

# EPHESIANS 4:3-6

LESSON 22

## *Unity of the Spirit*

### 1. Ephesians 4:3 – How to Keep the Unity

- a. “*Endeavour to keep*” – Most read it as “world peace” “we are the world”
  - i. Peace among the brethren – 2 Tim 2:22, 1Thes 5:13, Gal 6:16, Rom 12:18
  - ii. Christ is our peace – we are told to be who Christ made us – Eph 2:14, Rom 5:1
- b. These days you are either a bigot / legalist if you hint at any discrimination here
- c. Differences exist due to different beliefs, values, cultural identity, preferences
- d. Truth / People - 2 great commands (Mt 22:40) – love God (truth), love neighbor (people)
  - i. What if loving neighbor meant going contrary to God – Luke 16:13
  - ii. God’s will for us also concerns truth in 1 Tim 2:4, 1 Tim 3:16, Eph 3:9
  - iii. The church consists of truth and people – it is people *with* truth
  - iv. Church ministry is bringing people together in truth. United with Christ – Spirit.
  - v. New evangelicals replaced truth as words with truth as a person w/o words.
- e. How to keep unity with people in the church: (only one honors truth, leads to growth)
  - i. 1 – Silence. Don’t mention disagreements on truth.
  - ii. 2 – Mention disagreements, but agree to disagree; both/none are right
  - iii. 3 – Speak truth and correct errors until both are right
- f. It takes no effort (endeavor) to get people united without truth – one world. one life.
  - i. The endeavor is to keep the unity of the Spirit, the peace is from agreed truth
  - ii. Consider the task of the ministry as the task of a teacher.
  - iii. Paul assumes we will speak truth – he deals in Eph 4 with *how* to speak it.
- g. There are times for separation: 2 Cor 6:14-17; 1 Cor 5:7-11
  - i. Legalism separates on performance of the outer man.
    1. Grace separates on the truth and will of the inner man.
  - ii. When sound doctrine is rejected (1 Tim 1:3, 6:3-5; Titus 3:10)
  - iii. When reproof, correction, instruction is rejected (1 Tim 1:20)
  - iv. When young and weak are rejected/affected (1 Cor 8:12; Rom 16:15-17)
- h. Time not to practice speaking truth as in the church (Amos 3:3)
  - i. 1) Preferences / opinions – the difference between fact/truth and choice
  - ii. 2) Relationships not in the church – marriage, world, company.
  - iii. 3) Timing – ministry is patient work. Mention it and wait.
- i. “bond of peace”
  - i. Don’t be scared to live peacefully – Col 3:15; 1 Cor 7:15
  - ii. Peace is accompanied by righteousness – Rom 12:18, 14:19, 14:17
  - iii. Peace does not mean we do not correct, rebuke, admonish, exhort, warn, separate, etc – Rom 16:17-19
  - iv. Peace is found in Christ – keeping it requires one mind – 1 Cor 1:10, 2 Cor 13:11, Gal 6:16, Phil 4:9, 2 Tim 2:22, 1 Thess 5:13, Eph 6:23