

2PC AMEN (5/14/26) – “Keep the MAIN Thing, The MAIN Thing”

Scripture: Romans 16:17-27

Introduction

I. A WARNING about Gospel DISUNITY (v.17-20)

A. Romans is DEEPLY Concerned for UNITY

1. Our Need Is Unifying (ch.1-3)
2. Justification is Unifying (ch.3-4)
3. Sanctification is Unifying (ch.5-8)
4. Predestination is Unifying (ch.9)
5. Redemptive History is Unifying (ch.10-11)
6. Gospel Living is Unifying (ch.12-15)
7. Paul is deeply concerned for Unity in Rome

B. LOGOS – is a Teacher’s DOCTRINE off? (v.17b)

1. Are the teacher’s WORDS off?

C. PATHOS – Is a Teacher’s APPLICATION off? (v.18)

1. TRUTH, misapplied, is POISONOUS –
2. TRUTH, in the Wrong SPIRIT, is POISONOUS –
 - a. “an ANGRY Gospel”
 - b. “a SELF-RIGHTEOUS Gospel”
 - c. “a FEARFUL Gospel”
 - d. “a SHAMING Gospel”
 - e. “a SELF-SERVING Gospel”

D. ETHOS – is a Teacher Trustworthy? (v.18)

1. Is his LIFE aligned with Gospel?
2. Is his MOTIVATION aligned with Gospel?

E. DIFFERENCES don’t have to be DIVISIVE! (v.19) (“*your obedience is known...*”)

1. They can be CONSTRUCTIVE
2. They can be PROTECTIVE
3. They are an Oppor. to GROW UNITY
 - a. Gen. 2:20 – “fit” or “suitable” – Hebrew word meaning, “Like-Opposite”

F. Make the ONE Division, THE One Division (v.20)

1. Don’t be NAÏVE
 - a. There IS a DIVISION (Gen. 3:15)
2. Be WISE (shrewd, knowing, aware)
3. Be INNOCENT (not cynical, skeptical, etc.)
4. Lesser Divisions are ANTI-GOSPEL, ANTICHRIST

II. A GLIMPSE of Gospel UNITY (v.21-23)

A. Jews (v.21)

1. Timothy – despite a Gentile father (Acts 16:1)
2. Lucius, Jason and Sosipater (“kinsman”)

B. Gentile SLAVES – “*Tertius...Quartus*” (v.22,23)

1. Slaves in the Ancient World were “NON-PERSONS”
 - a. Tertius: “Third”
 - b. Quartus: “Fourth”
2. In Jesus, A Slave has PERSONHOOD
3. In Jesus, A Slave has a VOICE

C. Gentile WEALTHY/INFLUENTIAL (v.23)

1. Gaius (Head of Roman Household – host to Paul and the whole church)

III. PRAISE to the Gospel GOD (v.24-27)

A. STRENGTHENER-in-Chief – [thru Gospel] (v.25a)

1. Power of God to SAVE (1:16)
2. Power of God to ESTABLISH (16:25)

B. REVEALER-in-Chief – [thru Gospel] (v.25b-26)

1. That Jesus is THE ONE & ONLY
2. Jesus forces a Re-Reading of the Old Testament (v.26)

C. WORLD-CHANGER-in-Chief – “*the obedience of faith*”

1. To RECONCILE all things to Himself in Christ (ch.3-8; cf. Col. 1:20)
2. To UNITE all things under Christ (ch.5-15; cf. Eph. 1:9)
3. To MAKE all things new in Christ (ch.5, 9-11; cf. Rev. 21:5)

D. To Him ALONE be GLORY [thru Jesus, who IS the Gospel] (v.27; cf. 11:36)

1. “FROM Him...ALL THINGS
2. THRU Him ... ALL THINGS
3. TO Him ... ALL THINGS

Conclusion

“‘I am a Christian.’ So a prisoner from Vienne arrested in A.D. 177 had replied to every question put to him by his interrogators. Rather than tell them his name, or where he had been born, whether he were slave or free, he had instead repeatedly insisted that he had no status save that of a follower of Christ.... The refusal of Christians to identify themselves as belonging to one of the familiar peoples of the earth—the Romans, or the Greeks, or the Jews—branded them as rootless, just as bandits and runaways were.... Never before had there been anything quite like it: a citizenship that was owed not to birth, nor to descent, nor to legal prescription, but to belief alone.” (Tom Holland, *Dominion*, 116-117)

AMEN Action Steps

“Keep the MAIN thing, the MAIN thing”

Romans 16:17-27

HEAR the Word

“Open my eyes, that I might behold wondrous things out of your law.”
-Psalm 119:18

1. Can you think of, or remember church people in your past, that always seemed to have conflict and division wherever they went? What was it about them that stirred this up? In this context, practically, and concretely, what does it look like for you to be “wise as to what is good, and innocent as to what is evil”?
2. Think of concrete, specific ways that the Gospel of Jesus strengthens, sustains, and establishes you for ongoing life in a fallen, cursed world?

PRACTICE the Word

“...Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on a rock”
-Matthew 7:24

1. If you’re married, how have the differences between you and your wife actually made you a better man? How have you actually grown in oneness and unity by working constructively through differences and conflict? If you are not married, can you think of how you witnessed expanded unity through differences, among your parents, friends’ marriages, etc.?
2. Think of a church member, brother in Christ, family member who is very different than you. So, different, in fact, that this person would likely not be your friend, apart from your bond in Jesus. What is it that you’ve learned, or been changed by, as a result of being in relationship with them? How have the differences between y’all actually matured you?

RETELL the Word

“Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you...”
-Mark 5:19

1. In our polarized society, people are now genuinely afraid to talk about anything “controversial”, for fear of being shunned or “canceled” by others. How does the Gospel enable you to be a safe person, who can keep “controversial” things in right proportion? To what extent do friends (believing or unbelieving) trust you, as being “safe” to talk to?
2. To what extent can unbelievers see you being in real fellowship with other believers who, in our polarized society, unbelievers would otherwise expect you to be repelled by? To what extent do you see 2PC (or your church) embodying a unity that is truly countercultural?