

JANUARY 31, 2010

TITLE: UNITY

READINGS: Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-16 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 17:1-11

Today's readings painted a declaration of unity. Unity is defined as the state of being undivided or unbroken a completeness or totality with nothing wanting--it is the smallest...

Jesus prayer in John 17 is a prelude to the unity of the body of Christ through the people given to Christ. Glorify your son that your son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to those that you have given him. Life eternal is to know the one true God and Jesus Christ. We fully know God and Christ when we become complete in unity with the father and son.

Albert Einstein said "The human being is part of the whole, called by us the 'universe', He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

Separate we deteriorate, ensnared by deceitful scheming we begin to be alienated from God. Because of ignorance our hearts start hardening. We will lose all sensitivity and our understanding becomes darkened with futile thinking. We begin to seek the sensual and indulging in every kind of impurity. We spend most of our time bitter, enraged in anger and brawling. Our mouths can become filled with lies and unwholesome talk. We are wounded and blind groping the walls of darkness without the head that is Christ.

We have all seen the shadow of this in the world today but we also have heard the good news found in Ephesians 4:8-11 where Paul highlights the gift of victory over sin. It says that: "when he ascended on high he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." We have the Holy Spirit and each one of us possesses our own unique gifts along with a measure of grace given by Christ. With this we are to build up the body of Christ. Our participation is through mature works of service and in the faith and knowledge of the son of God attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ...

Paul said we need to be completely humble and gentle, to be patient while our attitude and behavior towards everyone is to be well-established in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. Paul is telling us

to love and to be gentle and patient with ourselves and with others because we are destined to be one in unity with Christ.

Last week Pastor Barney spoke comparing of the church to a bride and that we are the body of Christ. Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

In the book: How Then Should We Live Francis Schaeffer states that "There is a flow to history and culture. This flow is rooted and has it's wellspring in the thoughts of people." What people are in their thought world determines how they act."

When our thought world is that of the mind of Christ we begin to act with loving kindness moving the body towards Gods plan for unity. Our Gifted mature participation will be compelling us into oneness with the father and son. When the course of action called unity is completed we will know and experience eternal life. The church will be with nothing wanting. The head which is Christ will have a healthy complete body with one mind and one spirit. Jesus Christ will find his unblemished bride and our father in heaven will be gloried.

I clothed you with an embroidered dress and put leather sandals on you. I dressed you in fine linen and covered you with costly garments. I adorned you with jewelry: I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck, and I put a ring on your nose, earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. So you were adorned with gold and silver; your clothes were of fine linen and costly fabric and embroidered cloth. Your food was fine flour, honey and olive oil. You became very beautiful and rose to be a queen. And your fame spread among the nations on account of your beauty, because the splendor I had given you made your beauty perfect, declares the Sovereign LORD

Mat Nooner