

Faith to Unite

Key Verses:

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

***—Ephesians 4:1-3,
New American
Standard Bible***

Selected Scripture:
Ephesians 4:1-16

love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” “These things I command you, that ye love one another.” “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a

THE URGING OF OUR KEY

Verses is to walk in a manner worthy of the calling which we have received. Paul says we must first have humility, gentleness, patience, and tolerance for one another, in love. Then, he continues, we must be diligent to maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It also requires faith to unite. Some have, in error, created “creeds of men” to unite Christian people in faith. These have proved unsuccessful, because the creeds are of human origin. No carefully worded list of what must be believed has ever brought about true unity. It may only be obtained through the manifestation of a proper and loving spirit.

This theme is repeated often in Scripture. “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye

pure heart fervently.” “This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.”—John 13:34; 15:17; I Pet. 1:22; I John 3:23

With the foregoing verses in mind, it is distressing that consecrated believers divide over doctrines that often have little or no scriptural foundation. Paul reminds us of what the essential elements of Christian unity consist: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.” (Eph. 4:4-6, *NASB*) Beyond these, the apostle adds no other basis for unity.

Each believer is given grace from the Lord according to the measure of Christ’s gift. (vs. 7) In other words, the gift of grace works differently in each of God’s children. No two are exactly alike in appearance or in mind. Because we are different, conflicts arise. Love for one another must be applied in conflicts so that unity of the Spirit may result. The brethren at Corinth wrestled with the problem of divisions. Paul counseled them, “By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. . . . If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.”—I Cor. 12:13-18, *NASB*

The church was given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Their ministry to us is for the “equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.” (Eph. 4:11-13, *NASB*) May we be equipped to become mature, loving, patient, and sound in faith. Being sound in the faith, let us stand united as a new year begins! ■