



Sermon Notes

Term – Summer Term

Series – Ephesians Part 2

Gathering & Date – 16th June 2019

Title – Unity and Maturity

Preacher –Neil Shepherd

Reading – Ephesians 4:1-16

Main message of this talk in one sentence: Unity comes from knowing whose we are; Maturity comes from knowing who we are!

Main points –

See PowerPoint

Read Ephesians 4:1-16

Three questions that helped us to see that we are all different

How then do we understand unity in light of our difference?

Firstly, we recapped Ephesians 1-3 – see the table on the powerpoint with themes and keywords

So returning to unity, Ephesians 4:1-6 tells us that:

Unity is something we try to keep rather than have to make happen

we recognise that we are all equal because of all that God has done for us described in Ephesians 1-3

we recognise God's patience, gentleness and love therefore we demonstrate these characteristics to others

Unity flows out of knowing WHOSE we are!

Read Ephesians 4:7-16

The next part of the reading talks about the gifts that God has given us so that the church can mature.

Verses 8-10 explains how Psalm 68 describes the giving of gifts and then Paul, the author, explains what the wording of 'ascending' means in this context and in reference to Jesus.

Returning to the main part of the text, Ephesians 4:7 & 11-16, we read that God has given his gifts to all people and that Paul describes these gifts in terms of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor(shepherd) and teacher.

These gifts have been given to the church so that it can reach full maturity. I gave the example that if we are struggling to hear God's voice then we can find someone with the gift of the prophetic to help us grow in this area. Likewise, if we struggle to share our faith with others then an evangelist, who is gifted to obey God in this area, can help us to be better at sharing the good news.

The PowerPoint has descriptions of each of the gifts, examples from scripture, how we see it in Jesus and other terminology that might help us to understand the wider breadth of this gifting in our lives.

We finished with the reminder that our unity flows out of knowledge of whose we are and our maturity grows out of knowing who we are.

For further thought and prayer –

Connect

1. Ask someone to bring a worship song that is helping them to connect with God at the moment. Give them time to share what is significant about it and then use the song to worship.
2. Ask someone to share their testimony of how they encountered God for the first time

Grow

3. In light of Paul's encouragement to 'keep the unity of the Spirit' what might this look like in our context?
4. What questions does Ephesians 4:7-13 raise as we think about the gifts that God has given to us?
5. Do we recognise these giftings within each other within the group?
6. Is there an area we would like to grow in?
7. What is God saying to us from Ephesians 4:1-16?

Influence

8. What are the challenges we face as we seek to 'keep the unity of the Spirit'?
9. Pray for the church as we seek to grow in God's gifts so that the whole church grows in maturity.
10. Speak out the gifting we see in each other and pray for a greater awareness of how God has made us.