

Life Group Notes

Sunday 1st November 2022

Speaker: Terry Virgo

Title: God's Glorious Church

Passage: Ephesians 4:1-16

Read Eph 4:1-16

One of the most wonderful chapters about the church in the Bible. Ephesians 1-3 focus on telling us what God has done for us in Christ, and now in chapter 4 there is a "therefore..." in light of all this, what should we do?

The church is a body in which each part plays its part.

Maintain the Unity of the Spirit. This speaks of the unity initiated by the experience of the Spirit, firstly at Pentecost, and then in places like Acts 10, where the Holy Spirit falls upon Gentile Roman soldiers. Different people from diverse backgrounds are brought together by a shared dynamic experience of the Holy Spirit.

With all humility and gentleness. Lowliness – we are not full of ourselves. This was a negative value in the Greek world. Jesus said, "Learn of me, for I am lowly."

Gentleness. The Greek word is used for when a horse is broken in – it doesn't kick back. Do you kick back?

Make every effort. You could not use a stronger phrase – work hard at unity. Is there anyone you are out of step with at the moment?

With patience. We need to be patient with one another as we build a diverse church community.

Speaking the truth in love. We want to be a church of Word and Spirit. So often doctrine seems to divide, but to grow to true Biblical maturity, we need truth. Truth will build us up. But only with love. James 3: Wisdom from above is peaceable, gentle, open to reason, as well as impartial and sincere. So we are not dogmatic in a closed, arrogant way. We hold Word and Spirit, but with love and humility.

Each individual part. We are meant to be a functioning community, where everyone contributes. There are over 40 "one another" verses in the New Testament. We need one another. It is impossible to grow to Christian maturity alone.

Suggested questions:

1. What do you enjoy about being part of a diverse church community? What do you find challenging?
2. Why do you think lowliness is important in the church community?
3. Is there anyone in RFC that you feel like you are struggling with relationally at the moment? Do you need to take any steps to restore this relationship?
4. Word and Spirit. Which of these do you feel you are stronger in at the moment, and which do you feel is weaker?
5. Each part has a contribution to the whole body. Encourage one another by telling them what you think they contribute to the group.