

The Body of Christ: It's Unity

November 11, 2012

EPHESIANS 2:11-22; 4:1-6

Vol. 2 Num. 45

Core Competency:

Church- *I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Him who is the head —Christ. From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part. (Ephesians 4:15–16)

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate really matter, so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

❸ LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

Introduction

A March 1984 malfunction in a 500,000 volt Pacific Gas and Electric Company line in Northern California triggered a chain reaction that eventually darkened lights for millions in six Western states. The blackout came at rush hour, with motorists backed up at traffic lights in cities of California, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas. The trouble originated at the Round Mountain, California, substation, about one hundred miles south of the Oregon border. A circuit breaker tripped, and the concatenation shut down circuits all over the West as machinery protected itself from damage.

How dramatically that breakdown expressed the interdependence of our country's power, transportation, and food production! One little circuit breaker tripped in a remote rural substation, and hundreds of miles away people's lives instantly changed. We are one people in more ways than we think. What affects one affects many, perhaps all. Interdependence characterizes us.

The unity of the church is no different. An interlinking of interests, goals, and influences exists in which we all share. The good one person does makes righteousness easier for all. The bad example one sets negatively affects us all. God's people, wherever they live on earth, are linked into a grid of community interdependence from which they can never escape. Inextricably bound to one another as separate parts of the whole, what affects one becomes part of all.

This Week

Discover how God, at a great sacrifice to himself, provided the means by which His people would be dependent on Him and interdependent upon each other. The challenge in our current culture of individualism is to embrace the plan for which God died: unity and interdependence.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate really matter, so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage:

Read Ephesian 2:11-22; 4:1-6

11 So then, remember that at one time you were Gentiles in the flesh—called “the uncircumcised” by those called “the circumcised,” which is done in the flesh by human hands.

12 At that time you were without the Messiah, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

13 But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah.

14 For He is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In His flesh,

15 He made of no effect the law consisting of commands and expressed in regulations, so that He might create in Himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace.

16 He did this so that He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross and put the hostility to death by it.

17 When the Messiah came, He proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

19 So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God’s household,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone.

21 The whole building, being put together by Him, grows into a holy sanctuary in the Lord.

22 You also are being built together for God’s dwelling in the Spirit.

4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received,

2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love,

3 diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds us.

4 There is one body and one Spirit —just as you were called to one hope at your calling—

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

② DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the following questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with other.

1. In verses 13-16, Paul describes the effect Christ’s shed blood had on our relationship with God and with other believers.
 - a) Why does Christ’s shed blood bring peace with God?

 - b) How has this influenced your view of God?

2. What did God personally sacrifice to establish peace between you and other believers at CLBC?

3. Considering 4:1-2, give examples of self-centered actions or attitudes among believers in a church that are examples of:
- a) a lack of humility:
 - b) a lack of gentleness:
 - c) a lack of patience:
 - d) a lack of acceptance:
4. How do these self-centered attitudes and actions belittle, dishonor, or makes light of God's sacrifice?
5. What specific actions could you take when you experience the following at Clear Lake Bible Church:
- a) When you feel unloved or unvalued:
 - b) When someone complains to you about someone else, or a situation:
 - c) When someone responds to you out of anger or frustration:
 - d) When someone is absent?
 - e) When someone is in error on an essential doctrinal issue.

Sermon Notes:

③LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

There is someone in your group that regularly gossips, complains about situations or people in your presence. What should you do?

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away God's money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.