

Bridgeway Community Church  
Series: United When Divided  
Dr. David Anderson  
October 25, 2020

New three week series

Today: The Bonds of Peace  
Next Week: The Ballot Box of God's People  
Final Week: The Battle Never Lost

Ministry Year Theme: Stay in F.O.C.U.S. - Followers of Christ United in the Spirit

United in the Spirit

Question: Is it possible that Christians who disagree on the areas of politics and social issues, but yet they're still followers of Christ, is it possible that they can be united even when they're divided?

Answer: Yes, we can! But only by The power of the Almighty God! It takes the Holy Spirit.

Our ministry year theme comes from Ephesians 4:3

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

But the context of the theme verse is in Ephesians 4:1-6

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

3 BIG commands that will help us be UNITED when we're DIVIDED

# 1 Verse one: live a life worthy of your calling

DA translation: Don't stoop to the lowest common denominator of bad behavior and act like the others in the world regardless of whether we agree with their politics or not.

Why? We have to live a life that is worthy of what it means to be a follower of Jesus

# 2 Verse two: Be completely humble, gentle and patient

(v.2) Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

DA translation: Don't be a jerk even when others are acting like arrogant children with no home training!

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, **peace**, **patience**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> **gentleness** and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Must be United in the Spirit - Holy Spirit

This is still required even when discussing politics and social issues.

Has your humility been tested this year? Your gentleness? Your patience? Bearing in love?

Socialism, Marxism, Anarchy of protests vs defying local authorities, religious freedom, peaceful protest?

Protests, riots vs demonstrations?

Socialists/Communists vs activist with righteous indignation?

My frustration doesn't give me one license to disobey what God is teaching me.

**3** Verse three: Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

**Sermon in a Sentence:** Live worthy, humbly and gently while working patiently in love to maintain unity.

Peace is something that the Lord has made.

Ephesians 2:14-15

For he himself [Christ] is our peace, who has made the two [Jews & Gentiles] one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> 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

Matthew 5:9

[Jesus speaking] Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

John 14:27

[Jesus speaking] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Regardless of the social issues, do not be troubled and do not be afraid because my peace I've given to you.

Regardless of who wins/loses the election, may the peace of God which transcends all understanding guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

Philippians 4:7

the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

It is not simply about being peaceful, it is about making peace, it is active, it is something we are supposed to go and do.

Ephesians 6:17 ESV

and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

If we want to change the world, we've got to ask God to change the hearts of people. God is sending you as a missionary.

Peace doesn't mean the absent of conflict or chaos. It means in the midst of it, I can stand with these shoes on and know that the gospel is powerful enough to settle the most disorganized and confused hearts and minds.

We need to change the atmosphere by using words that make peace.

God wants us to plant seeds of peace. Do not sow division & doubt.

Proverbs 6:16-19

There are six things the Lord hates,  
seven that are detestable to him:

<sup>17</sup>haughty eyes,

a lying tongue,

hands that shed innocent blood,

<sup>18</sup>a heart that devises wicked schemes,

feet that are quick to rush into evil,

<sup>19</sup>a false witness who pours out lies

and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.

If you are bringing up injustice in order to get justice and God's peace, then you must do it boldly, but wisely.

If you are bringing up injustice to create more dissension and division, then stop it! It doesn't honor God even if your case is right.

But Silence is not peace either! In some respects, silence is violence. Silence is complicit at worse and ignorance at best.

It is no longer acceptable in the United States of America to use 'I did not know' as an excuse.

Learn your/our history! Regardless of your race.

The holocaust, 9/11, cross of Christ - we don't want to ever forget!

Same is true for the sin and sickness of slavery and it's impact on the black citizens of our country.

We live on stolen land built by stolen people!

2 Chronicles 7:14

[God speaking] if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

We want healing? Then come on repentance.

We want healing?

We don't do it by ignoring what has happened or by sowing seeds of dissension.

I sow seeds of peace.

I bring grace and truth together.

I am reminded that we are united in the Spirit.

We worship the one who can bring healing in our lives.

November 1st, Prayer Vigil for one hour at Bridgeway's Columbia campus.