



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man perfect in Christ Jesus*. Colossians 1:28

Volume 27
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A Plea to My Brothers in Christ

by — Stephen Hill

It has been quite some time since I've written an article. I could use the excuse that I've been too busy, but that's hardly valid, when teaching the Word and continuing fellowship with the saints should be at the top of my priority list. In truth, I have been in a lull, based partly in confusion, partly in frustration, and partly in complacency resulting from a continual feeling of fatigue and being overwhelmed with the responsibilities of daily life. In addition, some disheartening things happened in my attempts to teach the Scriptures a couple of years ago. As a result, I have focused all of my attention these past couple of years on family and other basic obligations, devoting much time to personal study and awaiting my time to return to teaching.

That time is now. I have recently felt a strong urge to get "back in the game," rooted mostly in a desire to address several seeds of division that I have observed creeping into the lives of believers – seeds that have grown, over time, into destructive weeds. My intention is to address some of those specific issues to help myself and others recognize and fight against them. In my "down time" Father has granted me much clarity and peace, fueling my desire to help my brothers and sisters in Christ, along with me, to recognize and fight against these issues, committing to unity and love. I ask that you read and analyze these problems fully and consider what you may change or continue doing in order to build *up*, rather than tear *down*, the Body of Christ.

PROBLEM #1

We Misunderstand Fellowship

In Ephesian 4:2-3, Paul instructs believers to walk in a manner worthy of our calling,



with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Note, *no part* of this instruction requires us to fellowship only with other believers who entirely¹ agree with us. On the contrary, the fact that we are to be humble, gentle, patient and eager to maintain unity as we bear with one another *proves* that we must *work* to maintain fellowship with others we may otherwise deem to be unworthy of fellowship. The clear implication in Paul's message here is that we should *expect* not to be always on the "same page" as other believers and that we must fight our natural avoidance impulses in dealing with others we normally wouldn't choose to associate with. This is precisely why Paul "*became all things to all men.*" Christ modeled this principle as well, seeking out sinners rather than the supposedly righteous. If Paul and Christ met with unbelievers, who are we to shun fellow *believers* who merely disagree with us at times?

Paul's words in Ephesians 4 make no sense apart from this proper perspective. He would have no need to remind us of our need to be humble were it not for our natural inclination toward pride; no necessity for reminding us to be gentle were it not for our natural tendency to be forceful; no need to encourage us to be patient with others were it not for our tendency to be *impatient*; no need to state that we must bear with one another in love were there nothing difficult to ►

1. [Editor:] For more information about fellowship, see:

- *The True Basis of Fellowship*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #546](#);
- *Our Attitude Towards Others*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #549](#).

bear; and no need to instruct us to be eager to maintain unity were we not capable of sowing division.

In spite of what Paul instructs, I see the exact opposite happening, time and again. Striving toward unity is at the bottom of the priority list instead of at the top where it should be. It is an obvious problem among mainstream Christians with their countless denominations, but it is no less a problem among even strong believers with apparently true faith and knowledge of God. Rather than focusing on Paul's plain instructions in Ephesians 4, many hone in on passages like I Corinthians 11:19,² where Paul says there must be "*schisms*,"³ or sects, among us so that those who are approved are made apparent. Certainly, though, to Paul this fact would have represented a rarity and not a general rule. The Body of Christ would generally exist as a stable unity and not as a myriad of small, shattered factions.

Paul's counsel in I Corinthians 11 is most certainly not a declaration that divisions in the Body should be pervasive. Given what Paul says *many* times elsewhere about unity, if he were to have summed up his point in one sentence, he likely would have written something like this: "Occasional divisions will occur in order to prove, through contrast, who is approved, but the Body of Christ, as a whole, should generally be a stable, unified entity committed to mutual edification." The existence of divisions to prove who is apparent is itself an edifying ingredient of the Body's development, *not* a negative aspect, since it removes

2. [Editor:] For more information on schisms, see:
 - *Divisions Are Necessary: I Corinthians 11:19*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #572](#).
3. [Editor:] For a quick view of Paul's words associated with division within the Body, see:
 - *Paul's 10 Greek Words Warning Against a Divisive Spirit*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #572](#).

ambiguity and upholds truth in order to foster growth for all members. Yet, when we prioritize division above unity by *causing* division, it does become negative, and all manner of unintended, unnecessary problems ensue. This is precisely why Paul warns in Romans 16:17-18 to "*mark*"⁴ and "*avoid*"⁵ those who cause divisions, for they are self-serving and deceitful. Long before Paul, the Scriptures had labeled it an "*abomination*," which God "*hates*," for men to "*sow discord among brothers*" (Proverbs 6:19). Unfortunately, the charisma and bold approach of such men are often appealing to new, impressionable believers.

