

# A Perfect Church?

Ephesians 4

# I. The Wrong Way

# 1. Think a local congregation is perfect in makeup

- Acts 5:1-11
- Acts 6:1-7
- Acts 15 . . .

**People are not perfect, thus a local church is not perfect**

## 2. 'Hopeless task; would have to resurrect NT congregations'

- 1 Co.1:1-2, Corinth
  - Includes all others (us)
  - Other churches did not become part of Corinth [1 Co.4:6, 17]
- 1 Th.2:14, Thessalonica
  - Learn from churches of Judea
  - Includes Jerusalem: Ac.2:42

### 3. 'If sinful churches of NT belonged to Christ, so can we...'

- 'Corinth' ? ?
- 1 Co.4:21
  - To justify one sin is to abandon truth, 1 Jn.2:1-2
  - Rv.2:4-5

4. 'Since we are not perfect, all churches are the same...'

Local church 1

People  
problems  
+  
Truth problems

Local church 2

People  
problems  
≠  
Truth problems

I. The Wrong Way

II. The Right Way

# 1. Embrace God's pattern

- 2 Tim.1:13

# 2. Become all God wants us to be

- 2 Tim.3:16-17

**Gladly change when corrected.**

Ac.18:26...; 3 Jn.9-10

# 3. Include all who hold these convictions, exclude all who reject them

- Ac.20:28-32; Tit.3:10-11



I. The Wrong Way

II. The Right Way

**III. The Right Way**  
**Illustrated – Ep.4:1-16**

# 1. Right Attitude Toward One another, 2

- Lowliness: humility, modesty
- Gentleness / Meekness: not 'run over people.'
- Longsuffering: patience with people
- Bearing with one another in love: tolerance
  - Tolerate people, not sin / error
  - Mt.17:17, patient nurturing

1. Right Attitude Toward One another, 2

## 2. Right unity, 3-6

- *'Of the Spirit'* – not ecumenical unity
- Seven unifying factors – One . . .
  1. Body – structure
  2. Spirit – revelation
  3. Hope – purpose
  4. Lord – authority
  5. Faith – belief
  6. Baptism – practice
  7. God – source

1. Right Attitude Toward One another, 2

## 2. Right unity, 3-6

- 'An honest person who is honestly mistaken when shown the truth, either quits being mistaken or quits being honest.'
- 'A sacred regard to the authority of God ought to lead us to reject an error, **however old**, sanctioned by **whatever authority**, or however **generally practiced**' – Charles H. Spurgeon.

1. Right Attitude Toward One another, 2

2. Right unity, 3-6

### 3. Right use of God's gifts, 7-11

- 7, all have gifts / work to do (Mt.25)
- 8-10, ascension: <sup>1</sup>led; AND <sup>2</sup>gave . . .
  1. Apostles. Lk.16
  2. Prophets. Lk.16; 1 Co.13:8
  3. Evangelists. 2 Tim.4:5
  4. Pastors. 1 Pt.5:2
  5. Teachers. 1 Co.12:28

1. Right Attitude Toward One another, 2

2. Right unity, 3-6

3. Right use of God's gifts, 7-11

**4. Right growth, 12-16**

- 12, equipping saints (Ga.6; 1 Co.1)
- 13, growth produces –
  - Unity of the faith
  - Knowledge, maturity
  - Perfect man ('manhood')
  - Stability (14)
  - Increase in His likeness (15)
  - Edification (16)

## The conclusion

- Eph.4:1, *worthy of the calling*
- Col.1:10, *worthy of the Lord*
- Ph.1:27, *worthy of gospel of Christ*

Worthy: **NOT** what we deserve,  
**BUT** how we respond

- 1 Jn.2:6, *just as He walked*
- 1 Th.4:7, *in holiness*
- 1 Pt.1:15, *holy in all your conduct*