

THE LOCUST

PROVERBS 30:27

Text: Proverbs 30:27

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²⁷The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;

Introduction:

Some insects, like the bee, are under monarchical government. The locusts have no king, yet they go forth all of them by bands; like an army.

We see from these insects a lesson on the importance of unity and unanimous movement?

Paul addressed this subject with those in Ephesus.

Ephesians 4:1-6

¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, ² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; ³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Notice:

1. PAUL'S PLEA FOR UNITY (VS. 3)

Ephesians 4:3

³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Note the words of this plea

- Endeavoring

I'll say more about this in a moment but this word means, "hasty, or zealous." It suggests that we allow nothing to hinder us from speedily striving to secure the unity of the church. It speaks of a holy zeal that demands constant attention.

- Keep

This word means, "to guard." Notice that it does not say "create." We cannot manufacture unity within the church. We cannot fake unity. We can only protect, or guard the unity we already have.

- Unity of the Spirit

This agreement, this common ground, is that which is produced within us by the Spirit of God.

- Bond of Peace

The word “bond” refers to “a band, or that which binds together.” “Peace” speaks of “tranquility, harmony, concord.” The belt that binds the church together in unity is peace. When we are at peace with one another, we are able to “keep the unity of the Spirit.”

2. PROBLEM SURROUNDING UNITY (VS. 3)

Ephesians 4:3

³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I’ll be brief with this thought because it is not explicitly mentioned in this text. It is, however, clearly implied. In verse 3, Paul commands us to be about the business of “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” If we have to work to guard the unity of the church, then it seems to me that this unity must be a fragile thing. The unity of the church must be something that is easily forfeited.

Since we are commanded to work to guard the unity of the church, it stands to reason that we are the ones who can cause the unity of the church to become fractured. The problem with unity in the church is this: the church is made up of people.

While we the people are the church, we the people are also the problem. We, the people who make up the local church, are the guardians of the unity produced within us by the Holy Spirit, but we are also the

greatest danger to that unity. Why is that? Many reasons could be listed, but I will mention just a few for the sake of time.

- We are all sinners who possess a fallen nature
- We are sometimes selfish, self-centered, and want our own way
- We are at times jealous when we see others succeed, get blessed or be promoted
- We get angry when we think we have been wronged
- We react out of spite hoping to hurt those we think have hurt us
- We fail to forgive the wrongs done to us by other
- We fail to love the Lord like we should, and because of this we cannot love others like we should

We have considered the Plea for Unity, and the Problems Surrounding Unity, notice with me thirdly:

3. THE PATH TO UNITY (VS. 2)

Ephesians 4:2

²With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

In this verse, Paul mentions several characteristics that should be true of each of us.

- **Lowliness**

This word means “to think or judge with lowliness; to possess lowliness of mind.” It speaks of “humility.”

The word used here for “lowliness” literally means, “a deep sense of ones littleness.”

The world might look upon humility as a weakness, but it is the most fundamental of Christian virtues. Without humility we can never please the Lord. Without humility, we can never be like Christ.

Philippians 2:5-8

⁵Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Humility is the opposite of pride.

Pride is something that is easy to see in the lives of others, but nearly impossible to see in self.

- Meekness

When we hear the word “meekness,” we often think of someone who is weak.

Weakness has nothing at all to do with biblical “meekness.”

This word carries the idea of “gentleness or mildness.” It does not speak of weakness, but of power under control of a master.

Illustration:

It brings to mind a wild horse that has been broken. The horse, though it has been broken, still retains all the power and wildness that it ever had. Now, that power is brought under control of its master.

“Meekness” is a direct result of true humility. The meek person has the power to revenge hurts, but they yield that power to their Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Biblical meekness is simply the ability to exercise restraint.

Meekness is a part of the “fruit of the Spirit,” Gal. 5:23, and should be a part of every believer’s life.

Meekness is the opposite of vengeance and vindictiveness.

Meekness is seen in a willingness to yield to the Word of God, regardless of what it says or teaches.

Meekness is seen in a willingness to forgive and restore those who have fallen into sin, Gal. 6:1.

Meekness is seen in a willingness to pray for and seek the salvation of the lost. Whereas the proud person looks down on the unconverted and feels mortally superior to them.

The meek person is not weak; they are Christ-like.

- Longsuffering

This word literally means, “to be long tempered.” It speaks of “patient endurance of trials, afflictions and others.”

“Longsuffering” patiently endures those people, who get under our skin; who aggravate us; who hassle us.

