

Sunday, February 3, 2019—Body Building: Forgiving One Another

Introduction

- Ephesians 4:16—the body of Christ was designed to edify itself. The focus of our current series has been on the self-edifying nature of the body of Christ. How does the body edify itself?
- Romans 12:5—in our first study in this series, I introduced you to a concept that I am calling the one-anothering principle. The phrase “one of another” is a translation of a plural pronoun which means: “reciprocally” or “mutually.”
 - Reciprocal—“Mutual; done by each to the other” (Webster’s 1828)
 - Reciprocally—“Mutually; interchangeably; in such a manner that each affects the other and is equally affected by it.” (Webster’s 1828)
- Thus far we have observed the following one-anotherings:
 - Kindly affectioned one to another (Rom. 12:10)
 - Preferring one another (Rom. 12:10)
 - Not judge one another (Rom. 14:13)
 - Likeminded one toward another (Rom. 15:5)
 - Receive ye one another (Rom. 15:7)
 - Admonish one another (Rom. 15:14)
 - Salute one another with a holy kiss (Rom. 16:16)
 - Same care one for another (I Cor. 12:25)
 - By love serve one another (Gal. 4:14)
 - **Should not** be biting, devouring, and consuming one another (Gal. 5:15)
 - **Should not** be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, or envying one another (Gal. 5:26)
 - Bear ye one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:2)
 - Forbearing one another in love (Eph. 4:2)

- Last week we discussed Paul’s one-anothering statement in Eph. 4:2, “forbearing one another in love.” In summation, we observed the following:
 - The word “forbearing” in both Greek and English carries the following general meanings: patient, long suffering, withholding from action, exercising patience and indulgence, to hold oneself up against, i.e. (figuratively) put up with.
 - Proverbs 25:15—“long forbearing”
 - Ephesians 4:2—notice the connection in this verse between longsuffering and forbearing. Lowliness, meekness, and longsuffering are the mindset that make the activity of “forbearing one another in love” possible.
 - Philippians 2:3
 - Galatians 5:22-23—the mindset of lowliness, meekness, and longsuffering is the mind set of God the Holy Spirit. Put another way, our ability to be “forbearing” is going to come from the Spirit of God working in us to produce His own mindset within us. Our natural flesh programming is expressed in verses 19-21 and they are all about speaking and acting out for self.
 - Galatians 5:26—this is the opposite of the mindset described in Eph. 4:2.
 - Colossians 3:12-13—putting on the mindset of God the Holy Spirit in verse 12 enables the believers to act like God the Holy Spirit in verse 13. Note the connection again between putting on the mindset of “longsuffering” in verse 12 with the believer’s ability to be “forebearing” in verse 13. Only the Spirit of God working in the believer is capable of accomplishing this.
 - Ephesians 4:2—notice that we are instructed to be forbearing one another in love. This is not the first time that we observed the idea of “love” tied to a one-anothering statement.
 - Galatians 5:13—“by love serve one another.”
 - I Corinthians 13:4, 7—one reason that “charity” is the more excellent way is because it produces and manifests the life of Christ now in our mortal flesh. Charity allows us to suffer long. Charity enables us to bear and endure all things. Charity is what allows us to be “forbearing” toward “one another in love.”

Forgiving One Another

- Ephesians 4:32—contains Paul’s next one-anothering statement. In this verse believers are instructed to be “forgiving” towards “one another.”