In recent years, I have heard of people being dis-fellowshipped or cast aside by seemingly faithful believers for the most unimaginable, petty reasons. One man told me he stopped all communication with the *Concordant Publishing Concern* because of a differing opinion relating to what Knoch taught about the spirit and soul. Several others have not spoken in years because of disagreements as to whether Christ existed prior to His earthly birth. Still others have parted ways because they don't see eye-to-eye on Noah's flood and whether it was global or local. One especially divisive issue for quite some time now is the disagreement over whether all of Paul's epistles are, in every way, equally relevant to the Body of Christ today, or if Israel was a large part of Paul's ministry and focus early on.

These topics, and many others, are certainly important and worth studying and discussing, but are they

4. [Editor:] For information on the divisionary abuse of this passage, see:
 - *The "Mark and Avoid" Religion*, Denis Durham, [Bible Student's Notebook #325](#).
5. [Editor:] For a look at Paul's admonition for avoidance, see,
 - *The Freedom to Excuse Ourselves*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #325](#).



120 pp., PB

Announcing the Long Awaited Volume 2!

Studies in Paul's Epistle to the Romans Volume 2

by — George L. Rogers (1869-1947)

After 80 years, the long awaited volume two is now in print. Sadly, this second and last volume covers only Romans 9:1-10:13. Although brother Rogers lived another decade after completing volume one, his health never permitted him to finish the series past the contents of this second installment.

See order form.

really grounds for fellow believers never to speak again? If our goal is to share the truth and we feel that others are not seeing it, does it make sense to altogether stop speaking with someone when you may help that person (or he may help you) discover the truth?

Inevitably, the same chain of events always occurs when these petty disagreements take place. Two friends with opposing views feel a sudden, uncomfortable shock when they discover that the other person, whom they felt shared all of their beliefs, disagrees on a scriptural point that they see as important. Of course, no matter how consequential or inconsequential, a matter is *always* considered vitally important at that moment by the parties of a debate. This can lead one or both people to question everything the other person believes in an attempt to discover every possible discrepancy or area of disagreement. They reason, “I need to find out what else he or she disagrees with me on and restore our mutual agreement to keep peace and maintain our feeling of closeness.”

At first, the goal of each person is to disprove and correct the other (a habit rooted in pride, since we suppose we are correct and in no need of correction), but when the other doesn't come around to seeing things the same way, one or both determine that they are not as close as they once thought. One minor disagreement can therefore spiral into a slew of mixed feelings that damages each person's credibility in the other's eyes. These unsettling feelings sometimes lead to aggressive tactics (the opposite of gentleness), and once-close friends decide that they are better off apart and at odds with each other (the opposite of peace and unity) rather than maintaining their bond with the understanding that they do not see things identically at that time. We forget that we are growing in faith *together* and that our Father has given us one another to aid in that purpose.

When the people in disagreement happen to be teachers, their “students” feel forced to pick a side and reject the teacher who disagrees with their teacher of choice. Needless to say, this entire process – which is so very common – is rooted in everything that is completely opposed to what Paul advises in Ephesians 4. In certain severe cases, I have even known of

people to vandalize the property of other believers or make death threats! It's simply unbelievable – Christians vandalizing and threatening other Christians simply because they hold some different beliefs! This leads to the second problem:

PROBLEM #2

We Put Our Faith in Men Above God

I often read or hear believers citing the opinions of teachers as if their words are infallible truth. Many in our circle quote Knoch, Bullinger and others as though what they have to say about a matter is the final word on it. In fact, entire ministries are often modern regurgitations of what those prior teachers taught. This isn't surprising when we often benefit and grow greatly from the teachings of certain men, but we must remember that they are just that – men. Though they may be gifted in study and understanding, they are not omniscient or free of error. No doubt, A.E. Knoch would have some strong words for anyone whom he felt upheld him to such a degree. The same problem was prevalent during Paul's time, and Paul was glad that he hadn't baptized certain Corinthians who had placed their faith in him or Peter above their faith in Christ. The Corinthians were pledging their allegiance to certain teachers and claiming to follow them. To this, Paul asked,

*Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?
Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*

Like the Corinthians, we tend to be followers who rely on others for instruction and encouragement. But we must be careful and heed Paul's warning not to fall prey to worshipping men above Christ.

