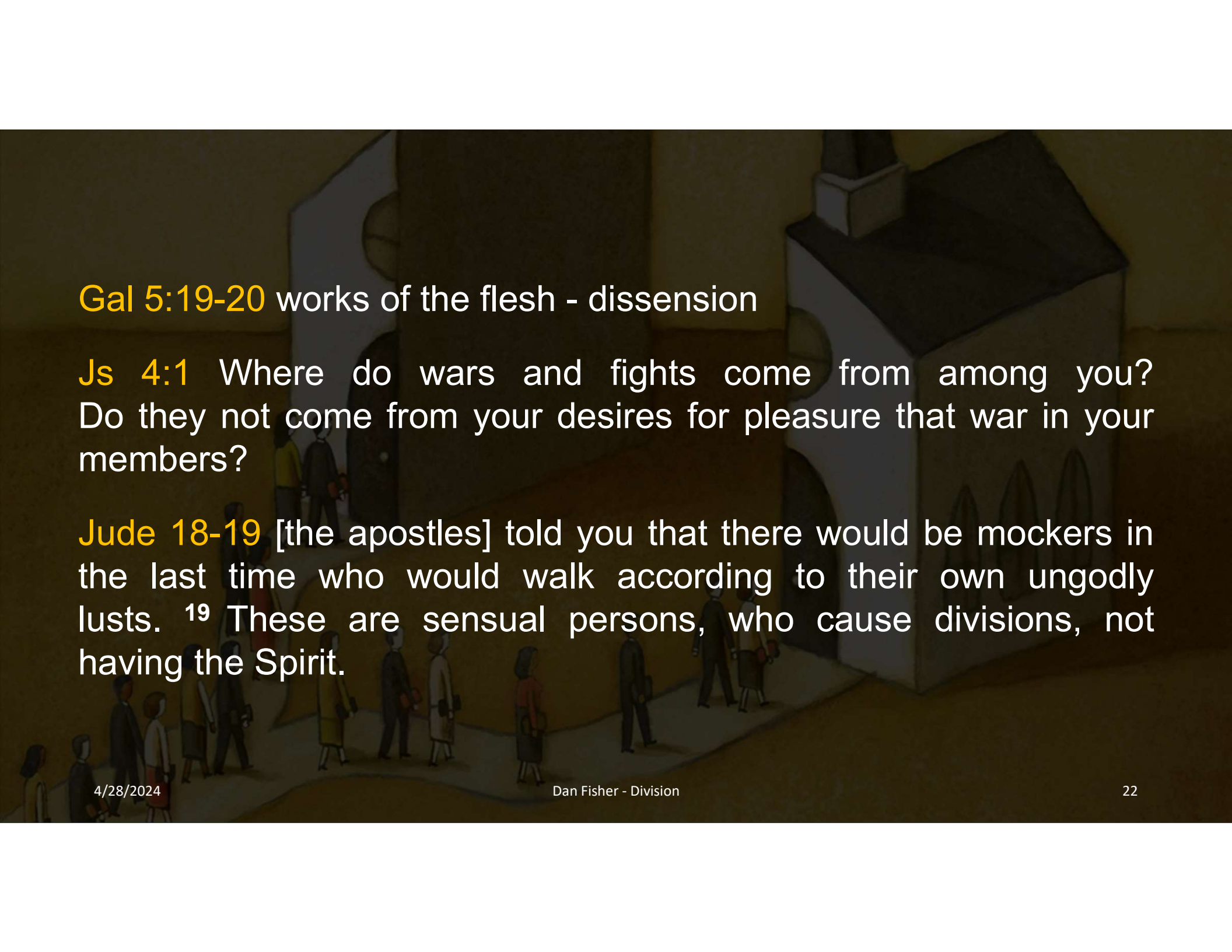
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- **Fleshly schisms**

1 Cor 1:11-12 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. ¹² Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Cor 3:3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?



Gal 5:19-20 works of the flesh - dissension

Js 4:1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?

