

Ephesians 4; Lord's Day 21

I BELIEVE IN THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

- I. The marvelous unity.
 - A. God establishes this unity, first a unity of mankind in Adam (Acts 17:26), but Adam's sin destroyed it.
 - B. God re-created a positive spiritual unity in Jesus Christ.
 - 1. First, in election God united to Christ all the elect.
 - 2. Second, in redemption God made peace.
 - 3. Third, God sends the Spirit of Christ to communicate to each member the life of Christ to each of the elect (Eph. 4:3b).
 - C. They are all "saints", i.e., justified in Christ's righteousness and sanctified in Christ.
 - D. There is diversity in this unity which has a wonderful purpose.
- II. Our calling is to practice our faith in this blessed truth by serving Christ (the Head) by serving the other members.
 - A. The first duty is to partake of Christ (His riches and gifts) and of the blessed friendship with God (covenant).
 - B. Second, consciously strive to serve (edify) the other members (12b,16).
 - C. Note that the more excellent way to exercise the communion of saints is to love (I Cor. 13).
 - D. What are we to do when there is conflict?
 - E. Great blessing and edification arises from the proper exercise of the communion of saints.
 - 1. Through each other we show and receive evidence of God's love (John 13:35) and show Jesus is divine (John 17:23).
 - 2. Thus we participate in the glorification and praise of God, as the Body of Christ functions on the earth.