**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | A Unified Church |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Ephesians 4:3-7 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2493 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Ephesians 4:3
   2. The desire of God for the church is that we have the unity of the Spirit.
      1. That we have the bond of peace.
   3. Psalm 133:1
   4. Proverbs 6:16-19
   5. We do not produce this unity; it is called the unity of the Spirit.
   6. But while we do not produce this unity, we are to preserve it.
      1. That should be our prayer for our churches.
   7. In today’s message, we will learn the three basic concepts on which this unity is based.
2. the ground of our unity (ephesians 4:3-6)
   1. The ground of our unity is truth.
      1. It is doctrinal and spiritual.
   2. There are seven basic truths found in the Word of God in Ephesians 4.
      1. They hold up the entire spiritual enterprise of the church.
      2. No one can call himself a Bible Christian who does not believe these seven basic truths.
      3. They are the foundation of our unity.
   3. Ephesians 4:3-6
      1. Do not let anyone say that doctrine does not matter.
         1. If a church ceases to hold these great truths, then she will lose her unity.
   4. What do we mean by unity?
      1. Unity is not unison.
         1. Unison is all right if someone is in a choir, but everyone does not have to sing the same note.
            1. We can sing in harmony without singing in unison.
      2. Unity is not uniformity.
         1. We don’t have to be a congregation of clones.
         2. We don’t all have to look alike and dress alike.
         3. Uniformity comes from without; unity comes from within.
      3. Unity is not union.
         1. Union and unity are not necessarily the same.
         2. We can be in the same church and not be in unity.
      4. Unity is doctrinal and spiritual.
   5. The ground of our unity includes the following seven truths:
      1. There is one body.
         1. Ephesians 4:4
            1. That one body is the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
            2. It doesn’t say one congregation.

The body of Christ is bigger than any church.

* + - 1. The church is a spiritual body.
         1. The church is not a corporation with Jesus as the president, the church is a body with Jesus as the head.
      2. It is not one denomination.
         1. Whether you are a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Episcopalian, if you have given your heart to Jesus Christ, if you have been twice-born, then you are a part of the spiritual body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
      3. There is a local expression of this body.
         1. The Bible speaks of the church here and the church there.

Because not only is there that great universal church, but there is also the local New Testament body.

* + - * 1. Every twice-born person should be a member of a local New Testament congregation.

That is the plan of God.

* + - * 1. A church is a unified body with pastor, deacons, and servants.
      1. If you are a disunified person, if you sow discord in the church, then you do the following two things:
         1. You dishonor the head, who is Jesus.
         2. You wound and mutilate yourself because we are members of the same body.
    1. There is one Spirit.
       1. Ephesians 4:4
          1. This verse speaks of the Holy Spirit who is the substance of our life, the secret of our strength, and the source of our unity.
       2. The Holy Spirit is the one who binds us together and tells us that we belong one to another.
       3. We do not know everyone’s name, but we know the Holy Spirit who dwells in each of us.
          1. The Holy Spirit that is in me is in you.
       4. Not only does God’s Spirit bear witness with our spirit that we are children of God, but God’s Spirit also bears witness with our spirit that we belong to one another.
       5. Vance Havner said that we are not to be wired together by organization, frozen together by formalism, rusted together by tradition, but melted together by one Spirit.
    2. We have one hope.
       1. Ephesians 4:4
       2. The Bible calls the Second Coming of Jesus Christ “*the blessed hope*”.
          1. Titus 2:13
       3. All true believers in Christ are waiting for Jesus Christ to come again.
       4. You cannot call yourself a Bible Christian if you do not believe in this one hope, the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
       5. People may have different views concerning the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus, such as amillennial, premillennial, or postmillennial.
          1. We don’t have to know the meaning of every detail to be expecting the Lord Jesus to come again.
       6. Revelation 22:20
       7. In Matthew 24, the Bible speaks about the signs of the times.
          1. In verse 8, the word for “sorrows” is the word for “birth pangs”.

