

The Peace of God Ruling in the Body of Christ

Col. 3:15

Introduction:

- A. We are now turning to peace of last half of verse.
- B. We turn to Ephesians as a book on peace in the church.
 - 1. "One" - 11 times
 - 2. "Together" - 7 times
 - 3. "Peace" - 7 times.
 - 4. "Unity" - 2 times.
- C. We are taught to overcome two fundamentals causes of division and strife in Ephesians:

Discussion:

I. Strife and Division Caused By Mishandling Necessary Differences.

- A. Ethic Differences.
 - 1. All sinners in need of grace. (2:1-10).
 - 2. All saved in same way in same body. (2:11-3:21)
- B. Positional Differences.
 - 1. Under positions behave as Christians - wives, children, poor, servants, citizens.
 - 2. Over positions behave as Christians - husbands, parents, rich, masters, officials.
- C. Growth Difference.
 - 1. Each at different growth stage. (2:21; 4:15,16; cf. Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8)
 - 2. Each needs to "bear with the other". (4:2).
- D. Ability Differences.
 - 1. Functions and responsibilities differ with ability. (cf. Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12).
 - 2. Functions blend into one body. (4:16; cf. 1 Cor. 12).
 - a. Without envy of other's function.
 - b. Without flaunting own function.
 - c. Without demanding responsibility beyond ability.

II. Strife and Division Caused By Creating Unnecessary Differences.

- A. By not walking as new creatures. (4:17-32).
 - 1. Old man tends to strife: greed (19), lying (25), theft (28), corrupt speech (29), bitterness, etc. (v. 31).
 - 2. New man tend to peace: righteousness, holiness (24), careful speech (29), kindness, etc. (32).
- B. By not walking in love. (5:1-7).
 - 1. Opposites of love cause discord: fornication, covetousness, deception.
 - 2. Fruit of love causes harmony: self-sacrifice (v. 2), obedience (v.6), purity (v.7).
- C. By not walking in light. (5:8-14).
 - 1. Approves things acceptable to God. (v. 8-10).
 - 2. Reproves works of darkness. (v. 11) - promotes real peace.
 - a. Compromising with darkness does not serve peace. (v. 11; Rom. 16:17).
 - b. Compromise causes further division. (cf. Man on border during civil war.)
- D. By not walking in wisdom. (5:15-17).
 - 1. Foolish and divisive to be drunk (v. 18 cf. "given to wine" and "brawler".
 - 2. Wise and peaceful to:
 - a. Sing together. (v. 19).
 - b. Pray together. (v. 20).
 - c. Yield to each other when possible. (v. 21)
 - (1) Can yield on matter of judgment.

(2) Cannot yield on matter of faith.

Conclusion:

- A. We need to let peace of God rule in our hearts and in church.
- B. We need to "keep the unity of the Spirit" in one body. (4:1-3).
 - 1. By recognizing unity established by Spirit in Christ. (2:11-16).
 - 2. By practicing forbearance and longsuffering.
 - 3. By treating all as one in spite of natural differences.
 - 4. By removing differences caused by ungodly attitudes and actions.