

**THE CHURCH ON OFFENSE IN
CONFLICTED DAYS
FALL/WINTER 2020/2021
“KEEPING UNITY WITH THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH”
JANUARY 06, 2021
EPHESIANS 4:1-6 and other selected support Scriptures**

I. PAUL'S PREPARATION OF THE EPHESIANS

- A. He held back nothing that was *PROFITABLE* v. 20
- B. He testified that the gospel was about *REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD and FAITH TOWARD THE LORD JESUS CHRIST*. That means that they would have to change their mind about who the Sovereign One was and put their trust in the Son of the Sovereign One, the Lord Jesus Christ v. 27
- C. He testified of the *GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD* v. 24
- D. The main focus of his preaching was *PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM OF GOD*. v.25
- E. He declared to them the *WHOLE COUNSEL (WILL, PURPOSE, INTENT, DESIRE) OF GOD*.

He trusted God with them, encouraging them to guard themselves against the *FALSE TEACHERS and FALSE TEACHING* that was going to come.

TONIGHT: we will see how Paul taught them things and appealed to those things as truth which was PROFITABLE, THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD, FULL OF THE GOSPEL OF GRACE, FOUNDATIONAL TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and the reason to REPENT OF OUR IDEAS ABOUT GOD and put our TRUST IN CHRIST AS THE LORD OF ALL. It was this truth that created a unified vision of what God had done in our salvation, The Spirit had created a unity of these truths into which He had called us that was our responsibility to keep in tact completely.

II. THE UNITY OF TRUTH THE SPIRIT HAD CREATED

- A. It is a calling, an invitation from God to be received, not a philosophical choice to make. It is not arrived at by simply weighing Christ against the “other gurus” of the world. It is a personal call from God to accept Jesus as a category all by Himself, not shared with any other human being for all of time. *THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD*
 - 1. God is calling out a people to give to His Son as a bride and a gift for His coronation

2. *This special people will rule and reign with Christ as they are justified, purified, sanctified in this present age for the coming age*
 3. *This people have been chosen by God to have eternal life that they might be a part of the restored creation and live forever with Him*
- B. *It is captivating when accepted. (Paul is the prisoner of the LORD)*
1. *There is an element of ego loss in it.*
 - a. *You will either choose to retain your own merit and autonomy and gamble that you have enough standing to present your case before God as to your justification and right to enter His kingdom on those merits or*
 - b. *You will surrender your autonomy to the sovereignty of Christ and accept His justification of you with no merit of your own to present to God. This scenario offers that you have no merit to argue your case before God.*
 - c. *If you accept the former you will have put yourself on an equal par with God in the delusion that you can argue your good behavior or spotless character as good enough to occupy God's kingdom apart from the merits of Christ.*
 - d. *If you accept the latter, you will recognize that all things you have done will never offset your refusal to have an open, trusting relationship with God. You will be willing to accept that you have nothing to merit your life for eternity in the presence of God; instead you will see that the merits of Christ alone are the only adequate recommendations to being justified before God. You will surrender your life to the lordship of Christ for the gradual revelational process that is. You will be offering yourself to be changed into Christ's image. That will put you in a willfully binding relationship to the One who called us to enter into His yoke with Him (Matthew 11:28-30)*
 2. **PROFITABLE THINGS:** *It is a calling of inestimable worth. The Spirit authorizes us to live in this calling. It is to be lived grasping the worth of its state of being. We are to "walk worthy" of it. Paul describes this worthy walk in these terms:*
 - a. *With all lowliness: humility of mind; a mindset that does not think too highly of itself; its only comparison is with the perfect God; understanding you are only as important as your immediate response to what God calls for no matter how small*

or great; it does not pursue greatness but likeness of Christ the servant; it is the path to receiving God's favor or grace

- b. With all gentleness: considering how you would want to be treated by another; considering how Christ has treated you when you failed or were being taught a valuable life lesson; treating others as you would want to be treated*
- c. With longsuffering: treating others with the same kind of understanding and patience with which you have been treated by God; this is a character trait of God, something for which He is known for.*
- d. Bearing with one another in love: one application of longsuffering*
- e. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: recognizing first what the spirit has put in its right place (peace, justice, righteousness); working from what you know to be God's proper place for things, endeavor (put every humble effort to work) to keep that peace, making no compromises with God's order*
- f. To recognize there is one body: there is only the body of Christ created by Him, for Him and in Him*
- g. To recognize there is one Spirit: Many spirits in the world; it is the rejection of all other spirits for the one and only Holy Spirit of God; He is the only one with the truth to be believed*
- h. To recognize there is one hope of your calling: the blessed hope is the return of Christ, not a better society, not a more comfortable world for all, not the end of poverty, not prosperity for all, not good politics*
- i. To recognize there is one Lord: there are not multiple paths to God, Christ is the only way; that of necessity is exclusive; there may be multiple paths to conversion but they all must be conversions to faith in Jesus as the Christ*
- j. To recognize there is one faith: Only one faith has been revealed and that is faith in Christ alone; it is saving faith, justifying faith*
- k. To recognize there is one baptism: It is the baptism in to Christ Jesus both spiritually and with water; there had been the baptism of John for repentance that prepared the way for Messiah and the baptism of the Messiah at Pentecost that identified Jesus as the Messiah and His community of believers as the Messianic community. John's baptism had been*

*overridden and eclipsed by the Messianic baptism since
Messiah had already come*

- l. To recognize there is one God and Father of all who is above
all, through all, and in you all: To which all is he referring? In
the first two "alls" he must be referring to all humanity; the
last all must be referring to his readers.*