Ask yourself: do you feel a sense of allegiance to a certain teacher? When studying a topic, do you blindly believe whatever a certain teacher has to say about it, without studying it for yourself? Do you have feelings of bitterness or resentment toward teachers who disagree with the teacher you respect, and do you refuse to associate with anyone opposed to the teacher whom you follow? Do you revere a certain teacher so much that your thoughts are more on him than on Christ? Do you admire a certain teacher more for his charisma, wit or showmanship than the content of his teaching? Have you quoted current, present- ►

day teachers on social media or in discussions as if their words are a quote from Scripture? If honest, most people would have to answer “yes” to at least one, if not all, of these questions, and that is a glaring proof that something is sorely amiss.

We are not baptized into Knoch or Bullinger, or a present-day teacher, or even our apostle, Paul, for that matter – but Christ alone! Respecting other teachers is one thing, but when we border on idolizing them and excluding other believers who disagree with their teachings, we do great harm to the evangel and to the Body of Christ. We do not belong to a fellowship of all the believers who follow a teacher we respect; we belong to a fellowship of *all* true believers – period. And no two of those believers are at the exact same point in their spiritual journey or in complete agreement on every single doctrinal point.

We have a natural tendency to conform and organize. We feel secure knowing that we are part of a group and something tangible. For this reason, it is difficult for us to be at peace merely knowing that we are part of the Body of Christ, which includes people we will never even meet in this age. Instead, we seek comfort by organizing ourselves, inventing our own criteria for “membership,” inflicting judgments that cause unwarranted division, naming “leaders” and so forth. In short, we are inclined to form our own system of governance and fellowship rather than allowing God’s already-existing system to lead us. Israel demanded a king for this very reason, even after the prophet, Samuel, warned against it and insisted that they needed no leader other than God. Not surprisingly, nothing has changed from ancient Israel to today.

PROBLEM #3

We Care More About Knowledge than Love

At the heart of all of these problems is one fundamental issue. Whether we realize it or not, we tend to care more about knowing things than acting in love. We pride ourselves in studying and gaining knowledge and understanding of scriptural truths. We feel a sense of awe and scholarly achievement when we open our heavily-worn Bibles and tattered old books. Not that this is a bad thing, but it is easy to get caught up in the aura of academia to the point where we place it above all else.

Contrary to this, Paul advises that “*knowledge puffs up*” (instills self-righteousness) while “*love builds up*.” If we were given a choice to possess little knowledge but great love, versus little love and great knowledge, we should certainly choose the former!

I Corinthians 13:2, a very powerful verse, put it this way:

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

Nothing! Few verses of Scripture are as powerfully direct as this. Even a person with *all* knowledge and *strong* faith is NOTHING if he doesn’t possess love.

I am not at all dismissing the importance of increasing in knowledge. The more our knowledge grows, the more we see our Father for Who He really is, and this is a crucial endeavor. We should strive to increase in our knowledge *and* love, but we must be sure to prioritize love above knowledge. Our Father IS love, and the more we know Him and conform to His Son, the more we naturally embody love.

Unfortunately, many believers seem to do the oppo-



The Problem of Evil and The Judgments Of God

by — A.E. Knoch

346 pp, PB (*See order form.*)

This book traces the divine function of evil from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty. Here is what one of our readers has written about *The Problem of Evil*:

“The litmus test for motive in any writer is whether or not the power of the ‘Cross’ is being diminished or supplanted in any way; Knoch unfolds each point with the loving simplicity of someone who has faced and answered the critics with the overarching victory of Calvary. One comes away from each chapter of this work once again realizing that the offense of the ‘Cross’ has driven so many wonderful and freeing truths out of what is traditionally taught and practiced.”

site. They puff up themselves and neglect to build up others. Such teachers are known by their deportment (behavior), which invariably demonstrates a near complete absence of “*the fruit of the spirit*” Paul lays out in Galatians 5 – *none* of which, by the way, relate to doctrine. One who exhibits love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control does *not* dismiss, write off, belittle, mock, insult or malign others, or act with conceit. He humbly and willingly opens his heart to all who seek the truth and attempts to build up other believers in love. Furthermore, he listens to other members of the Body of Christ, understanding that he, too, may learn and grow from them, for the greatest teachers are perpetual students.

