

Keep Heart

Keep Your Heart from Division: Ephesians 4:1-6

Read Ephesians 4:1-6 together:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The Living Church is to be a lighthouse. Lighthouses can be beautiful and awe-inspiring, but what have they been built for? What is their real, critical function?

The Light of the World

There are 4 rules for lighthouses:

1. The lighthouse lamp must be lit every day from sunset until sunrise.
2. The lamps and lenses must be kept clean & trimmed every 4 hours. This is very disciplined, repetitive work!
3. The oil supply must always be maintained.
4. The lighthouse keeper MUST always stay on post. This is most critical at the hardest times!

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
Matthew 5:14-16

Building on the Foundation of Unity

- ? What is the definition of “unity” within the Living Church? Is there room for differing viewpoints?
- ? What are some topics that you believe allow for unity, while believers maintain differing points of view?
- ? What topics cannot promote unity in the presence of differing viewpoints? Why?
- ? In Ephesians 4 Paul mentions seven interlocking stones for the foundation of unity: the Holy Spirit, the body (the Living Church), the Lord, faith, baptism, and God our Father.
- ? According to 1 John 4:2, what is the litmus test of Truth (that which comes from the Spirit of God)?

The Problem: Sin
The Solution: Savior
The Result: Salvation

- ? Considering 1 John 4:2, does biblical unity allow for differing opinions about the reality of sin, Jesus’ humanity/divinity, and salvation?
- ? According to Critical Theory, what is the problem with our society? Is this the correct assessment of the problem? Why or why not?
- ? According to Critical Theory, what is the solution to the problem? What do they claim will be the result?

Shining the Light of Unity

We must not waver from the foundation of our unity: Jesus. We must be solidly anchored in the One Who never changes and never waivers. Remember what He prayed for: internal unity, not external tactics!

- ? How has the current worldview that surrounds us affected the theology of our churches?
- ? How has the current worldview that surrounds us affected the vocabulary and behavior of our churches?
- ? Consider your opinion on an important topic to you (parenting, school choice, 2nd amendment, masks, etc.). Are you willing to listen or to consider the evidence or experience of others? Are you guilty of desiring to “suit your own passions” as Paul spoke of in 2 Timothy 4:3-4?
- ? How do we rightly test “evidence” and hold to Truth?

We must ask ourselves: are we learning from the Spirit? Or are we conforming to the culture in our view of ourselves and how we treat others? We must resist the temptation to stray from the foundation of Jesus in our attempts to fit peaceably into our world.

Poisoning the Well

Poisoning the well is the act of undermining or discrediting a source in advance. The goal of this discrediting is to contradict any evidence from that source.

- ? How has Critical Theory poisoned the well for the Living Church?
- ? How do we, as a part of the Living Church, poison the well of politics? Of wearing masks?
- ? Many justify indefensible acts as “righteous anger.” What determines truly justifiable righteous anger?

The Practice of Unity

“Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing one another in love.” The Living Church must be grounded in humility. We must daily practice gentleness, patience, and forbearance with one another in love.

Let us be eager to maintain unity in the Living Church! Remember, Jesus’ great high priestly prayer was that we may be one! This unity will keep our light clear and bright, offering redemption for a fallen world.

**The Living Church must rightly consider the following mindsets/actions
and the impact upon unity that each delivers:**

I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
John 17:20,21

Humility

We must humbly live in total dependence upon God. We must remember that “all have sinned;” every race, every class, and every nation.

Subjectivism

The Living Church must reject subjectivism.
There is only one source of Truth: The Word of God.