

**“Treasuring Christ Together”
Ephesians 4:1-16**

INTRODUCTION:

I. Unity Through Like-Mindedness for Treasuring (vv.1-10)

A. Like-minded in life and doctrine (**vv.1-6**)

1. A worthy walk (vv.1-3)
 - a) "Therefore..." In the previous chapter, Paul stated the central purpose of his ministry, to reveal the mystery that is the gospel for the Gentiles. He then asks the Ephesian church to pray for his strength to continue in pursuit. The context for the need for strength, is that Paul is in prison. As a result of this strengthened, gospel-centered pursuit, Paul urges the local body to be unified in their worthy-walk in Christ.
 - b) This worthy walk is consistent with the calling of salvation (**Eph.1:3-14**)
 - c) Humble and gentle
 - d) Patient
 - e) Forbearing
 - f) Wanting unity and peace
2. A common faith (**vv.4-6**)
 - a) One body (It's crucial for the church to realize they are part of so,ethnic bigger than themselves. How fitting to remind a local church that she is part of the universal church. This church will not be known until Christ returns for His bride. Jesus is not a polygamist.)
 - b) One Spirit (**Eph.1:13-14**)
 - c) One calling (to be called as a believer is to walk as a believer)
 - d) One Lord
 - e) One faith (the general common doctrines of Christianity)

- f) One baptism (Some debate: baptism of the holy spirit or water baptism, with debate as to mode)
- g) One God (the Giver of all good gifts, gives the gifts, so the gifted worship The Giver!)
- h) Emphasis is on trinitarian theology as we see throughout the book, particularly in chapter 1.
- i) So, core beliefs are not to be some mere checklist of common beliefs as if merely a badge or a uniform would tie our hearts together. We have to know our central beliefs so that the gospel is clear. In a clear understanding of the gospel, we will know how to be unified, and what biblical unity looks like.

B. Like-minded in the Giver of Gifts (**vv.7-10**)

1. Gifts are based on Christ's sovereign administration, as is salvation (grace: unmerited favor)
2. The Giver of Gifts is victorious (this quote of Ps.68:18 has particular importance as the city of Ephesus was known for diverse deities and victory over demonic work would be particularly encouraging to a church that faced very real outside persecution and engaged in spiritual warfare.
3. The Giver of Gifts is the King of Heaven and Earth

II. Unity through Diversity for Maturing in our Treasuring (vv. 11-16)

A. Diverse Gifts (**v.11**)

1. Gifted people are the gifts
 - a) "He gave" - the gift to the church is the person with the gift. This parallels the giving of grace in salvation. Our sovereign, and gracious Savior works according to His own pleasure in and through the lives of His people for His glory in the church

- b) These gifts are in greater weight with church planting and development, with the task of equipping the entire church made abundantly clear.

2. Gifts of the gospel

- a) Apostles / Prophets / Evangelists / Shepherds & Teachers -- the common emphasis here being those who articulate the gospel. It's not to say these are the only gifts needed, but it surely speaks to the priority of the church and her unity being in the gospel clearly proclaimed, taught, and applied.
- b) Makes clear that unity doesn't exist apart from share (right) beliefs. Churches can love their history, traditions, and reminiscent longing, and just believe they love God by association, when in fact, they are without unity and probably without a witness.
- c) The job: equip the saints for ministry work so that the body of Christ is built up and edified. The leaders would train the body to build the body relentlessly until their is unity of faith and knowledge of the Son. So, sound teaching and doctrine is central to unifying God's people. If there are factions or fractures in the local church, it is because the church has neglected sound teaching and application, NOT because preferences were not adhered to. This is why the core gifts to the church were gifts that would in one way or another teach and promote gospel truth. This is the never ending work of the church.

B. Common Pursuit (**vv.12-16**)

1. Unity is the pursuit, but what defines this unity?

- a) Knowledge of the gospel
- b) Maturity in Christ
- c) Battling against falsehood
- d) Declaring truth in love
- e) Treasuring Christ as supreme

2. Natural church development (love)

- a) Treasuring Christ as the source and end
- b) Equipping people to use their gifts
- c) Trusting the results

APPLICATION:

- So, we are to be rooted in our common doctrine and faith in order to treasure Christ, exalting Him as supreme in our midst.
- In our church, we say it like this.... GLORIFYING God by TREASURING Christ above all things and REACHING others that they may find lasting joy in Him! We invite you to join us in this unified pursuit.
- We are to then understand that there are diverse gifts of grace given to the body so we help each other mature into Christ, to treasure Him more, helping others to treasure Him above all things. This is the builds itself up in love language. Our love for Christ deepens and our love for each other is strengthened by our common doctrine and embracing of diverse gifts. If you join us in this pursuit, you will be expected to use your spiritual gifts for the building up of this body for maturity in Christ, expressed through love.
- What should you do if you do not have, or promote, a spirit of unity? I think you do what Christ told this church to do... **Rev.2:5**, "*Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.*"
- It could be you do not feel that you are united with the church because you are not unified with Christ. **SHARE THE GOSPEL HERE.**