

Five Keys to Unity

Ephesians 4:25-32

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Walk Through Ephesians – In chapter one, Paul reminds the Ephesians of who they are and the power they possess in Christ (Eph. 1:3-22). In chapter two, he reflects on who they once were and what Christ has made them through His grace and mercy (Eph. 2:1-22). Chapter three focuses on their calling to make Christ known, culminating in Paul's prayer for them to walk in the power of Christ as He rules in their hearts (Eph. 3:1-21). In chapter four, Paul urges the Ephesians to live in a manner worthy of this calling, emphasizing unity and mutual love. He encourages them to "put on the new self" (Eph. 4:24), which he further explains in the verses that follow.

Message Statement for Ephesians – God will use the church (the fullness of Christ) to make Christ known in this age and to conform His people to the image of His Son as they love one another and walk in unity.

Message statement for this Lesson – Five Keys to being Unified in the body of Christ

Homiletical Outline

I. Key One: Speak Truth (Vs. 25)

A. Negative Command – Laying aside Falsehood

- 1. Laying Aside** – to put off from oneself, cast off, to put or take something away from its normal location, to remove.

2. Falsehood – a lie, untruth

- i. Getting rid of falsehood is a purposeful decision.
- ii. Falsehood aligns itself with our former way of living.

B. Positive Command – Speak Truth

1. Speak – to talk at random

- i. The emphasis is not on the content of the speech but that the person who spoke instead of staying silent.

2. Truth – the unveiled reality lying at the basis of and agreeing with an appearance; the manifested, the veritable essence of matter.

- i. Denotes the reality clearly lying before our eyes as opposed to a mere appearance without reality.

- ii. Pertaining to being a real or actual event or state, actual reality.

3. Neighbor – fellowman or fellow creature, indicating primarily an outward nearness or proximity.

- i. Anybody close to you is a neighbor, though the context is speaking of believers.

C. Motivation for the Command – We are members of one another

1. This verse is tied to verse 4:13-16.

2. In the same way we are members with Christ, we are also members with one another. Therefore, we have a responsibility to build up one another.

3.

II. Key Two: Don't Let Anger Drive You (Vs. 26-27)

A. Positive Command – Be Angry

1. This phrase is an imperative (a command).
2. **Angry** – to be provoked to, arouse to anger.

B. Negative Command – And yet do not Sin nor let the sun go down on your anger.

1. **Sin** – to miss or not hit the mark.
 - i. One who keeps missing the mark in his relationship with God,
 - ii. Anger, that is righteous, in itself is not a sin, but to allow that anger to control us is a sin (James 1:20).
2. **Do not let the Sun go down on your Anger**
 - i. This is pertaining to letting anger sit rather than dealing with it.
 - ii. Anger then can become wrathful and get worse.
 - iii. The day of anger should be the day of reconciliation.

C. Motivation for the Command – Don't give the devil an opportunity

1. **Give** – grant, bestow, donate, produce.
 - i. The context of the verb can be used to yield fruit.
2. **Devil** – the accuser; one who falsely accuses and divides people without any reason (Rev. 12:10).
3. **Opportunity** – place or space
 - i. When we don't properly deal with our anger, we give the enemy the opportunity and space to create disunity and accuse us.

III. Key Three: Don't Steal but Labor (Vs. 28)

A. Negative Command – Stop Stealing.

B. Positive Command – Labor.

1. Labor – to toil; work.

2. Performing – work or labor.

i. To be involved in business with the focus upon the work which is involved.

3. Good – benevolent, profitable, to do good to benefit others.

i. Being morally, honorable, pleasing to God.

C. Motivation for the Command – Being able to share with others

IV. Key Four: Build up don't Tear Down (Vs. 29-30)

A. Negative Command – Don't Tear Down.

1. Unwholesome – rotten, worthless.

i. Pertaining to that which is harmful in view of its being corrupting.

ii. It signifies what is noxious (poisonous), offensive, or useless, and refers to language which, so far from yielding “grace” or benefit, has a tendency to corrupt the hearer.

2. The word “no” indicates that this should not ever be the case for a believer.

B. Positive Command – Build Up

1. **Edification** – the act or process of building.
 - i. Edification spiritual profit or advancement.
 - ii. The word expresses the strengthening effect of teaching.
2. These words should be expressed when the moment calls for it.

“According to the need of the moment.”

C. Motivation of the Command – Give Grace and Don’t Grieve the Spirit

1. **Grace** – to confer a favor; to give pleasure or profit.
 - i. The Word here means the generous giving on the part of Christians which is considered as a gift of thanksgiving.
 - ii. The words should benefit those who hear them.
2. **Don’t Grieve the Spirit.**
 - i. **Grieve** – become sad, sorrowful, distressed.
 - ii. That which grieves the Holy Spirit is sin. In this context, it’s speech or actions that cause disunity.
 - iii. Although the Holy Spirit may be grieved, He will never leave the believer because He is their seal and pledge (Eph.1:13-14).

V. Key Five – Forgive as much as you have been forgiven (Vs. 31-32)

A. Negative Command – Don’t display an unforgiving heart

1. **Six Negative Vices (vs. 31)**
 - i. The first set of 3 for the negative vices can be seen in the emotional state of the believer that has yet to manifest itself.

- a. **Bitterness** – state of being bitter (resentful) in an affective sense, bitterness, animosity, anger, harshness.
 - b. **Wrath** – a state of intense displeasure, anger, wrath, rage, indignation.
 - c. **Anger** - state of relatively strong displeasure, with focus on the emotional aspect.
- ii. The second set of 3 for the negative vices can be seen as manifestation of the first 3 that affects those that it is aimed toward.
 - a. **Clamor** – shouting, of people shouting back and forth in a quarrel (argument).
 - b. **Slander** – speech that denigrates or defames, reviling, denigration, disrespect.
 - i. Generally, of any kind of speech that is defamatory or abusive.
 - c. **Malice** - a mean-spirited or vicious attitude or disposition, ill-will.

B. Positive Command

1. Believer's actions towards one another.

- i. **Kind** – loving, benevolent (well-meaning or charitable).
- ii. **Tender Hearted** – pertaining to having tender (gentleness or sympathetic) feelings for someone, compassionate.

C. Motivation – Christ has forgiven you

1. Forgiveness – show favor, give freely.

- i. Biblical forgiveness is seen as the removal of a consequence to an underserving person or persons (Lk. 7:42; Rom. 6:23; 2 cor. 2:10).
- ii. Biblical forgiveness is a command of all who follow Christ (Matthew 18:21-35; Lk. 17:3-4; Eph. 4:32).