

"Unity Within the Body of Christ"

Psalm 133

Introduction: This past week God placed upon my heart a subject to build a message upon and the subject was UNITY. A few days ago, I was a part of a conference call and in that meeting, God reinforced the need for me to do this message.

As we get our church started back up after being away since March 15th it is really time for us to get back together. But not everyone sees things in the same way. So, Satan has taken this virus and the fears that are associated with it and he has used that as a means of dividing God's people.

In the conference call someone shared a story of a church that was having unity issues as they considered gathering back together. There was one deacon who was ready to resign because of the steps they were going to take to go back. They were not divided over starting back, but they were divided over HOW to go back. I can assure you there are churches that are divided right now over starting back up. Some people believe it is illegal to go back and, in some states, it was ordered that churches were to close. But here in Pennsylvania the church was NEVER ordered to close for we were considered to be essential.

Then on Friday President Trump encouraged ALL churches to return so in the churches where there was fear about breaking the Law there are now people saying, "We were ordered to go back!" So, now there are more divisions.

Let me just tell you that this entire situation is a spiritual battle. Satan is using the entire situation to attempt to do several things:

1. Keep God's people apart.
2. Cause division within the church.

Let me show you some verses from the Book of Acts:

Acts 1:4

⁴ And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

Acts 1:6

⁶ When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:15

¹⁵ And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

Acts 2:44

⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

Acts 4:31

³¹ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Acts 12:12

¹² And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

Acts 20:7-8

⁷ And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

⁸ And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

These are just a few of the verses that speak of God's people being TOGETHER. So, we can be sure it is God's will for His people to gather together in one accord. So, because it is God's will we can be sure that Satan is going to do all he can to cause division and he is doing that very thing.

He is dividing churches over returning, how to return, over masks and over social distancing. So, it is our responsibility to walk in obedience to the words which Paul recorded in Ephesians 4.

Ephesians 4:1-3

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

² *With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;*

³ *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

We must do all we can to preserve the UNITY within the local body of believers here at Claysburg Bible Church. We must understand that people have different views. Let me show you from God's Word two different views concerning the return from the Babylonian captivity.

Ezra 8:21-22

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

22 For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.

If Ezra was alive today, he would not wear a mask, he would shake hands and hug everyone, and he would never miss a service. Then there was Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 2:6-9

6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

*9 Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. **Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.***

Nehemiah gladly accepted the military escort. If he were alive today, he would be here, but he would be fully masked up, he may have a full body suit on for protection and he would not get close anyone.

Now, the point I want to make here is that neither man was wrong. So, we must respect the decisions of others and that is part of endeavoring to keep the unity. Now I want to show what the Psalmist said concerning UNITY.

Psalm 133

We shall look at this Psalm in three sections:

1. The Statement.

Notice Psalm 133:1

Let us stop with this first word. It is the word "BEHOLD". The Lord desires that we step back and look closely at the beauty of unity among His children. It is a wonder that is seldom seen. Then the Psalmist makes two observations about the UNITY between the brethren.

1. It is GOOD.
2. It is PLEASANT.

The Psalmist does not attempt to measure the goodness and the pleasantness but instead he says, "HOW good and HOW pleasant the UNITY is. It is to be noticed that he calls the UNITY among brethren both GOOD and PLEASANT. For something to be GOOD is good and when something is pleasant with the good that takes it to something even better.

UNITY among the brethren is something that is not only good, but it is pleasurable. In our world much of the pleasure that people experience is evil and sinful. But not so with UNITY.

We need to notice closely the word DWELL. It is one thing to have unity and be separated but it is something else to have UNITY when the brethren are dwelling together. It is easy to get along with someone when you are miles or houses apart, but this Psalm is talking about UNITY when the brethren dwell TOGETHER.

Let me tell you what the foundation is for UNITY. It is LOVE. In order for UNITY to exist there must be love FOR the brethren. Now let me show you a verse.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

⁹ *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*

The love which God teaches us to love with is agape love. This is the love that is unconditional. Let me show you what this love looks like.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

⁴ *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,*

⁵ Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

⁶ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

⁷ Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

It is this kind of love from which UNITY arises.

3. The First Illustration. It is like the anointing oil poured on Aaron.

Notice Psalm 133:2

Here David helps us to see several benefits of UNITY.

a. It is like a sweet-smelling perfume.

UNITY sends up a sweet-smelling aroma to the Lord and it is very pleasing to Him.

b. It is HOLY.

UNITY is here likened to the anointing oil that was poured upon Aaron to start his priesthood. This oil was used to consecrate Aaron for service.

Application:

In the same way UNITY is HOLY. Aaron was anointed with the oil to consecrate him for the Lord's service. He had to be anointed for his service. In the same way it is the LOVE for the brethren and the UNITY which arises that brings about an effective ministry. Without the two there will be no fruit from our lives.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

c. It is diffusive.

When the oil was poured upon Aaron's head it ran down to his beard and even down upon the bottom of the priestly garments.

Application:

This is what brotherly love does in the life of a believer. It does not just remain in his heart, but it flows into the lives of those around him. When a man is taught of God to love and when he or she pays very close attention in class and absorbs all they can then you will see a person who pours out love into the lives of many others around them.

The fact that the oil ran down upon the garment of Aaron tells me that agape love flows even where it is not desired. In other words, it touches the lives of people who do not even desire it. But it is impossible to stop just like oil through the beard. It makes its way into the lives of bitter people, cold hearted people, and hard-hearted people. Agape love knows no limits. It does not see skin color, nationality, or age. Agape love flows like the oil poured upon Aaron and it is impossible to stop it.

UNITY among the brethren does the same thing also. The sweet perfume smell finds its way into the lives of many people.

4. Second illustration, it is like the dew of Hermon.

Notice Psalm 133:3a

The morning dew descended down from Hermon to the lower valleys and ever so lightly watered the vegetation.

Application:

What is the lesson for us here? Agape love comes from above and it is far reaching.

Conclusion:

Notice Psalm 133:3b

Where brotherly love dwells there, God dwells also. When love wishes a blessing, God has but to command a blessing. Brotherly love is like the early morning dew:

- a. It refreshes
- b. It brings joy
- c. It enhances life

Ephesians 4:3

³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.