We may justify our attacks on others by claiming that we are adhering to Paul’s guidance in II Timothy 4:2 to “*correct*” and “*rebuke*,” or we may point to Paul’s public rebuke of Peter at Antioch recounted in Galatians 2. But how did Paul instruct Timothy to correct and rebuke? With *longsuffering* – that is, with immense patience and hope, always bearing the recipient in mind. Did Paul continually *attack* Peter? Of course not. He “*rebuked*” Peter once and ensured their ongoing unity from that point forward.

Unlike Timothy, we do not have Paul himself, *in person*, as a teacher. As Paul’s student, Timothy was in a uniquely-qualified position to correct and rebuke on all scriptural points. This is not to say that we should never correct or rebuke others, but we would do well to remember that we do not possess the first-hand guidance Timothy had; therefore, we should refrain from petty arguments related to minor doctrinal dif-

ferences. Paul and Timothy knew the answers to the many questions we all may have, but *none* of us is yet in possession of that level of understanding, even if we arrogantly believe we are. Paul and Timothy focused much more on correcting the “big,” consequential issues than the small ones. We tend to view all doctrinal issues as “big” and important, but many would be surprised to read in Romans 14, where Paul details how we should treat those new to the faith, that his guidance is not to quarrel with new believers even over opinions of what is right versus wrong! Not only would this passage undoubtedly surprise some who endlessly debate doctrines, it also proves that not all doctrinal matters are vitally important. If they were, Paul’s advice to Timothy would have been much different. We must always keep in mind that, while we can plant the seed in others’ minds and water it, only God can “*make it grow*” (I Corinthians 3:6); we must be patient with others as they “*work out*” their own salvation along the precise path, with the precise steps, that God has authored uniquely for them.

Paul’s rebuke of Peter was certainly a “big” issue that warranted Paul’s firm reaction. At the very time when non-Israelites were being brought into the fold, Peter hypocritically violated the very heart of that purpose by separating himself from those believers, which resulted in even Barnabas being led astray. Yet, in spite of this event, the two continued in strong fellowship and support of one another. Had Peter’s actions not been in clear violation of the essentials of the evangel and caused another to be misled, Paul certainly would not have responded as immediately and with as much intensity as he did. Rather, he would have ►



The Dispensational Writings of Dee L. McCroskey, Volume 1

by — Dee L. McCroskey (1902-1991)

Brother McCroskey was a student of brother Nels Thompson (who himself had been a student of Harry Ironside). Nels founded several assemblies, beginning in Oakland California. McCroskey succeeded him in these assemblies. More were added in Oregon and Arizona. McCroskey was an experienced printer, and in 1936 set up *Gospel Tract Distributors* to proclaim Paul’s Gospel. He became editor of the periodical *Outside the Camp*, which later became *Last Day Messenger* which remained in print until 1990.

36 pp., PB
See order form.

Chapters:

- *The Kingdom Offer in Acts*
- *Rightly Dividing Paul’s Epistles*
- *Tongues: Israel’s Sign Gift*

taken time to study carefully Peter's actions, possible motives and assertions prior to responding. He most certainly wouldn't have made it his mission to malign Peter publicly from that point forward, or relentlessly challenge the majority of his teachings, as that would have served only to harm and discredit his faithful friend and distract from Paul's own purpose and message. Let us not get caught in the same trap in which the Pharisees found themselves, caring more about their image and being "right" than about others – especially our brothers in Christ!

