

Sunday Celebration (May 30, 2010)     ***"The Passion of the Shepherd & the Purpose of the Flock" (Pt. 3)***  
***"Proclaiming God's Excellence Through Unity"***

**INTRO**

**The Passion of the Shepherd**

**The Purpose of the Flock**

Peter (apostle to the Jews): **1Pet 2:9**

Paul (apostle to the Gentiles): **Eph 3:8-10**

***>>> PROCLAIMING EXCELLENCIES of Him ... this is the purpose of the Flock***– This is Your Great Purpose Statement!!

**Eph 4-6** ... Many Specifics on Our Proclamation of His Excellencies in the day-to-day of our lives

**Eph 4:1-6**

v. 4-6 ... "ONE body and ONE Spirit ... ONE hope ... ONE Lord ... ONE faith ... ONE baptism ... ONE God and Father of ALL"

v. 3 ... Eager to maintain the UNITY

Unity = henotes (hen-ot-ace'); from NT:1520; oneness  
NT:1520 heis (hice); (including the neuter [etc.] hen); a primary numeral; one (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary.)

**Unity, Disunity, and Identity**

Unity (oneness) – is about harmony/agreement for a common purpose; it is many things devoted to and oriented about ONE THING; it is being centered on ONE THING

Disunity = a condition where more than one center exists

- MARRIAGE—Unity & Disunity
- GENDER – Unity & Disunity
- CHURCH – Unity & Disunity
- RACIAL – Unity & Disunity
  - Disunity in Races = a condition where there is more than one center/purpose in our God Ordained Diversity
    - Centered in man’s natural history vs his spiritual history –
    - Centered in temporary allegiances vs eternal allegiances

- ***Racism is about Boasting!*** It is about elevating natural distinctions in order to assume a posture of superiority over others—that God has created with distinctions.

- Whether White Supremacy... Black Power... Latino Machismo... etc., It’s all a celebration of the WRONG THING at the Expense of Celebrating the RIGHT THING...Proclaiming the Excellencies of Him!

***This is Effecting the Church's Ability to Proclaim the Excellency of Him!!***

*"Martin Luther King Jr. once said 11 a.m. Sunday is the most segregated hour in America. Now, 40 years after King's murder, only 7 percent of America's churches are considered racially mixed." ABC News, "Segregated Sundays"*

## **Racism in the Scriptures**

***...This Isn't New – We Didn't Invent Racism and Racial Hostility ... It's the Backdrop of Eph 4***

*...as we approach the Christian era the attitude of the Jews toward the Gentiles changes, until we find, in New Testament times, the most extreme aversion, scorn and hatred. They were regarded as unclean, with whom it was unlawful to have any friendly intercourse. They were the enemies of God and His people, to whom the knowledge of God was denied unless they became proselytes, and even then they could not, as in ancient times, be admitted to full fellowship. Jews were forbidden to counsel them, and if they asked about Divine things they were to be cursed. All children born of mixed marriages were bastards. That is what caused the Jews to be so hated by Greeks and Romans, as we have abundant evidence in the writings of Cicero, Seneca and Tacitus. (from International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia)*

*the Jews did not regard the Gentiles as brethren, might not journey with them, might not even save them when in peril of death (Maimonides, Rozeach. 4:12, etc.), and held that they would all be destroyed and burned at the Messiah's coming. (from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia)*

*[a plaque excavated from Jerusalem] 'No man of another race is to enter within the fence and the enclosure around the Temple. Whoever is caught will have only himself to thank for the death which follows.' (From "Does the Future Have a Church" by Terry Virgo, p. 36)*

**The Response to the Gospel Going to the Gentile World** – Acts 11:3 "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."

## Eph 2:11-22

v. 13 ... **"But NOW"** ... No matter what your background—Something Greater Now Defines You!!

... The Key to Unity ... Our Nearness to God because of the Blood of Christ

- **ILLUST: The Triangle of Nearness** ...Functional Application

v. 14 ... **"The DIVIDING WALL of Hostility"** ... Double Meaning

v. 14-18 ... "HE himself is our peace" ... "HE has made us one and broken down any division" ... "HE has created one new man" ... "HE reconciled us both to God" ... "HE preached peace" ... "HE gave us both access to the Father by the Spirit" ...

v. 19 ... **So Then** – The RESULT of Christ's Work

***... To Fail to Live This is to Proclaim the Work of Christ  
INEFFECTIVE***

***Our Lives DECLARE the Result of Christ's Work***

**Col 3:5-13** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: ... 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

**Gal 3:26-29** for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

***We Are Proclaiming the Excellencies of Him Through the  
Racial Diversity of the Unified Church!***

**Eph 4:3** ... "EAGER to maintain the unity of the Spirit"