

UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

Ephesians 4:1-3

INTRODUCTION

- A. Perhaps the greatest problem facing the church today is the lack of unity.
- B. The apostle Paul appealed to the church to be unified:
 - 1. Romans 12:16, *“Be of the same mind toward one another;...”*
 - 2. Rom. 14:19, *“So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.”*
 - 3. Rom. 15:5-6, *“Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
 - 4. Phil. 2:2, *“...make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.”*
 - 5. Col. 2:2, Paul struggled, *“...that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love...”*

I. THE CALL FOR UNITY AND PEACE. Eph. 4:1-3

- A. Be Diligent to Preserve [Keep]... vs. 3.
 - 1. The word *“diligence,”* same word used in 2 Tim. 2:15.
 - a. *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.”*
 - 2. It means to do your utmost, constantly, to be eager.
- B. The Unity of the Spirit.
 - 1. Jesus prayed (4 times) that we might be one, Jn. 17:11, 20-21, 22-23.
 - 2. We have our unity through Christ, Eph. 2:14-22.
 - 3. The Holy Spirit was given to help maintain that unity. Acts 2:38; Eph. 1:13-14
- C. In the Bond of Peace.
 - 1. This peace is from God. John 14:27; Rom. 15:13; Phil. 4:7
 - 2. It is a peace that is found in love, Col. 3:14.
 - 3. Without love, there is no peace, Eph. 4:2.

II. HOW DO WE HAVE THIS UNITY?

- A. Live a Life Worthy of the Calling. 4:1
 - 1. Rom. 8:28-30
 - a. Called according to purpose...
 - b. To conform to the image of His Son, Phil. 2:5-8; 2 Cor. 3:18.
 - 2. Living worthy of God, Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:10.
- B. Characteristics of This Life, 4:2.
 - 1. Humility, Rom. 12:3; Eph. 5:21.
 - 2. Meekness (gentleness).
 - a. This is the opposite of self-interest.
 - b. The apostle Paul addressed the problem:
 - i. Romans 14 – meats, observance of feast days.
 - ii. The church in Corinth struggled with division.

- aa. 1 Cor. 1:10; 3:1-3ff
 - bb. 1 Cor. 6:7; 8:13; 9:22; 10:33
- c. Eph. 4:14-16, "...grow up in Christ..."
- d. 1 Pet. 2:21-23, example of Christ.
- 3. Long-suffering (patient).
 - a. This is the same word as used in 1 Pet. 3:20.
- 4. Forbearance [enduring] to one another in love, Eph. 4:17.
 - a. Not harboring feelings of ill-will inside.
 - b. Jn. 13:34-35
 - c. Eph. 3:16-19

CLOSING

- A. When Christians love God, love Christ, love the Word of God, love the church and love one another as God loves...
- B. Then there will be unity and harmony in the church.
- C. Then we can begin showing the world a life pleasing to God.
- D. Eph. 4:3, "*Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*"