When a woman is going to deliver a baby, she has what is called in this verse “sorrows”.

They are labor pains.

There comes a time when the contractions get especially severe and strong.

* + - * 1. Jesus said that when these things come to pass, then look up.
      1. We are living in the closing shadows of an age.
      2. The one and only hope for this world is the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
    1. We confess one Lord.
       1. Ephesians 4:5
       2. That one Lord is Jesus Christ.
       3. The early church didn’t call Him Jesus nearly as much as they called Him the Lord Jesus.
          1. We need to get in the habit of saying, “The Lord Jesus”.
       4. Jesus did not come to take sides.
          1. When Joshua came against Jericho, a pagan city, he went out to reconnoiter and see what the situation was like.

While Joshua was out there, he became aware of a presence behind him.

He saw a man with a drawn sword.

Joshua asked the man whose side he was on.

The angel with the drawn sword said that he was on neither side.

He had come as the captain of the Lord’s host.

He was saying that he wasn’t for them, he wasn’t for you, he had not come to take sides; he came to take over.

Joshua 5:13-14

* + - 1. Jesus must always be the Lord of the church.
    1. We have one faith.
       1. Ephesians 4:5
       2. This one faith is the unified body of truth that we call the Bible.
          1. Not “a” faith, but one faith.
          2. A body of truth.
       3. Jude 3
          1. “The” faith, not “a” faith.
          2. There is one faith; it is God’s revealed Word.

We are to earnestly contend for it.

Get a grip on the Word of God and never let go.

* + - 1. We don’t need a new and modern gospel for a new and modern age.
         1. If it is new, then it is not true.
         2. If it is not absolute, then it is obsolete.
      2. Open the Word of God; analyze it, organize it, illustrate it, and apply it.
      3. A church may have all other kinds of programs, but they must have this one faith.
      4. 2 Timothy 4:7
         1. Paul was faithful to the fight, faithful to the finish, and faithful to the faith.

We must never waiver.

* + 1. We share one baptism.
       1. Ephesians 4:5
          1. This is not talking about immersion or sprinkling.

It goes beyond that.

* + - 1. When a person gives their heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, they are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the spiritual body of Christ.
         1. At the moment of your salvation, you are placed into the body of Christ.

The church is a body with Christ as the head, and we are the members.

* + - * 1. Before you were ever baptized in water, you were baptized with the Holy Spirit of God and into the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13

This is what makes us one.

Water baptism only symbolizes that which takes place when someone gives his heart to Jesus.

* + - 1. People talk about receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
         1. If you are saved, then you have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
         2. Nowhere in the New Testament is a believer told to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We are told to be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18

The baptism takes place at the moment of salvation.

There may be many fillings, but there is only one baptism.

* + 1. We worship one God.
       1. He is not Allah; He is Yahweh, Jehovah God.
       2. Ephesians 4:6
       3. His name is Jehovah, and we do not know Him apart from Jesus Christ.
          1. John 14:6
  1. Our unity is found in these seven basic foundational truths.
     1. They are the ground of our unity.

