Walking as one in Christ

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Date: 28 July 2024 Preacher: Brian King

Let me just say a short prayer before we begin. Heavenly Father, we thank you that you are a God who is not silent. And we just pray, Lord, that as you speak to us, that we would have hearts to hear and be ready to live your way.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Now someone wants to ask a pastor if he had an active congregation.

Yes, they are very active, he answered. **EXECUTE**, **EXECUTE** Half of them are actively working with me, and the other half are actively working against me.

Now that's obviously a joke, but it's also not, isn't it?

Because unfortunately, this is true in far too many cases around the world.

A story once told about a church in Scotland about 80 years ago.

[1:12] They were trying to decide whether a clock should be placed in the sanctuary. They were trying to decide whether a clock should be placed on the back wall, while another group insisted it should be placed at the front for everyone to see.

they couldn't agree, and one group left to form a new church.

They split over a clock.

■■■■■ And division is tragic because of at least three reasons.

Firstly, it's tragic because it means that the church is spending all of its time trying to sort out internal matters rather than focus on its mission to the world.

A lot of energy has to be used to fight.

The congregation can become split into different factions. And there just isn't any motivation to reach out to unbelievers.

The gospel claims that peace and reconciliation with God is possible,

So how can we avoid falling into unnecessary strife?

More positively speaking, How can we instead be a church that is in line with God's will?

[4:00] Well, today Ephesians 4 verse 1 to 6 will help us. Verses 2 to 6 in particular will give us three practical steps we should take. But before we get into the specifics, I need to show you the big picture first. might misunderstand these verses. As a prisoner for the Lord, then I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. **BELLEVISHED**, **BELLEVISHED** Now at first glance, it sounds like Paul is saying, make sure you are a good Christian boy or girl. Proof you are deserving of the name Christian. [5:16] **BELLEVISION** And if we think that's what Paul is saying, we will read the instructions of verses 2 to 6 as if that is how we are to get into God's good books. But is that what he's really saying? **THE STATE OF THE CONTRACT OF** book.

Look back with me to Ephesians chapter 1 verse 18, where Paul first mentions calling in this letter. So it's on the screen, let me read it. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you. notice, what is Paul praying for? [6:35] **BELLEGATION** He's praying that we will understand the confident hope God has given to us. what God has already done for us. That's what the first three chapters of Ephesians are actually all about. **INCOME STATE OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPERTY** about who we now are in Christ. chapters, what do you discover? ■■■■■■■■,■■■■■■ ? We discover we have every spiritual blessing in Christ. **THE STATE OF THE STATE OF THE** God the Father has for Jesus. We discover we were completely dead in our sin, completely deserving of God's anger, but now God has made us alive with Christ and made us his beloved children. [7:55] We discover we were completely unholy, but now we have been made holy, so much so that God says we are nothing less than the temple of God. THE STATE OF THE S the slide. Now here's the big point. It is all a gift from God. why Ephesians 4 verse 1 says, This is a calling we have received. **It's not a calling we have earned.**

These blessings came to us not by our own merit, but by God's mercy.

This calling is about who God has made us to be, rather than what we are to do for God.

[9:17] And so, as one teacher once said, It's not so much that we are called to live a life that shows we deserve this, but that we live a life that these truths deserve.

Lim going to say it again, It's not so much that we are called to live a life that shows we deserve this, but that we live a life that these truths deserve.

TikTok video that went viral.

shopping malls, Everyone from the ground floor to the top floor stopped what they were doing, Stood up and stood still.

And that's because Sarawakians understood that's what our state anthem deserves.

We live a life that is in line with the gospel, because that is nothing less than what the gospel deserves.

That's why the first core conviction of our church is to be centered on the gospel.

A church without the gospel at the center is like a car without an engine.

go anywhere.

And it is only when we get this big picture in place, then we can move to the specific steps of verses 2 to 6.

church life, How then do we live a life worthy of the calling we have received?

> May every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.
>
> Paul is telling us, Do you know what kind of unity exists between you and your fellow Christians?

THE Spirit. THE SPIRIT IS NOT NOT IN THE SPIRIT IN THE SPI

Rather, it is supernatural. You see, we all know that sin separates us from God. Be, Belle Belle Belle But did you know that sin also separates us from one another?

[13:25] After all, if we are sinners, that means we are capable of selfish behavior.

