

引言 INTRODUCTION

Let us begin with a question. A church will not be a church without its _____. What will you put in the blank? I will give you my answer based on today's passage at the end. We have finished the first half of the book of Ephesians. Remember the church members there were mostly Gentiles. Paul wrote this letter to remind them that God has given them abundant grace. I called the first three chapters: Believing in God's Grace. Paul shares some important truths about God's salvation grace. God chose those He had intended to save before creation. He gave them a new life while they were still dead in their spirit. Those who respond to His grace by faith are saved. God includes both Jews and Gentile Christians into one church. Beginning from chapter 4, Paul tells us how we should apply what we believe in our new life. Therefore, I call the second section: Be Living in God's Grace. Paul starts off by focusing on the church. The Ephesian believers came from a diverse background. Only through Christ could they work together as one people. The same is true for our church. We have three language groups. Even people who speak the same mother tongue may be from various places. On the top of that, we also have different personality, experience and preferences. However, we are one family in Christ. Each of us should contribute toward the common goals. The theme for this message is very simple. If you forget everything after you walk out from here, just remember the word "one."

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 肢體的合一 Unity of the Body

First and foremost, Paul stresses the unity of the body. Let us first consider the **foundation** of our unity. Paul brings up seven one's from verses 4 to 6. Those are the building blocks for our unity. We see the three persons of the Trinity God on the list: the Holy Spirit, our Lord Jesus Christ and the Father. The Bible says there is only one God, but He exists in three persons. This doctrine separates Christianity from other religions. Other than the Trinity God, Paul mentions four other elements. In verse 4, he says there is only one body. There are many localized churches in the world, but together they form one universal church in Jesus. Also, Christians hold onto one hope. They will be with God in eternity whenever they leave this world. Then Paul adds in verse 5 that they believe in the one faith. We can only be saved by putting our trust in Jesus. They also embrace the one baptism. Water baptism is a ceremony to testify one's faith in Jesus. Those seven components build the foundation of our unity. Any Christian church should embrace those beliefs. Next, we will focus on the **formation** of our unity. Putting a group of people together will not generate unity automatically. Each of us has to make an effort to foster unity. Paul encourages us in verses 2-3: **2 With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** We find a formula of 3-2-1 here. We must display three virtues and take two actions in order to accomplish the one result of unity. The three virtues are humility, gentleness and patience. You show others those virtues and hope that they will be inspired to do the same things. Jesus is our role-model for those godly characters. He humbled Himself and came into the world as a human. He served others like a servant. Moreover, He guided people with gentleness. Jesus also showed

much patience toward people's disbelief and His disciples' ignorance. We need to demonstrate humility, gentleness and patience as we engage in two actions. First is to show tolerance toward one another with love. We overlook others' mistakes without condoning sins. We can only do so when we are filled with love. Jesus loved us and died for us when we were still sinners. His love motivates and empowers us to accept others. Besides loving one another, we must also bind each other together in peace. Jesus reconciled us with the Father. Hence, we become children of peace. We must use God's peace like a glue to stick together. If we display those three virtues and take the two actions, the outcome will be unity. Many years ago, I joined the choir at a Billy Graham crusade. The participants belong to various churches. They have different views on issues like the mode of baptism, predestination and supernatural gifts. But everyone only had one goal on the few nights: to sing praise to the Lord. The result was a beautiful harmony. It was the closest thing to heaven I ever experienced. Unity is anti-cultural and even anti-human. We live in an individualistic society. But the Bible tells us to love God first, love others more and love ourselves last. We can easily let differences divide our church. It happens when we categorize people based on their hometowns, mother tongues and social status, etc. We need to work hard to strengthen our unity. The most basic thing is to get to know other people. After all, how can you care for others if you do not even know their names? I know a few English-speaking members are learning Mandarin. That is impressive! I encourage everyone not just to mingle with your friends, but get to know at least one more person every time you come here. In your small group, learn to listen more and talk less. Respect others' different viewpoints if their opinions are not contrary to the Bible. Remember that they are part of the family and not your enemies!

2. 肢體的分工 Diversity of the Body

We should cherish our unity in the church body. We share a common faith. However, being equal does not mean we are the same. God blessed the body with diversity. Paul introduces different roles in the church in verse 11: **And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers.** The Bible calls these roles spiritual gifts. They are some special capabilities that God gives believers to serve in the church. Other lists of spiritual gifts can be found in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Peter 4. Here, Paul tells that there are some **diversified gifts**. Apostles and prophets are messengers of God's Word. They received messages from God and they wrote them down to become the Bible. Paul is one of those Bible authors. Since the whole Bible had been completed, those two gifts no longer exist. Then we have evangelists on the list. We can understand them as traveling missionaries. They preach the gospel, save souls and plant churches. While evangelists may go to various places, pastors and teachers usually serve a local congregation. There are some overlapping functions between the last two groups of servants. All pastors are Bible teachers. But not all Bible teachers are pastors. Your Bible may translate "shepherds" as "pastors." They are the same word in Greek. Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd in John 10. He guides His followers like a shepherd who takes care of his sheep. Pastors should imitate the perfect model of Jesus as they lead their congregation. The five spiritual gifts here have one thing in common. They are all ministers of God's Word. Apostles and prophets recorded God's Word. Evangelist share the gospel. Pastors and teachers explain God's Word to church members. Despite their diversified gifts, these coworkers strive toward the same **unified goals**. Paul describes three progressive goals in verse 12: **To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.** The immediate goal is to equip church members. It is like instructors giving training to inexperienced workers. The