PROBLEM #4

We Focus on Who's "In" Rather than Who's "Out"

In addition to instructing us to strive for unity,⁶ Paul does provide us with a gauge for judging with whom we should *not* have fellowship. Judging by the current state of things, you would think that Paul's advice is, "Do not have fellowship with anyone who doesn't share *all* of your beliefs." Of course, that's not at all the case, and none of us would have *any* close relationships with other believers if it were. According to Paul, the only people with whom we should not have fellowship are those who teach a works-based evangel contrary to his evangel of grace (Galatians 1:8), and anyone who *claims* to be a believer but engages in the wicked acts cited in I Corinthians 5:11. For Paul, the matter was very simple: *all* who have faith are "in," and only those people who fit very specific criteria are "out."

How often, though, do we attempt to judge for ourselves who gets to be "in?" We focus a great deal on the qualifications one must have to be accepted, and

6. [Editor:] For more information on Father's desire for unity in the Body of Christ, see:

- *Freedom from Identifying and Assigning Motives*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #266](#).
- *Be Likeminded*, Daniel Anderson, Parts 1 & 2, [Bible Student's Notebook #503 & #504](#);
- *Our Attitude Towards Others*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #549](#);
- *Divisiveness and Contention – and Our Divine Calling to Peace*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #571](#);
- *Paul's Stern Warnings Against Divisiveness and Contention*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #571](#);
- *Paul's 10 Greek Words Warning Against a Divisive Spirit*, (Chart), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #572](#);
- *Contention's Entrance and Exit – Wisdom from the Book of Proverbs, "Reason" or "Argue"?* and *Unbelieving Believers*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #573](#);
- *Making Peace*, Aaron Locker, [Bible Student's Notebook #573](#).

then use our own additional criteria to, likewise, decide who should remain or be put "out." We need to get back to the basic, simple standard that Paul provides for us. The *only* people we should refuse to fellowship with are those who teach a works-based gospel and those who claim to be believers but commit certain evil acts that prove their lack of faith. Everyone else is "in!" This includes all believers who uphold Paul's evangel of grace, regardless of whether they see eye-to-eye with us on other doctrinal points.

Fellowship is first and foremost a noun, not a verb. When we are brought into unity with Christ through faith, we are automatically brought into fellowship (intimate union) with Christ, and our mutual fellowship with our Head brings us into mutual fellowship with all other believers in the Body. We may feel as though we are dis-fellowshipping others (or that they have dis-fellowshipped us), but the reality of our fellowship remains nonetheless, and our goal must be to recognize that truth, fighting for unity while simultaneously opposing division. The way in which we go about this must be rooted in love and in line with the fruit of the spirit. We must be "*devoted*" to one another in brotherly affection, "*in honor, preferring one another*" (Romans 12:10).

PROBLEM #5

We Inadvertently Promote Hopelessness Above Hope

Our entire faith is centered on hope, yet we unintentionally but frequently promote a sense of hopelessness. When a fellow believer holds a different understanding, we are likely to gossip about that person to others, making damaging and unnecessary comments like, "She has 'gone off the deep end,'" or, "Have you heard his recent teaching? He's fallen away and totally lost it." Oftentimes, we haven't even verified the accuracy of what we've been told about others, which compounds the gossip with hearsay. In some cases, slander may even occur.

Those who make such comments likely do so out of frustration and concern for the person they reference, but what this type of behavior actually does is alienate the person further and suggest that he is unreasonable or beyond help. In fact, one brother I know was told many years ago by a certain teacher

that if he didn't understand and agree with one of his teachings he must be "stupid." Unsurprisingly, to this day that brother *still* brings up that statement as a painful memory that stunted his spiritual growth.

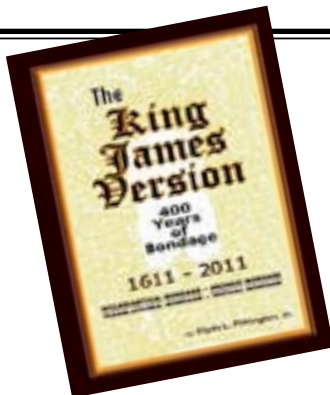
What possible good can come of speaking to or discussing other believers in such terms, no matter how confounding their beliefs currently may be to us? A more appropriate comment (if any) would be something like, "I am concerned about 'so and so' because he apparently believes 'such and such.' Let's discuss his beliefs and, if necessary, how we can help him." No comment should be made at all if its end aim is not the good of the person being discussed. Even if one's motives are good, the way in which he speaks to, or about, others needs to be kind and gentle, not demeaning and aggressive. Of course, before jumping to the conclusion that we are right and the other person is in need of correction, first we should thoughtfully and fully consider their statements, ensuring that we are completely confident in our own understanding. Our responses should, likewise, be carefully considered and not hasty. An immediate response is typically one made in passion out of anger or arrogance, without much care, humility or thought, for there is more hope for a fool than a man hasty in his words (Proverbs 29:20), and "a fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion" (Proverbs 18:2). We mistakenly assume that, to persuade others, we need to be aggressive, when in reality it is "sweetness of speech" (kind words) that effectively works to increase persuasiveness (Proverbs 16:21). Unpleasantness and sarcasm may seem to do the job initially, but they will quickly prove ineffective once a believer has matured beyond the "milk"