Jude 18-19 [the apostles] told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

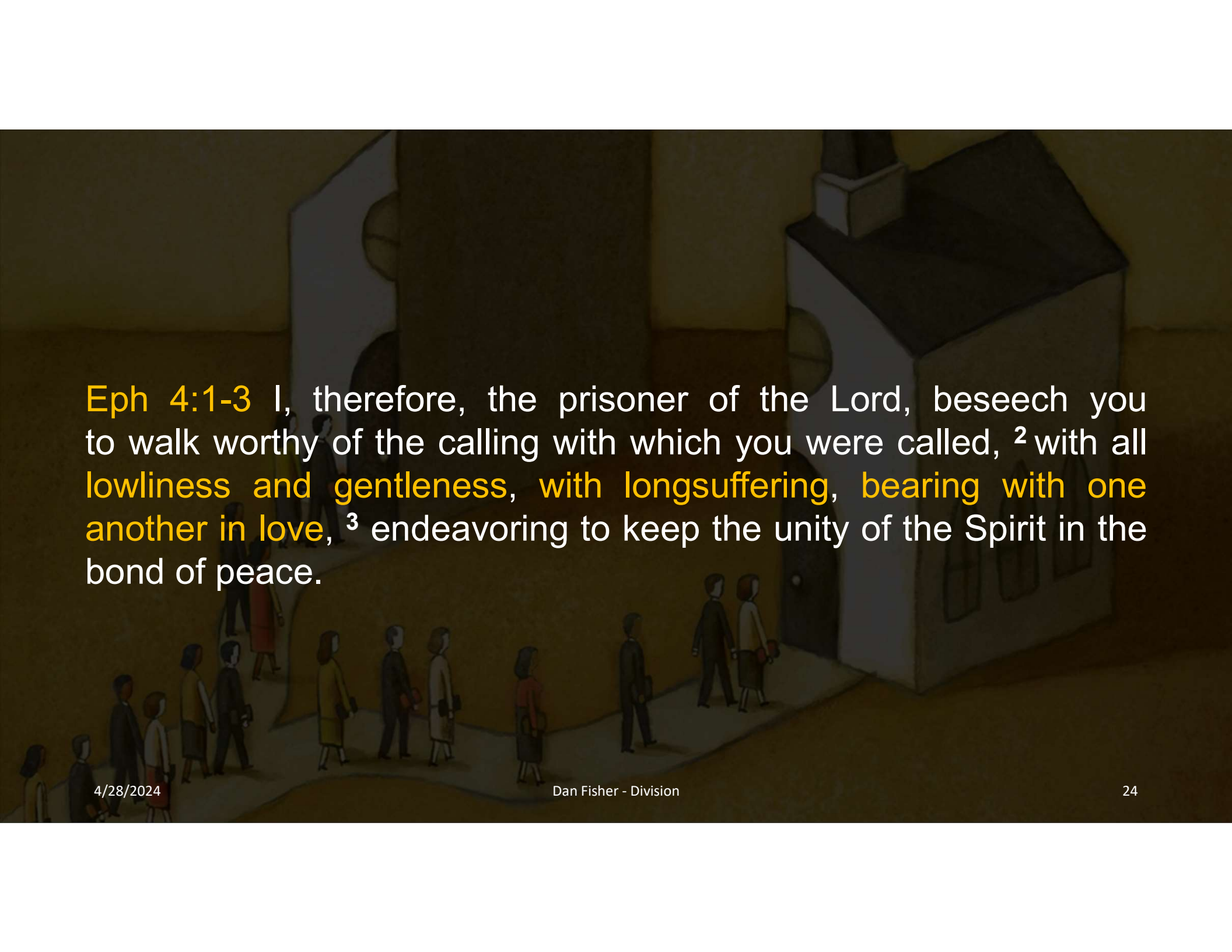


5. Division is preventable

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Eph 4:1-3 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all **lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,** ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

- **Practice humility**

Prov 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Phil 2:3 do nothing out of selfish ambition

1 Pet 3:6 humble yourself under the mighty hand of God

1 Pet 5:5 clothe yourself in humility ... God opposes the proud but favors the humble

- **Be gentle/patient**

Mt 11:29 Jesus: "I am gentle and humble in heart"

Gal 5:23 gentleness is part of the "fruit of the Spirit"

- **Forbear/bear with one another in love**

1 Cor 13:4-8 love bears all things