**May 21, 2017 “Unity” Psalm 133:1**

 **Ephesians 2:11-22**

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One of the often-overlooked results of sin is the problem of disunity. We see it all around us. At work, sometimes people are at odds with one another. Often times seeking to pit one group against another thinking that if this certain person or this certain rule or this certain process is to be eliminated then ethereal bliss will occur and tranquility will abound. Unfortunately, many times the cure is worse than the disease.

One only has to look at the way our current president is being railed against by people in his own party, people in the opposition party, people in the news media, people in foreign countries and by others in positions of power throughout the world. One only needs to look at the leaders of various countries to find extreme disunity among nations. Consider North Korea, Yemen, Iran, Russia, Syria, and Israel with all its neighbors.

Paul is however not addressing political or national disunity but rather is laying out the framework for unity within the Church in the passage we are studying today.

In order to lay out a little framework for the passage, we need to remember what Paul’s experiences have been as he has labored to bring the Gospel to a lost and dying world.

Acts 13:1-3

Acts 13:14… they arrive at Pisidian Antioch… Paul preaches the Good News

Acts 13:43… the result

Acts 13:44-51… went to Iconium

Acts 14:1-5

Acts 15:1-5

Philippians 4:2… Euodia and Synchte to live in harmony

Acts 15:39… Paul and Barnabas

III John 9… Diotrophes who loves to be first (Apostle John)

Paul address this issue head-on in this passage and we would do well to study it so that if disunity ever raises its ugly head, we all will be well equipped to deal with it primarily in our own life first and then also in the life of the Church.

Ephesians 2:11-22

1. Two groups (Jews and the Gentiles)
	1. Deal with centuries of animosity
		1. Uncircumcision
			1. David called Goliath… this uncircumcised Philistine
			2. Term of disdain
	2. Now
		1. Colossians 3:11… no distinction
	3. Remember
		1. Gentiles… how you were treated
		2. Jews… circumcision is a human action on human flesh
			1. Not the heart
		3. Gentiles… you were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel
		4. Jews… remember you were given the covenant of promise
			1. And did nothing with it except exclude everyone but Jews
2. Covenant of promise… Genesis 15
	1. Starts in Genesis 12:1-3
		1. In you will all the nations (families) of the earth be blessed
	2. How will I know?
		1. Genesis 12:9
	3. Reiterated in Genesis 15:17
		1. Smoking oven
			1. God the Father
		2. Flaming torch
			1. The Messiah
			2. The One who takes the place of Abram
			3. The descendant according to the flesh
			4. The One in whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed
	4. Genesis 12:18… God made a covenant with Abram
	5. Covenant (Hebrew B’rith)
		1. To cut… the penalty
		2. To bind… the promise
	6. God in essence is saying, “If I ever break my promise to you… may what has happened to these animals happen to Me”
		1. I will keep my promise to you even if I have to slay My Own Son for you
		2. “Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13)
		3. “Let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost” (Revelation 22:17)
	7. You… Gentiles were “strangers” to the promise
		1. Without hope
		2. Without God

Let me ask you one question. What hope is there in this world and in this life? Which of us can add a single hour to our life? Who among us has a guarantee that we will be here next week and not in our grave?

There is a guarantee that is available to you… “and the one who comes to Me, I will certainly not cast out” (John 6:37)

You can bank your eternal life on that!!!!