



SEQUIM COMMUNITY CHURCH

EPHESIANS

SESSION 12: THE UNIFIED EFFORT

Ephesians 4:1-8 • March 6, 2018

"Exploring the new standards and new relationships God intends for us"

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Ice Breaker

1. Describe a time in your life when you had to rely on others to complete a task or project.

What did it teach you about cooperation? _____

After laying out the promises of Christianity on Chapters 1-3, Paul urges us to fulfill our calling and strive for unity, applying our spiritual gifts in the ministry of the church.

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

- Ephesians 4:1-3

2. From what you learned in chapters 1-3 of Ephesians, what do you think Paul wants you to remember about the "calling" we have received? _____

3. How do the character qualities of humility, gentleness and patience help in keeping "the unity of the Spirit" in our relationships with one another? _____

Unity is something given by the Spirit, not something we create. It is based on the oneness of God. Christians do not need to agree on everything to have unity, but we need to live the unity of a common commitment to Christ. It is something that needs to be valued and maintained. Christians must keep the unity of the Spirit because everything they hold of any significance they hold with other people. Christianity is a shared faith. No separate or merely individual faith exists.

"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." - Ephesians 4:4-6

4. Why do you think Paul emphasizes "one" so much? _____

5. In which of these areas do Christians seem to struggle the most in terms of having unity?

"But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: 'When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.' (What does 'he ascended' mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)" - Ephesians 4:7-10

In this passage, Christ is compared to a conquering hero whose triumphal procession fills the whole universe, from the highest heaven to the lowest earth. Paul uses this description to teach that Christ, in his crucifixion and resurrection, was victorious over Satan. Jesus generously distributes gifts (the spoils of victory) to his loyal followers.

6. What does it mean to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling?" To answer this question, consider the following:

• What does Paul mean by the word "walk" in this context? _____

• Why does he use this verb? _____

• Based on your study of chapters 1-3, what "calling" does Paul have in mind in this passage? _____

• Why would this calling motivate us to obey Paul's command to "walk... worthy?" _____

• What does a worthy walk look like according to this passage and Ephesians 4:17 and 5:2, 8, 15? _____

Praying for one another:

In this lesson we have explored calling, the purpose of the church and the discovery of our spiritual gifts. Going forward together in a unified effort is essential for the growth of the church and for growth in our own lives. Is there any area in your life where disunity is hindering you? Do you feel like you are finding God's specific calling for you in the church and in the world? Spend some time praying together and appreciating what God has done for you. Pray also for any needs you are facing in the group.