phase of faith.

Conversations about other believers behind their backs often lead to mockery, belittling, and making fun of the subject. I have seen well-studied men of seemingly sincere faith imitate other believers, make fun of the way they talk, act out their gestures, and so forth. At first, this may all seem in good fun and produce a few laughs, but all of that is at the expense of the person being made fun of and does no good at all in building him or her up – personally or to others. We may attempt to justify such behavior by insisting that we are not harming the other person if they aren't present at the time or aware they are being mocked, but it does affect the way those who witness the mockery view the victim, and it is rooted in anything *but* love. In addition, there is no guarantee that the subject won't at some point find out about the mockery and be very hurt by it. Quite frankly, belittling other believers (or unbelievers, for that matter) – especially publicly – shows a significant lack of love and maturity, and we would clearly not envision Christ, Paul or other great men of faith acting in such ways. The person we may make fun of is a unique and cherished creation of God, given his or her looks, expressions, mannerisms, voice and other characteristics *by* God. How dare we diminish and poke fun at the Creator's workmanship!

Paul's instruction is clear:

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear (Ephesians 4:29).



72 pp., PB

See order form.

The King James Version – 400 Years of Bondage 1611-2011

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

1611 was not a high spiritual mark in the history of the church, the Body of Christ. Instead of being a grand year of the pinnacle of preservation or perfection of God's Word, it was rather the sad depths of the subtle corrupting of God's Word by the historic union of governmental and ecclesiastical politics.

An excellent book! – *NC*

Quite an eye opener to say the least! Very good! – *NM*

CONCLUSION

Our fellowship in Christ, in faith, is a living reality that exists regardless of what we do. God calls us to build up one another in love rather than tear one another down, to strive for unity rather than divisions that are occasionally necessary, and to treat each other with kindness, gentleness, patience and affection rather than anger, resentment, hopelessness and arrogance. We tend to act in accord with the latter set more than the first, and in doing so we do harm to the Body of Christ by discouraging others.

My goal in writing this is not to point fingers (I have myself been guilty, at times, of some of these behaviors, and I have taken care not to use any names in this article) but to encourage all of us to put love above all else and forsake our pride in order to refocus our efforts on building up the Body which, for some time now, has been more torn down. The problems listed here are certainly not exhaustive, but they are several of the most prominent and serious that I have witnessed for quite some time.

As Paul told the Romans at the beginning of his epistle, I long to see my fellow brothers and sisters (you who are reading this) in order to be strengthened,

and for us to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. We desperately need one another, and my hope is to encourage us all to recommit to that truth, in love.

If you have read this in its entirety, I thank you and encourage you to examine what your own habits have been in dealing with other believers. If you realize that you have acted in ways contrary to what Paul advises in Ephesians 4 or that you have parted ways with others over any reason other than what Paul shows is warranted, then commit to strengthening your unity and bond with fellow believers – particularly those with whom you have parted ways. Give them a call, send them an email or card, invite them to your home, ask others close to them how they are doing, and, of course, pray for them. The Body of Christ is far too important to neglect this basic yet monumental task.⁷ ■

TOPICS:

Major: Attitude; Believer's Walk; Body Life; Division
Minor: Department; Testimony; Unity

7. [Editor:] For a multitude of articles covering the precepts contained in this article, see the following topics located in the "By Topic" section of the [Bible Student's Notebook Master Index](#) (Also available on the order form),

– Attitude, Believer's Walk, Body Life, Controversy, Department, Division, Judgement, Ministry, Peace, Unity.

- total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
- union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
- adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a semi-weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 1:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:

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