When the selfish behavior with the English service can look down on the Mandarin service, or the Mandarin service can look down on the English service.

and like it or not, on our own, we cannot stop hurting one another.

trusted Christ and received the Spirit? We have peace with God, yes. **Example 2** Ephesians 2 tells you that. But did you know we also have peace with our fellow Christians? **BECAUSE** those sitting next to you, in front of you, or behind [14:32] you, are united to you if they are Christians. Even if they speak a different language to you. **BELLEVISHED**, **BELLEVISHED** And we all are taught to be part of God's people, God's household, God's family. That is the unity of the Spirit. describes the bond that already exists between us, not a bond that is hypothetical. And that is why verse 3 again, God says we are to maintain this spirit unity. So our job is not to produce this unity like how our government often tries to make us united. **BEAUTION** Our job is simply to [17:21] keep this unity. **In fact, did you notice how much stress Hope puts on this?** _____? At the beginning of verse 3, he says, make every effort. words, it's not something we do occasionally whenever we feel like it. ■■■,■■■■■■■■,■■■■■ This is high on Jesus' agenda. ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ He died for it. **BESSES** So every Christian is responsible to maintain this spirit given unity. So tell me how are you doing on this front? Are you eager to speak words to build up others? **THE STATE OF THE STATE OF THE** [18:24] you eager to give others the benefit of the doubt? Are you eager to keep this unity? The fact that Paul has to tell us to maintain this unity means he sees it as a work in progress. can still be disrupted as long as we live in this fallen world. **But if we do keep this unity, we are** walking worthy of our calling. ■■■■■■■■■■, ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ We are giving what the gospel deserves.

But that is not all Paul has to say. Secondly, hold on to the core of our [19:32] unity. superficial unity, aren't there? Just think of the kind of unity where two very different political parties come together simply to keep power.

But what happened when we

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY OF unity you might see at a company family day or team building day. The employees might participate in all kinds of activities for a short while, But then they go their separate ways later, And on Monday, the workplace rivalries continue. But Paul says that's not the kind of unity he has. **EXAMPLE 1** Rather our unity in practice is driven by a unity in belief. [20:50] **INTERPORT OF STATE O Let me read verses 4 to 6 to you. There is one body and** one spirit, Just as you were called to one hope when you were called, One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all. Now here's the important thing to understand about verses 4 to 6. **These are statements of fact, not commands.** This is a description of reality. ■■■■■■■■ You see what Paul is trying to show us here is that unity can only flow from these truths. body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord and so on, is what forms the foundation of our unity. **BELLEY, BELLEY, BELLEY, BELLEY, BELLEY, BELLEY, And so this is what we** [22:32] need to hold onto if we are to achieve true unity. So for example, Paul says, we are one body. That's the truth. We're not two or three bodies. are all hands and knees and feet that are all interconnected to one another. **WELLES OF STATE OF S** ■■■■■■ And the reason we do that is because every Christian, as soon as they believe, have the one Holy Spirit who gives us all equal access to God the Father. And the one hope that I have through the gospel, the hope of eternal life and of a future inheritance, is a hope that I share with you if you are my brother and sister in Christ. [23:55] And if you are my brother and sister in Christ, that means we worship the same Lord. We both want to follow the one true God. **THE STREET THAT'S** what we share in common. **BELLE III** We have only one God over us, we are baptized into the same reality. **So there is a shared reality between the two of** us. **It is a reality that finds its basis in what each member of the Trinity** has done. fact that we support the same football team, or we both like hiking, or that we are both fujiao, or yban, or something like that. No, the core of our unity is in God and his gospel itself.

III. So hold on to the core of our unity.

HEREFORE Hold on to our common beliefs.

[25:19]

THE STATE OF STATE O unity for the sake of it. oh, let's be united, but we never base our unity on the common truth. So we cannot, for example, unite with Muslims or Hindus in a prayer service. After all, we have no common ground as to who we are praying to, or the same understanding as to how God receives our prayers. WE CANNOT even unite with other groups that claim that they are Christian, but hold beliefs that do not line up with the gospel. **BELLEVISHED WE CAN BE STONE OF THE STONE OF** them, but we can't say we are united with them. For our unity is based on the reality of the gospel. Then thirdly, display a life of unity. **BALLE BALLE I** will see that we are to maintain and hold on to this God-given unity, but the question that remains is, how do we do this practically? The answer is found in verse 2. **Be** completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love. **IDENTIFY** So Paul says, here are three ways to do that. You see, the fastest way to break up the unity of a church is by pride and arrogance. **III.** If everyone is looking out for their own interests, if everyone thinks that they are number one, it is going to cause all sorts of problems. BULLET BUT WHAT IF WE ALL THE STREET BUT WHAT IF WE ALL think of ourselves less, and we think about the needs of others more? **SECOND SECOND S** ourselves before we judge others? **BELLEVISHED**, **BELLEVISH**? If everyone acted that way, what a wonderful community it would be. And how wonderful it is if we were all gentle. meekness, and meekness is not weakness. ■■■■■■■■■■ It is strength under control. ■■■■■■■■■ Imagine an Olympic wrestler playing with his young son. He is strong, but he will know to control his strength so as not to hurt his son, but rather to give his son joy. That is the picture here. **THE STATE OF STATE O** Again, let's imagine the opposite. **Imagine** Imagine if no one is patient. **EVERYONE** Everyone is harsh with one another. doesn't want to care about each other. wounded.

[26:41]

[27:56]

[29:02]

[30:13]

So the idea here is of not getting irritated or angry easily.

■■,■■■, ■■■■■■■■■■ Paul is realistic, isn't he? ■■■■■■■ He understands church life requires this.

demonstrated his love by sending Christ to die for us, when we were still ungodly, then God says by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can love in the same way.

We ask all this in Jesus' name.