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Epistle to the Ephesians: Christian Unity (4.1-6)

- Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church
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1. A New Section - "Therefore"
 - a. This is the practical part of the epistle (The doctrinal part is chapter 1 - 3)
 - i. Practice always flows from doctrine or we must not separate faith and practice. Practice flows from faith.
 - ii. It is important for us to know the doctrine before we put it into practice
 - b. The first application is the call to Christian Unity
2. Our calling
 - a. We are called to walk worthy of the God's calling for us
 - i. To walk worthy is to give equal weight
 - ii. Especially in the various aspects of our calling
 - b. We are fulfill the goal - keeping the unity of the Spirit
3. The goal
 - a. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace
 - i. To endeavour is to be diligent in achieving something. To be in a hurry to do something or to show concern about
 - ii. To show great concern that this unity exists
 - b. What? The unity of the Spirit
 - i. This unity has already been created by the Holy Spirit
 - ii. The central object is salvation - to reunite, to bring together again, to restore the unity that obtained before sin and the fall produced
 - c. Endeavour to "keep" - to guard, to hold fast, to preserve
 - i. Not to create a unity
 - ii. Not to break the unity that is already there which is produced by the Holy Spirit
4. The manner
 - a. With all lowliness - humility of mind, modesty, opposite of self esteem, pride
 - b. With all meekness - an inner mildness and gentleness; but compatible with great strength; ready to suffer wrong
 - c. With longsuffering - suffering long. Holding yourself in control for a long time and not giving way to passion
 - d. With forbearing one another - hold yourself up against. Put up with it; bear it, endure it; suffer it.
 - e. We must do all these in love
 - i. Love is the consideration of the feelings of others
 - ii. Love is consideration of understanding

- iii. Love is the consideration for the good of the other person
 - f. At all times, in all occasions must we seek to preserve unity in these ways
 - g. In sum, "Try above everything else to win him to your position if you are convinced that you are right. Do not merely try to score over him, do not strike him, do not dismiss him, do not be contemptuous of him, do not be impatient with him. We must be patient with one another, we must be forbearing, we must be longsuffering"
- 5. The already existing basis
 - a. One body, one Spirit, one hope of your calling;
 - b. One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
 - c. One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all
 - d. Looking at the church a unity
 - i. Christ is the Head
 - ii. We are different members
 - (1) Some more honourable, some not so honourable
 - (2) Some great, some lesser
 - (3) Some perform greater tasks, some lesser tasks
 - (4) But the church is a unity!
- 6. Or, The 7 Necessities for Unity
 - a. One body
 - b. One Spirit
 - c. One Hope
 - d. One Lord
 - e. One Faith
 - f. One Baptism
 - g. One God and Father
- 7. Application
 - a. The church needs each one of us to do our part in the church - we are members one of another
 - b. We must be humble and meek, patient, longsuffering, forbearing with one another especially when we hold different views or convictions
 - c. We must not antagonise or irritate one another
 - d. We must try our best to maintain the peace in the church

Reflection questions

1. What are the ways in which we break this unity?
2. What are the wrong attitudes we sometimes have towards one another?
3. How can we maintain unity in the church?