

The Monthly Ministry Focus: November 2017

A Moment of Scripture Focus for Every Ministry in First Baptist Church



To Ministry Leader: Please read or have this scripture read at your monthly meeting /activity/rehearsal.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS FOR THIS MONTH: EPHESIANS 4: 1 – 7; 11-16

4 ¹As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it..

¹¹So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Commentary: The human quest for purpose, significance, and wholeness is universal. We all seek to find that *something* that makes us feel grounded and purposeful in a world driven by possessions, pride, and false perceptions of God. We ask: what is *really* important and worth our pursuit? The Apostle Paul taught the Ephesians that we can become grounded, “not tossed back and forth by waves,” when we recognize that we each have God-given gifts – a purpose-- that will build up the body of Christ. And as we exercise our unique gifts, we will grow together in love. **As we approach the Thanksgiving and the Christmas holidays, Paul’s message resonates, as it reminds us to give thanks for and celebrate the diversity of each of our spiritual gifts, as we seek Christian unity.**

For Discussion:

1. How might the characteristics listed in verse 2 reveal themselves as we work in unity?
2. What seven elements of Christian unity are listed in verses 4-6?
3. How might we move from spiritual adolescence to spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ?
4. Read Psalm 68:1-6, 15-20, 32-35. How does it connect/relate to this passage from Ephesians?
5. What metaphor does Paul use for the church?