- Colossians 3:13—contains the same instruction.
- It is interesting that Ephesians 4 begins with the instruction to be “forbearing” towards “one another” and ends with the admonishment regarding “forgiving one another.” Whereas in the Colossians 3 these two statements are contained within the same verse.
- Ephesians 4:16—midway between Paul’s instructions regarding “forbearing” in verse 1 and “forgiving” in verse 32 we find one of the text verses in this series of studies on Body Building.
 - Ephesians 4:15— “speaking the truth in love” carries the capacity for spiritual growth or edification. This is going to be important later in the chapter.
- Ephesians 4:17-20—Paul does not want the Ephesians to walk in the same manner as the unsaved gentiles around them. Verses 17-20 do not describe the “vocation wherewith” the Ephesians “were called” in verse 1. Rather, the Ephesians were called in verse 2 to walk with the mindset of God the Holy Spirit (lowliness, meekness, and longsuffering) which produces loving forbearance.
- Ephesians 4:18—notice the lost man’s “heart” condition. The heart of an unsaved gentile is “blind” and it is not able to understand or process spiritual truth.
 - Jeremiah 17:9-10—mankind in his natural state has a heart problem. His heart is desperately wicked.
 - Genesis 6:5— “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
 - Romans 1:21, 24—the state of a lost man’s heart is that it is at enmity with God.
 - Romans 2:5—speaks of a lost man’s heart as being hard and impenitent.
 - A lost man’s heart is described as being:
 - Deceitful above all things & desperately wicked
 - Only evil continually—in terms of imagination(s) & thoughts
 - At enmity with God
 - Hard & impenitent
 - Blind & not able to understand or process spiritual truth
- Ephesians 4:17—an unsaved person has no spiritual capacity to do anything other than “walk in the vanity of their mind.” The condition of their heart will not allow it or produce anything that God will accept.

The Believer's Heart

- On the basis of the finished work of Christ and his shed blood as the only total complete payment for our sins the believer has undergone a heart transplant. Our core problem has been rectified and changed by the blood of Christ.
- Romans 5:5—“. . . the love of God is shed abroad into our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”
- II Corinthians 1:22—God has given us “the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”
- II Corinthians 4:3-6—where there used to be blindness and darkness God has shined the light of truth into our hearts.
- Galatians 4:6—the Spirit of God resides within your heart and is crying Abba Father right now as you listen to this message.
- Ephesians 3:17—Christ dwells in our hearts by faith.
- Ephesians 5:19—believers have the capacity to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord.
- Ephesians 6:5-6—believers have the capacity to serve their fleshly masters in singleness of heart “as unto Christ.” If one’s ability to do this comes from their heart, then there must not be anything wrong with a believer’s heart anymore.
- Colossians 3:15-16—believers can let the peace of God “rule” in their hearts. Before we were saved our heart was in a state of enmity against God.
- I Timothy 1:5—the believer’s heart is pure before God. Why? Because God the Holy Spirit lives in your heart and cries Abba Father.
- II Timothy 2:22—believers are possessor of a pure heart.

Conclusion

- On the basis of the blood of Christ, God almighty performed open heart surgery upon us. God has made us new creatures in Christ for which “old things are passed away” (II Cor. 5:17). God took our vial and sinful heart and placed his Spirit within it. Thereby making us alive to life of God and providing us with the capacity to do the will of God from the heart.
- Therefore, God is good with who we are at our very core. Our identity in Christ is perfect and includes the following:
 - All spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3)

- Chosen in Christ (Eph. 1:4)
 - Holy & Without Blame (Eph. 1:4)
 - Adoption of sons into the family of God (Eph. 1:5, Gal. 4:5, Rom. 8:15)
 - Accepted in the beloved (Eph. 1:6)
 - Redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:7)
 - Total forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7)
 - Abounded toward in wisdom & prudence (Eph. 1:8)
 - Justified and at peace with God (Rom. 5:1)
 - Joint-Heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17)
 - Sanctified (I Cor. 1:2, 6:11)
 - Possessor of the mind of Christ (I Cor. 2:16)
 - Regenerated (Titus 3:5)
 - Unblameable & Unreproveable in His sight (Col. 1:22)
 - Temple of God (I Cor. 3:16)
 - Not appointed to wrath (I Thess. 5:9)
 - Seated in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 2:6)
 - Sealed by God the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30)
 - Complete in Christ (Col. 2:10)
- These are God's divine declarations reading our identity, who we truly are. The truth regarding who we are in Christ runs out ahead of our thinking. When God the Father looks at us, he sees us as perfect in his son.
 - We have a new heart. Christ is in our heart. The Holy Spirit cries Abba Father from within our heart. At our very core, the essence of who we are is well pleasing unto God. We have received the total and complete redemption of our inner man.

- Ephesians 4:32—it is Christ in us that is going to allow us to be forgiving.