

INTRODUCTION

- * As we have been considering "The Marks of a Healthy Church," we have seen that unity is a significant "Mark" for which to look. Jesus had prayed for His followers to be one as He, the Father and the Spirit were one; as a testimony to the world.
- * The goal of this Oneness is for each believer individually, and the assembly combined, to be conformed to the image of Christ.
- * The church is referred to as the "Body" of Christ. Last week we examined 1 Corinthians 12 where Paul breaks out this word picture further by revealing that the body of Christ is made up of many members, yet it is one body. Each individual in the assembly was brought by God into the assembly as He has seen fit. Each member has been gifted with a special gift from God, to be used for the "profit" of the whole assembly.
- * Today, we want to continue this examination of Paul's description of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12-14, by considering The Excellency of the Church ... that which truly gives those within the assembly a desire to glorify God through the unity of His church. The Excellency of the Church is the expression of "agapao" love in its other-focusedness, or more specifically ... revealing the love, and mind, of Christ in elevating my love of others above my love for myself.

INSTRUCTION**I. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH (Ephesians 4:1-6)****II. THE SYNERGY OF THE CHURCH (Ephesians 4:7-16)****III. THE DIVERSITY OF THE CHURCH (1 Corinthians 12:1-31)****IV. THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHURCH (1 Corinthians 12:20-14:40)****A. The E_____ of Love (ch. 13)**

1. IT IS ESS_____ (v. 1-3; Matthew 7:15-23)
2. IT IS S_____ (v. 4-7; cf. 12:25; Phil 2:2-5)
3. IT IS S_____ (v. 7-8; 1 Thess 3:1,5)
 - a. It B_____ (cf. 1 Thess 3:1,5)
 - b. It B_____ (cf. Heb 11:1)
 - c. It H_____ (cf. Heb 11:1)
 - d. It E_____ (cf. Matthew 10:22; 24:13; 2 Tim 2:12; Heb 12:2-3,7; James 1:12)
 - e. It N_____ (cf. Acts 12:7; 27:17,26,29; James 1:11; 1 Peter 1:24; Rev 2:5)
4. IT IS S_____ (v. 13; cf. Gal 5:13-14, 22-23; Matt 22:37-39; 5:43-48; John 13:34-35)

B. The E_____ of Love (ch. 14)

1. IT IS REVEALED IN THE P_____ OF THE GIFTS (cf. 14:1; 12:28)
2. IT IS REVEALED IN THE P_____ OF THE GIFTS (cf. 14:2-25)
 - a. The Purpose of P_____ is to Glorify God and Edify Others (cf. 14:3-5,24-25)
 - b. The Purpose of T_____ is to Glorify God and Edify Self (cf. 14:2,4,6-23)
3. IT IS REVEALED IN THE P_____ OF THE SAINTS (cf. 14:26-40)

INTROSPECTION

- * HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ROLE WITHIN THE LOCAL CHURCH?
- * HOW ARE YOU SERVING THE OTHERS IN THE ASSEMBLY?
- * ARE YOU SELF-FOCUSED ... OR OTHER-FOCUSED?
- * DO YOU CARE MORE ABOUT HOW SOMETHING AFFECTS YOU OR OTHERS?
- * IS THERE A NEED TO CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ... AND, THEREFORE, THE WAY YOU ACT?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

- * How should we "target" people within the assembly toward specific roles, or ministries? Should we have titles and positions to which people are assigned? Should people volunteer, or wait to be asked? How does this mutual-edification of the assembly work itself out in a practical way? (*This is purposefully the same question as the past two weeks!*)