

MY NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

EPHESIANS

How can you specifically honor God with your life this week?



EPHESIANS

11. UNIFIED IN CALLING, CONDUCT, AND CONFESSION EPHESIANS 4:1-6

As Paul starts this section of his letter, he moves his focus to our lives and the unity that Christians are supposed to have inside the church. We are to love one another as Christ has first loved us. Within the Church, we will have people of different political views, different tastes in music, differing parenting styles, different food choices, and different ways we enjoy connecting. In every local church there will be different personalities and people from different social statuses; the only way we will ever come together and have our differences be secondary is if (and when) we worship Jesus first.

- **What things cause the most divisions in our world today?**
- **What issues cause the most divisions in your friendships?**
- **How would/does focusing on Jesus first allow us to move past our differences?**

Paul has set the stage in Ephesians by telling us that there is one God, He exists as a Trinity, we have seen the plan of God, we have seen God's desire for His people, and we have seen that the problem in the world is sin and the answer is Jesus. When we have trusted Jesus for our redemption we get to be connected to God and others. At the end of Ephesians 3 Paul tells us God does all of these things for His glory.

Read Ephesians 4:1-3.

- **How does it glorify God when His people live in unity?**
- **What does God's triune nature teach us about unity?**

Paul urges them to live a life worthy of their calling. To "live a life" means to "walk." Paul's language has both a present and a future orientation. We see God's purpose for the cosmos – bringing all things together in Christ – as well as how all things are brought together in His family. God cares how we live and Paul shows us certain character traits God wants us to grow in, together.

DISCUSSION NOTES

- **For each of these traits, spend time reflecting on your own life and ask others to speak into whether they see that trait in you.**

1. **Humility** – The church father, Augustine, said that all of our sin ultimately stems from pride.

Pride is the filling of yourself with yourself; humility is the emptying of yourself *and* filling of yourself with Christ.

2. **Gentleness** – Describes the kind of person, who though wronged and possessing the "right" to lash out, does not.

The person with this quality makes allowances for the weaknesses and ignorance of others (without looking down on others for said ignorance); it takes the kindest perspective whenever possible.

3. **Patience** – Waiting for others in love.

4. **Bearing with one another in love** – We learn by bearing with each other.

We will never **bear with one another** apart from love. Love comes from God to God's people so we would share it with others.

Read Ephesians 4:4-6.

Loving one another is a work of God's power; He is making us humble, patient, gentle, and loving in how we bear with others (especially when we/they are unbearable). ***Unity is not what we must strive for; it is what we already possess, and we must strive to maintain.*** We are not unified because we are all the same, we are unified because of our love of Christ.

- **How important is unity with other believers to you?**
- **How has your experience in the Church been diverse?**
- **How is the Church's own love and unity a witness to the world?**

If we seek God's glory, we will have God's unity among us.