**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS: THE WEALTH AND WALK OF A BELIEVER**

*“Walking in Unity”*

**INTRO:**

* **THE PLEA FOR UNITY**
* Paul’s instruction to the churches was filled with references to unity in the body. (I Cor. 1:10; I Cor. 12:25; Rom. 16:17)

*1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

*1 Corinthians 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*

*Romans 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

* **THE PROBLEM OF DISUNITY**
* **Spiritual Immaturity (I Cor. 3:1-3)**

*Matthew22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*

*37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

*38 This is the first and great commandment.*

*39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

* **Selfishness (James 4:1-2)**

*James 4:1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?*

*2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.*

* **THE PURSUIT OF UNITY**
* **Biblical unity cannot be created, it can only be maintained.**

*Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to* ***keep*** *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

* **In order to maintain Biblical unity, we must work at it.**

*Ephesians 4:3* ***Endeavouring*** *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

**“endeavor” – to use speed; to labor, try hard to achieve**

**Endeavor to maintain unity by…**

* Refusing to murmur or complain (Phil. 2:14-15)
* Refusing to participate in gossip (Pr. 26:20; Pr. 25:23)
* Following Biblical principles when offended (Mt. 18:15-18)
* Forgiving when you are wronged (Eph. 4:31-32)

**TODAY**

* **THE PREREQUISITES FOR UNITY**
* **Spirit-filled living (vs. 2)**
* **Lowliness –A proper view of self.**

*Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

*2 Timothy 3:2 For men shall be* ***lovers of their own selves****, covetous,* ***boasters, proud****, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*

*3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,*

*4 Traitors, heady,* ***highminded****, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*

*The “lowliness” of Jesus (Phil. 2:1-8)*

*Am I willing to put others needs/desires above my own?*

*Am I willing to see and acknowledge my own sin – not focusing on the sin of others?*

*Am I willing to receive and respond to the instruction of others?*

*Am I willing to fill any role-no matter how big or small?*

**The opposite: Pride/Self-promotion**

* **Meekness –A proper approach toward others.**

*2 Timothy 2:24 And the servant of the Lord* ***must not strive****; but* ***be gentle*** *unto all men, apt to teach, patient,*

*25* ***In meekness*** *instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*

*26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

*The gentleness of Jesus (Is. 40:10-11)*

*Isaiah 40:10 Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, And his arm shall rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, And his work before him.*

*11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, And carry them in his bosom, And shall gently lead those that are with young.*

*Am I careful in how I approach others?*

*Do my words speak edification or judgment?*

*Do I diffuse situations with my soft tone?*

**The opposite: Harsh/Judgmental**

* **Longsuffering/Forbearance –A proper disposition toward the flaws/slights of others**

*Willingness to suffer (long-tempered); endure*

*Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled,* ***not soon angry****, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;*

**The opposite: Quick-tempered; short fuse; volatile**

*I Cor. 13:4 “Charity suffereth long (Love is patient), and is kind….”*

*Psalm 86:15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*

*Psalm 103:8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*

*Psalm 145:8 The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; Slow to anger, and of great mercy.*

*Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;*

*13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*

*Am I irritated by those with personalities that differ from mine?*

*Do I react to hurts with anger or with mercy?*

*Is my tongue an instrument of kindness or cruelty?*

* **Doctrinal oneness (vs. 4-6)**

*Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

* One Body: Placed into the same body (I Cor. 12:27)
* One Spirit: **Indwelt** by the same spirit (I Cor. 3:16)
* One Hope: Having the same hope and calling (Eph. 4:1)
* One Lord: Having the same Lord (Acts 4:12)
* One Faith: **Believing** the same Biblical truth (Jude 3)
* One Baptism: Having the same baptism (Rom. 6:3-4)
* One God and Father: Being **children** of the same Heavenly Father (Jn. 1:12)