- Forbearance

This word means “to put up with,” and it speaks of our ability to be tolerant of others. “Forbearance” is the ability to accept people just as they are, without wanting them to change in order to be worthy of your love.

When we walk in pride, we will judge others if they don’t meet our standards. We will judge them if they aren’t just like us. We will judge them when they are the least bit different. You show me someone who stands in judgment of the actions and lives of others, and I will show you someone who walks in pride!

If we are going to have genuine unity in the church tolerance of others is an absolute essential. If we expect people to conform before we accept them, we have missed the whole point of grace. The Lord did not expect you to change before He loved you, called you and saved you. He knew you couldn’t change. He took in just like you were. He saved you while you were yet in your sins. He didn’t ask you to change a thing before you could come to Him. He just took you like you were and changed your life.

- Love

This word is really tied to “forbearance.” We are to “tolerate one another in love.” This word speaks of our

passion one for another. The only way we will ever walk in true “lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearance” is if we truly love one another like Christ loves us.

This kind of love is commanded:

Matthew 22:37-39

³⁷ Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

¹ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

² And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. ³

And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. ⁴ Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ⁵

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷ Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. ⁸ Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Suffereth Long (vs. 4) - This word means “patient endurance under provocation.” The literal meaning of the word is “long-tempered”. This characteristic of love reveals the truth that love does not retaliate!

Is Kind (vs. 4) - This word refers to active goodness that goes forth in behalf of others. Genuine love is never hateful or mean, but it respects others and reaches out to them.

Envieth Not (vs. 4) - True love is not jealous over the abilities or possessions of another. Instead of being jealous when others prosper or excel, love is pleased when they do well.

Vaunteth Not Itself (vs. 4) - Literally, this phrase means "does not make a parade". Love does not brag! It does not draw attention to itself or to what it is doing. A person who must be the center of attention and is hurt when he is not is not walking in love!

Is Not Puffed Up (vs. 4) - Love is not arrogant or proud, but it realizes that all it has and all that it is has been given to it by God. No matter how great our talents or how spectacular our gifts, everything we are the result of divine grace.

Does Not Behave Itself Unseemly (vs. 5) - Love is never rude, but it always treats others with compassion, consideration and respect! Love controls the emotions. It is not friendly one day and rude the next. Genuine love always makes Jesus look good!

Seeketh Not Her Own (vs. 5) - True love is never selfish and self-centered, but it is actively interested in what

will profit others. It never looks at itself first, but it always considers another ahead of itself.

Is Not Easily Provoked (vs. 5) - True loves keeps no record of evils done to it, but it willingly endures all slights and injuries.

Thinketh No Evil (vs. 5) - Ill. Literally, this phrase means “takes no worthless inventory”. Two thoughts are in mind here.

Rejoiceth Not In Iniquity (vs.6) - Love does not rejoice in sin; whether it is its own sins, or the sin of others. Love hates sin! Love does not rejoice when another falls into sin!

Rejoiceth In The Truth (vs. 6) - While love hates all forms of evil, it loves the truth! It rejoices when truth is proclaimed and when truth wins the victory. Love is glad for the truth, even when the truth hurts.

Bearth All Things (vs. 7) - Love patiently endures and overlooks the faults in others. The word “bearth” literally means “to cover”. Instead of parading the failures and faults of others before all the world, love covers them over and continues to love in spite of those things!

Believeth All Things (vs. 7) - Love always places the best possible interpretation on everything that happens. It

does not always seek the most negative answer, but it believes that good will triumph in any situation. Basically, love trusts, love believes and love has confidence in the one loved.

Hopeth All things (vs. 7) - Love always expects the best possible outcome. Love refuses to accept failure. Love always holds out hope that things will work out right in the end.

Endureth All Things (vs. 7) - This is a military term and means that love does not give up the fort! It stands its ground and continues in spite of everything that can be thrown against it. It continues in spite of persecution and ill treatment. Love bears the unbearable, believes the impossible, holds on the incredible and never gives up. The word stop does not exist in the vocabulary of love!

Charity Never Faileth (vs. 8-12) - When everything else in this world has passed away. When everything that is held us such high esteem is gone. When knowledge and gifts no longer matter, love will still exist. It is the great constant throughout eternity. There are times when love may lose a battle. In that the object of one's love may never return that love. Yet, while it may lose a battle here and there, love has already won the war. The idea here is not on success. The idea is one of endurance. When other things have been removed

from view, there will still be love! It does not give in, give up or give out. Love that is real is love that lasts!

Close:

May we learn the lesson from the locust. Learn the importance, and practice the unity that is possible through the Spirit.