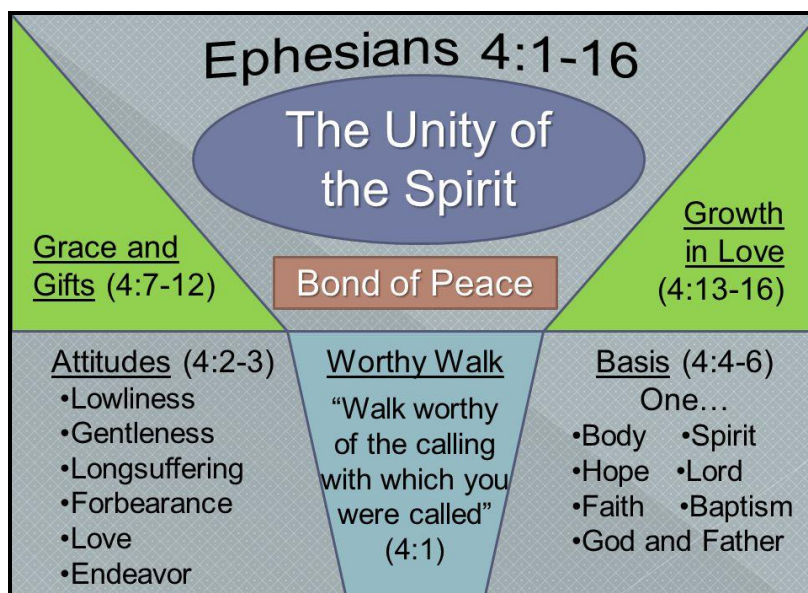


WINTER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2017-2018

THEME – GENUINE FAITH IS EVIDENCED BY OUR ACTIONS UNIT I – FAITH IN CHRIST DEMONSTRATED BY THE EARLY SAINTS

“A CALL FOR FAITH AND GENUINE UNITY IN CHRIST’S BODY”



Sunday School Lesson No. 5 – December 31, 2017 Presented by Rev. Frank Davis, III ~ Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Ephesians 4:1-16

Required Reading: Ephesians 4:1-16

Motto Text: Ephesians 4:1-3 (NLT), “Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.”

Reliable Resources: Precepts for Living (UMI); Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Libronix Electronic Library; MacArthur Study Bible; Thomas Nelson Open Bible Notes; Word Search 9 and 10 Electronic Library; Blessings and Behavior of the Believer; The Book of Ephesians, Vols. 1 and 2 by Dr. David Jeremiah

LESSON INTRODUCTION

Isn’t it interesting how in many of the local churches people seek oneness by their uniforms? “Black suits, white dresses, gold robes, etc.” It is a means by which the local church tries to demonstrate its oneness or unity. But is unity demonstrated by our carnal ways and activities? (I’m not against uniforms). Paul in Chapter 4 is reaching beyond the carnal characters of humanity into the spiritual realm of divinity, to call the church to unity above uniformity! Let us define these two words:

Uniformity – “The state or quality of being uniform; overall sameness; homogeneity.”

Unity – “The state of being one; oneness. Concord, harmony or agreement.”

A group of people could be dressed in beautiful uniforms or even synchronized in step and still not be united as one in harmony or agreement. The prophet Amos wrote in Amos 3:3 “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*” Paul writes to the church that there would be a harmony that transcends all barriers and that the church would walk according to the perfect will of Christ. Jesus prayer in John 17:20-21 was for unity in the body as it is with Him and the Father. Paul wanted the church to exemplify this unity between both Jewish saints and Gentile saints! In fact, H. L. Wilmington declares that the purpose of Ephesians the letter was to “teach about the Church as the body of Christ, composed of both Jew and Gentile believers. And to exhort believers to conduct themselves properly toward one another because of their oneness in Christ.” Now this week we turn from the first advent study, which focused on the birth of Christ, to Chapter 4, which focuses on the duties of the Church, to walk in faith and unity.

In Chapter 3 Paul reveals the great mystery that God held back through the ages. Both Jew and Gentile would be united into the Church, the Bride of Christ! (Read Ephesians 3:1-13). Now that the mystery is revealed, Wilmington declares:

- “Believers have access to the throne of God
- Believers are strengthened by the Spirit of God
- Believers can know the love of God
- Believers can request the power of God
- Believers can display the glory of God.”

Let us now focus on this week’s lesson “A Call for Faith and Genuine Unity in Christ’s Body.” Anticipated Power Points:

- **Unity’s Binding.** Ephesians 4:1-6
- **Unity’s Benefactor.** Ephesians 4:7-11
- **Unity’s Benefits.** Ephesians 4:12-16

LESSON OUTLINE

I. Unity’s Binding. Ephesians 4:1-6

Paul has taught us that we have received “*all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*” (Ephesians 1:3b). And yet there are many differences in our church fellowships throughout our Christian denominations. Should there be division in the Church of God? We may not agree on carpets, pews, chairs, organs or drums, but there is a “tie that binds” and brings us into perfect unity.

Paul says our unity should be demonstrated in our “Worthy walk.” Worthy defined in this context – “evenly mixed and not one-sided.” The believer must reflect upon all that Christ has done for him and walk through this life with spiritual balance. This is our divine vocation in Christ. But how is this done? What are the things we must agree upon in order to fulfill this worthy walk? Dr. David Jeremiah describes the points of our unity from vss. 4-6:

- A. One Body – (The Body of Christ) Romans 12:4-5; I Corinthians 12:12-31**
- B. One Spirit – (The Holy Spirit) I Corinthians 12:13**
- C. One Hope – (Christ is our Hope) Titus 2:13; Ephesians 1:13-14**
- D. One Lord – (Christ the true and only Sovereign) I Timothy 2:5**
- E. One Faith – (One true belief system of fact, the Bible) Jude 3**
- F. One Baptism – (The Spirit’s work placing believers into Christ’s body. I Corinthians 12:13) Believers who are able will also submit to water Baptism when this is possible in a local church.**
- G. One God and Father (The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ) Ephesians 1:3, 17; 2:18; 3:14**

Blest be the tie that binds!

II. Unity’s Benefactor. Ephesians 4:7-11

Paul, reflecting on Psalm 68:18 shares that the unity of the church is possible because of the Great Benefactor our Lord Jesus Christ, whose victory over death and the grave is demonstrated by the gifts and gifted people He left to minister throughout His church. Read I Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-31; Romans 12:3-8, which give listings of some of the gifts Christ the Benefactor of Unity left for the sound functioning of His church – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers. Ephesians 4:11

III. Unity’s Benefits. Ephesians 4:12-16

Paul closes this lesson with the benefits the church gains through its unity. God’s gifted personalities are used to edify the church and cause it to mature and thrive. He uses the gifted leaders to fulfill His goals for the Body of Christ. According to H. L. Wilmington, the benefits of a united church are that they might be: “equipped (v. 12), mature (v. 13) and settled (vv. 14-16).”

CLOSING

Quote by Jane E. Campbell (Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator): “In order for an automobile to safely transport us, all of its parts must function as they were designed. For example, if the battery is dead, a car’s engine will not start. While it is only one vehicle, its many parts must work in concert before it can fulfill its purpose. Likewise, the church is one body gifted with many vital gifts, no one gift being greater than any other. They must harmoniously co-exist to accomplish God’s purpose for His church, however.”

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LOOKING AHEAD:

January 7, 2018

Daniel 1:8-21

Please join us each Wednesday noon at Bibleway where Pastor Davis teaches the Sunday School lesson.

