

Let's continue in our study of Ephesians. Last week we dealt with Ephesians 4:1,2 – this week let's pick up with verse 3:

Ephesians 4:3-6 *being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

I want to spend some time talking about unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This topic of unity in the bond of peace goes very deep, so we're going to break it into 3 bite-sized chunks:

- 1) God's perspective on unity
- 2) Our responsibility to preserve unity
- 3) The practical walking out of unity and lack thereof

First, let's look at unity, and the lack thereof – division/discord – from God's perspective.

This morning, we are going to start by looking at Proverbs 6

Proverbs 6:16-19 *There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:*

*¹⁷ Haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
And hands that shed innocent blood,
¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that run rapidly to evil,
¹⁹ A false witness who utters lies,
And one who spreads strife among brothers.*

The word strife is also translated discord, conflicts, trouble. God hates this. He designed His creation to operate in Shalom – wholeness, completeness, peace.

It is good and pleasant in the eyes of the Father when His children dwell together in unity.

Psalms 133:1 *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!*

In the amazing prayer of Jesus that is recorded in John 17, we can see how unity is woven into so beautifully into the tapestry of the relationship between God the

Father and God the Son, Jesus. Jesus' heart is for us to experience the purest form of relationship and unity – that which He and the Father enjoy.

John 17:11 *I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.*

John 17:20-23 *I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.*

We see God's perspective of how we are to operate in unity by the analogy He gives for us as His children – We are the Body of Christ.

Romans 12:4,5 *For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

1 Corinthians 12:18-25 *But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. ¹⁹ If they were all one member, where would the body be? ²⁰ But now there are many members, but one body. ²¹ And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; ²³ and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, ²⁴ whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, ²⁵ so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.*

Ephesians 4:11-16 *And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵ but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to*

the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Hale Pule Question:

Look over the verses that talk about unity from the Father's perspective. Do any of them speak to you or challenge you in your perspective of unity? If so, please share with the others.

How do you see how the Father created you and your role/function in the Body of Christ as it helps build unity?