



Sunday, January 14, 2018
Pastor Don Denyes

Introduction to Ephesians 4:1-6

Unity in the church is not easy to achieve. That is why God Himself had to intervene to unify us. There are so many things that divide us as human beings: age, race, geography, hobbies and other interests, temperament, politics and many, many more. It would be near impossible for people across all distinctions listed above to come together, and yet that is exactly what God has done for us in Christ. Earlier in chapter 2, we read that Jesus Himself is our peace. He is the One who breaks down the dividing walls of hostility between people and unites them.

This is why it is to His glory that we realize and live out the unity that Christ has already accomplished for us. Perhaps you've heard the cliché, "blood is thicker than water" (meaning, family relationships are closer than any other). Well, the divine reality is that the Spirit is thicker than blood. In truth, there is no greater unity between people than the unity that exists among God's people. This is why when we meet Christians from all over the world, we still enjoy fellowship with one another, because our unity in Christ transcends any other dividing wall (whether politics or skin color or favorite sports team or whatever).

Context

Ephesians 4 begins a new series of arguments by Paul designed to explain how the great and glorious theological truths of chapters 1-3 get lived out in day-to-day life. He begins with how to live out the unity we share with other Christians. This is fitting because one of the greatest theological truths in chapters 1-3 is that God has reconciled people to one another. Not only that, but the unity of the church provides something of a logical underpinning for everything that follows for the remainder of the letter.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

“Walking in Unity”

Read Ephesians 4:1-6

Walk worthy of your calling.

How do we walk worthy?

- Humility
- Patience
- Unity

Trinity

- Spirit... body
- Lord... hope, faith, baptism
- God the Father.. of all, entire family

At the deepest level I have this in common with every fellow believer—the same Spirit that lives in my heart lives in their heart.

Discuss

- 1) In your experience, what have been some of the major obstacles to unity among Christians in a local church?

- 2) What does it look like to “bear with someone in love” (v. 2)? Why do you think Paul uses that language?

- 3) Describe a time when someone in the church has “born with” you in love. Or perhaps a time when you have had to bear with someone else.

- 4) Read Ephesians 1:9-10. Why is it so important, based on those verses, that we work at unity in the church now?

- 5) Some have said that the unity of the church is our greatest evangelistic tool. Do you agree or disagree with that statement? Why?