1. the glory of our diversity (ephesians 4:7)
   1. God made us one, and God made us different at the same time.
   2. Ephesians 4:7
      1. Notice the word “but”; he is changing directions.
         1. He had been talking about our sameness doctrinally.
         2. Then, in contradistinction, he uses the word “but”.
      2. The Greek word for “grace” is “charis”.
         1. It is a word we get the word “charismatic” from.
   3. God gives different spiritual gifts to different people.
      1. God made us different in the church.
      2. Not only do we have unity, but we also have diversity.
   4. A church is not to be a congregation of clones.
      1. A church is to have unity in diversity.
   5. This is not talking about diversity about doctrine.
      1. Romans 16:17
      2. There isn’t room for every kind of belief, but there is room for people who have different gifts.
   6. God gave us different gifts that He might make us one.
   7. We each have a grace gift.
      1. Ephesians 4:7
   8. God gave each of us a gift to serve Him.
      1. Think of what would happen if every member of a church were to discover, develop, and deploy his gift.
      2. A spiritual gift is not for your elation.
         1. It is not a toy; it is a tool.
      3. There is a place of service for you in a church.
   9. Sameness is not unity; unity comes from diversity.
      1. We have unity because we’re different.
      2. It’s the differences that draw us together.
      3. We don’t have to march in locked step.
   10. One of the difficulties that churches have is that people have different tastes.
       1. For example, people have different tastes in music.
       2. We can be divided over tastes but not over Jesus.
          1. We are here to glorify the Lord Jesus.
          2. We are to be one body in the Lord Jesus Christ.
   11. We are to celebrate and conserve our diversity.
       1. We don’t all have to sing in unison.
2. the goal of our maturity (ephesians 4:13)
   1. Why do we have this unity and this diversity?
      1. Ephesians 4:13
         1. The word “perfect” in this verse means “mature”.
   2. Peace comes with unity, diversity, and maturity.
      1. Little children squabble and fuss.
      2. Mature adults learn how to get along with one another.
      3. Bickering comes from immaturity.
   3. We are to be mature in stature.
      1. Ephesians 4:13
      2. If you want to know whether you are growing or not, do not measure yourself by another member of the church; measure yourself by Jesus Christ.
      3. The measure of ministry is not the size of the buildings, budgets, or Bible study attendance.
         1. The measure is if we are becoming more like Jesus Christ.
   4. We are to be mature in stability.
      1. Ephesians 4:14
      2. Get your feet on the rock.
      3. Acts 20:29
         1. False cults don’t produce converts as much as they try to siphon off Bible believers who don’t understand because they are not rooted and grounded in the faith.
            1. They are like little sailboats that are blown this way and that way.
      4. Get a bulldog grip on the truth.
   5. We are to be mature in speech.
      1. Ephesians 4:15
      2. We are not to speak truthless love or loveless truth.
      3. We are to speak the truth in love.
         1. Truth without love is brutality.
         2. Love without truth is hypocrisy.
      4. The Bible is a wonderful sword, but it is a poor club.
      5. Don’t be argumentative over small differences.
      6. We are never to jettison the truth, but we are to speak the truth in love.
   6. We are to be mature in service.
      1. Ephesians 4:16
         1. Each part helps the other parts so that the whole body is healthy, growing, and full of love.
         2. This verse speaks of “joints”.
            1. What makes an arm operate and the fingers move?

It is because there is a joint.

* + - * 1. The Greek word for “joint”, “harmos”, is the word we get our word “harmony” from.

The body is to be flexible.

The body is to work together.

The body is to be coordinated.

* + 1. We are in business for Jesus.
    2. If my ministry makes difficulty for your ministry, then there is something wrong with what you are doing, what I am doing, or what we are both doing.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. The church is to be one in the bond of love.
      1. There is the ground of our unity.
      2. There is the glory of our diversity.
      3. There is the goal of our maturity.
   2. If you have not received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, then there is a blessing and a fellowship that you know nothing of until you know Jesus.
   3. To be saved means the following:
      1. That every sin is forgiven.
      2. That God, through the Holy Spirit, lives in you.
         1. He has baptized you into the body of Christ.
      3. When that blessed hope comes or when you die, you will be caught up to meet the Lord in Heaven.
   4. You can be saved by trusting Christ.
      1. Christ purchased your salvation with His shed blood on the cross.
      2. It is your duty and privilege, by repentance and faith, to receive Jesus Christ.
         1. Repentance means you turn from the old way.
         2. Faith means you put your trust in Jesus.
   5. The greatest thing that you could do is to give your heart to Jesus Christ.
      1. It is the beginning of a brand-new life and the first day of an eternal life.
   6. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   7. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16