

Ephesians: Finding Our True Identity
Embracing Unity In Christ #5
Cornerstone Church Of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
September 1, 2024

Sermon Notes

Big Idea: "Christ's saving grace and unifying power **transforms** our identity, deepens our relationships and guides our purpose."

Three Steps To Embrace Unity In Christ:

Step 1. Don't Forget Where You Came From

¹¹ Therefore, **remember** that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- ¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, **without hope** and **without God** in the world. **Ephesians 2:11-12 (NIV)**

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. **Romans 5:1-2 (NIV)**

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Step 2. Rejoice in the Peace Christ Brings

¹³ **But now** in Christ Jesus you who once were **far away** have been brought **near** through the **blood of Christ**. **Ephesians 2:13 (NIV)**

"so **Christ was sacrificed** once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring **salvation** to those who are waiting for him." **Hebrews 9:28 (NIV)**

¹⁴ For **He himself is our peace**, who has **made the two one** and has **destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility**, ¹⁵ by **abolishing in his flesh** the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to **create in Himself one new man out of the two**, thus making **peace**, ¹⁶ and in this one body to **reconcile** both of them to God through the cross, by which **He put to death their hostility**.

Ephesians 2:14-16 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. **John 14:6 (NIV)**

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Step 3. Build Unity In The Church

¹⁷ He came and preached **peace** to you who were **far away** and **peace** to those who were **near**. ¹⁸ For through him **we both** have **access** to the **Father by one Spirit**.

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but **fellow citizens** with God's people and **members of God's household**, ²⁰ built on the **foundation of the apostles and prophets**, with **Christ Jesus** Himself as the **chief cornerstone**. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a **holy temple** in the Lord. ²² And in him **you too** are being **built together** to become a **dwelling** in which God lives by his Spirit.
Ephesians 2:17-22 (NIV)

Cornerstone's Mission is to help people find and follow Jesus. Matt. 28:19-20; Romans 10:9

• **In Essential Beliefs** — we have Unity.

The Bible Is The Definitive Word Of God – 2 Timothy 3:16-17;

“For it is by **grace** you have been saved, through **faith**--and this not from yourselves, it is the **gift of God**-- ⁹ **not by works**, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are **God's workmanship**, created in **Christ Jesus** to **do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” **Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)**

“There is **one body** and **one Spirit**-- just as you were called to **one hope** when you were called-- ⁵ **one Lord, one faith, one baptism**; ⁶ **one God** and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” **Ephesians 4:4-6 (NIV)**

• **In Non-essential Beliefs** — we have Liberty.

⁴¹ Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on **disputable matters**...

¹⁵ If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

Romans 14:1,15-18 (NIV)

A copy of the Statement of Faith is provided on our website www.cornerstonepoway.com

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➤ **Will you take your next right step to embrace unity in Christ?**

My Next Right Step I Will:

Find a place to serve First Impressions Sept. 8, 12:30 Children's Media

Accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior

Take the Cornerstone Membership Class: September 22, 12:30-2:30



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Talk It Over

Family Corner: [Choose one day this week to ask questions to go deeper in faith as a family. Try this over dinner. Keep it to 12 minutes or less.]

Open With Prayer: Begin the session with a prayer, asking God to open hearts and minds to the truths of Ephesians 2:1-10 and to guide the discussion.

Icebreaker:

Share a time when you experienced a significant barrier in your life being broken down. How did that change impact you?

Three Steps To Embrace Unity In Christ:

Step 1. Don't Forget Where You Came From

Read Ephesians 2:11-12 and Romans 5:1-2

What does it mean to remember our past separation from God?

How does reflecting on our past help us appreciate our present relationship with Christ?

Share how your life has changed since coming to know Christ. How has your perspective on life shifted?

Step 2. Rejoice in the Peace Christ Brings

Read Ephesians 2:13-16 and Colossians 1:20

How has Christ destroyed the barriers of hostility in your life?

What does it mean to you that Christ is our peace?

Discuss ways we can actively pursue peace and reconciliation in our relationships.

Step 3. Build Unity In The Church

Read Ephesians 2:17-22

What does it mean to be "fellow citizens with God's people" and "members of his household"?

How can we actively participate in building up the body of Christ?

Share practical ways we can foster unity within our church and community.

Reflect on the barriers that Christ has broken down in your life. How has His peace transformed you?

Identify one area in your life where you can promote unity and reconciliation.

Read Matthew 28:19-20

What is Cornerstone's two-fold mission? Why does this matter?

• **In Essential Beliefs** — we have Unity.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

As Christians, what do we believe to be the authority for our morality and way to live our lives? Why?

Read Ephesians 2:8-10

Why is our belief in God's grace essential?

What has God called us to do? Ephesians 2:10

What does this passage teach us about what unifies us?

• **In Non-essential Beliefs** — we have Liberty.

Read Romans 14:1,4,12,17, 22

What are the three issues Paul addresses as non-essential?

What church rules have made it difficult for you or your friends in the past?

What do you consider to be essential and non-essential? Does this match God's Word?

Closing Prayer: