Endeavor to Keep the Unity presented by “The Ministry of YOU”

KJV Ephesians 4:3; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. In this Scripture reference the Apostle is echoing the Words of the Lord Jesus Christ (the Head of the Body of Christ). Jesus prayed to God the Father for our unity and peace as a body or community. The Lord Jesus Christ walked this earth as a Righteous Man of God and God listens to answers the prayers of the righteous. So, this means He heard and answered the prayer of Jesus. AMP 1 Peter 3:12; For the eyes of the Lord are (looking favorably) upon the righteous (the upright), and His Ears are attentive to their prayer (eager to answer), but the Face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

AMP John 17:9-26; I pray for them; I do not pray for the world, but for those You have given Me, because they belong to You; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and (all things that are) Yours are Mine; and I Am glorified in them. I am no longer in the world; yet they are still in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in your Name, the Name which You have given Me, so that they may be one just as We are.

While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your Name which You have given Me, and I guarded them and protected them, and not one of them was lost except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. But now I am coming to You; and I say these things (while) I Am still in the world so that they may experience My joy made full and complete and perfect within them (filling their hearts with My delight).

I have given them Your Word (the message You gave Me); and the world has hated them because they are not of the world and do not belong to the world, just as I Am not of the world and do not belong to it.

I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but that You keep them and protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I Am not of this world. Sanctify them in the Truth (set them apart for Your purposes, make them holy); Your Word is Truth. Just as You commissioned and sent Me into the world, I have also commissioned and sent them (believers) into the world. For their sake I sanctify Myself (to do Your Will), so that they may also be sanctified (set apart, dedicated, made holy) in Your Truth.

I do not pray for these alone (it is not for their sake only that I make this request), but also for (all) those who (will ever) believe (without any doubt) that You sent Me. I have given to them the glory and honor which You have given Me, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected and completed into one, so that the world may know (without any doubt) that You sent Me, and (that You) have Loved them, just as You have Loved Me.

Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given to Me (as Your gift to Me), may be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, because You Loved Me before the foundation of the world. O Just and Righteous Father, although the world has not known You and has never acknowledged You (and the revelation of Your Mercy), yet I have always known You; and these (believers) know (without any doubt) that You sent Me; and I have made Your Name known to them, and I will continue to make it known, so that Love with which You have Loved Me may be in them (overwhelming their heart), and I (maybe ) in them.

The Head of the Body of Christ was praying to God the Father, Whom Jesus referred to as the Just and Righteous Father, for His entire body to be one just like the God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. What does it mean to be “one”? According to the Webster 1828 dictionary, it means single by union: undivided, the same, single in kind. God the Just and Righteous Father answered Jesus’ prayer for His Body and community of believers. So, this is why the Apostle Paul echoed this answered prayer. Let’s look at Paul’s words in the Amplified version. Ephesians 4:3; Make every effort to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the bond of peace (each individual working together to make the whole successful).

Paul goes on to talk about this oneness or bond. AMP Ephesians 4:4-6; There is one body (of believers) and one Spirit just as YOU were called to one hope when called to salvation. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all Who is (Sovereign) over all and (working) through all and (living) in all. The words oneness, bond, unity, and peace can be all used interchangeably. They all mean the same thing!

We as the body of believers have been instructed to make every effort or endeavor to keep our oneness or bond. Let’s take a closer look at the word “keep.” To keep is defined in the Merriam and Webster dictionary as to attend carefully, to guard, to keep in the state in which it is. Each member of the body or community is responsible for putting forth the necessary effort to keep this community of believers united and not divided!

The Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul wanted us to understand we are commanded to exert effort in the upkeep of our body or community. Paul goes on to explain that were each endowed with gifts from Him to help or assist us to keep and build the body of believers. AMP Ephesians 4:7; Yet Grace (God’s undeserved favor) was given to each one of us (not indiscriminately, but in different ways) in proportion to the measure of Christ’s (rich and abundant) gift. AMP Ephesians 4:11; And (His gifts to the church were varied and) He Himself appointed some as apostles (special messengers, representatives), some as prophets (who speak a new message from God to people), some evangelists (who spread the good news of salvation), and some as pastors and teachers (to shepherd and guide and instruct). The Holy Spirit makes it very clear through Paul the reason why He gave us the varied gifts. AMP Ephesians 4:12-13; And He did this to fully equip and perfect the saints (God’s people, the community) for works of service, to build up the Body of Christ (the church); until we all reach oneness in the faith (only one faith) and in the knowledge of the Son of God, (growing spiritually) to become a mature believer, reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ (manifesting His spiritual completeness and exercising our spiritual gifts in unity). This is what Jesus prayed for all of us who are His Body.

Subtitle: The Love of God is How We Accomplish this Commission

Please let us bear in mind that Jesus said that He commissioned us as God the Father had commissioned Him. Jesus was commissioned by God the Father to unify and keep His Body and now Jesus has commissioned us to keep it that way! A commission is a formal written warrant (the Word of God) granting the power to perform various acts or duties, and an authorization or command to act in a prescribed manner (Agape or the Love of God) to perform prescribed acts (using our gifts in Love to build each other up in oneness in faith working through Love).

AMP Ephesians 4:15; But speaking the Truth in Love (in all things in both speech and our lives expressing His Truth), let us grow up in all things into Him (following His Example) Who is the Head, Christ. So, Paul teaches us which his God-given gift, that it is walking in the Love of God that is our endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The Apostle Paul had to address a situation in the Corinthian church or the body of believers in Corinth. It was a serious situation because it was dividing the body of believers instead of unifying them as Christ prayed. We will use this example as reproof and correction as the Word of God said we could. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

AMP 1 Corinthians 3:1-9; However, brothers and sisters (family and community), I could not talk to YOU as to spiritual people, but (only) as to worldly people (dominated by human nature), mere infants (in the new life) in Christ! I fed YOU milk, not solid food, for YOU were not able to receive it. Even now YOU are still not ready. YOU are still worldly (controlled by ordinary impulses, the sinful capacity). For as long as there is jealousy and strife and discord among YOU, are YOU not unspiritual, and are YOU not walking like ordinary men (unchanged by faith)?

For when one of YOU says, “I am (a disciple) of Paul, and another, I am a disciple of Apollos,” are YOU not (proving yourselves unchanged, just) ordinary people? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Just servants through whom YOU believed (in Christ), even as the Lord appointed to each his task. I planted, Apollos watered, but it is God Who causes growth. So, neither is the one who plants nor the one who waters anything, but (only) God Who causes growth.

He who plants and he who waters are one (in importance and esteem, working toward the same purpose); but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers (His servants working together); YOU are God’s cultivated field (His garden, His vineyard), God’s building. Moreover, we see this example of a body divided instead of united, and swiftly and bluntly Paul addressed and dealt with this division. The Apostle Paul was mature enough to understand how dangerous division is to unification of the Body of Christ. Paul was practicing what he was preaching. This was his endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. He used his gift of teaching to teach and correct his dear sisters and brothers to stop the strife and division of the body of believers in Corinth.

Like the Apostle Paul we must mature in Love and reach the full stature of Christ our Head and endeavor, making the effort at all times to keep and maintain the unity in the Body of Christ. This is our Great Commission!