intermediate goal is to appoint them to serve. After learning the skills, workers will be assigned duties under the supervision of some foremen. The ultimate goal is to build up the church. If the whole team works effectively, the end result will be a completed project. In the Bible, Jesus is the perfect trainer and leader we should look up to. He called twelve men to be His disciples. Jesus taught them the truths to shape their mind. He also showed them how to serve people by His example. He treated people with love and compassion. He looked for lost sheep and brought them back. After giving the disciples enough knowledge and skills, the Lord sent them out to do gospel work. After Jesus went back to heaven, the disciples repeated the same model to recruit, equip and send church leaders for the gospel mission. Even today, church coworkers should aim toward the same goal of building up the body. We have leaders in our church to direct different ministries. Part of their tasks should be equipping others. They train new coworkers by sharing their skills and experience. In a healthy church, there should be a succession of labors. Existing leaders will prepare the next generation of coworkers. Church members are either trainers or trainees. As such, our leaders need your help. God gives each of you specific gifts. The question is: are you actively using your gifts? Do not say to yourself that other people are doing everything already. God puts you in this family, and He has a place for you to serve. You do not even need to fill out a form and pass an interview before you can participate. We will provide the necessary training. All it takes is a heart to be used by God.

3. 肢體的成熟 Maturity of the Body

We should appreciate the unity of the body, and we should put to use the diversity in the body. Next, Paul brings up the maturity of the body. He uses the growth of a child in verses 13-16 to illustrate his points. A child will keep growing when the body functions are working as normal. The same is true for a church. Paul says in verse 16 that a church will continue to grow **...When each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.** We need each other to build this church up. You will facilitate others when you exercise the gifts God gives you. For example, teachers of children will free up the parents to serve. Our facility coworkers take good care of our building so that our kitchen crew can focus on cooking. Other than growing in functions, children should grow in knowledge too. They go to school to learn. The church is a bigger classroom for us to learn the Bible. Paul describes in verse 13: **Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.** We learn about Jesus by studying the Bible in small groups and by listening to sermons. We study the identity and works of Jesus, His plans in history and His expectations on us. Those biblical truths must be applied in daily life. That is why growth in knowledge is closely related with growth in discernment. Parents teach their sons and daughters to distinguish right from wrong. They hope that kids will make wise decisions in life. Similarly, Paul says in verse 14: **So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.** Satan has never stopped preaching falsehood like materialism, pursuit of money and pride. He also tells us that it is offensive to call people sinners, we need to love people by agreeing with all ungodly lifestyle and salvation is all about building a peaceful society. We can tell what is false only when we know what God sees as right. Besides growing in functions, knowledge and discernment, the fourth sign of maturity is growth in character. Kids will eventually become independent. They should exercise sound judgment and do the right things. Similarly, truthfulness must be a signature of the church. In verse 15, Paul hopes that the

church will be “speaking the truth in love”. We often apply this principle in communication. We say that we must tell the facts with love. As important as that should be, it is not Paul’s focus here. The “truth” is in contrast with the false doctrine he mentions in the previous verse. God’s church must be an outlet of truth. Where else can people hear the truth if they cannot get it from a church? We need to preach and practice Biblical truths without compromise. But we must do so in a spirit of love. People may shut their ears if they feel that we see ourselves holier than them. All the aspects of growth we discussed is a result of normal functioning of the brain. This most important organ directs the works of every part and tissue. Paul describes the brain in a church in verses 15-16: **15 ... We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly...** Jesus is the Head of the church. He unites all the members through the Holy Spirit like joints connecting bones. He sends out directions by His Word like the brain transmits signals via nerves. He coordinates believers so that we will work in harmony, must like the brain organizes various body functions. An organ isolated from the brain may become a piece of dead meat. Christians separated from Jesus will not be able to perform the functions He assigns to them.

結論 CONCLUSION

We are ONE in the Lord. Jesus Christ started this church. He saved us and gathers us from different places. He removes language and cultural barriers and unites us as one people. He gives us spiritual gifts. He calls some to be leaders to equip the rest of us to serve. Jesus’ ultimate goal for the church is maturity in Him. At this time, we will revisit the question I asked you at the beginning. A church will not be a church without its _____. What is your answer? In sum, the church is about three ships – the Headship of Jesus, the Leadership of Coworkers and the Ownership of Members. Without Jesus, this is just a community center for learning good moral lessons. Without our leaders, we may lose our direction. But without each of us, this place will become an empty building. Without human interaction, coming here is not different from going to a grocery store. We just grab what we need then leave. Only when we are connected with each other and are connected to Jesus, we together can build a beautiful masterpiece.

引言 INTRODUCTION

讓我們用一個問題來開始：沒有_____，教會就不是教會了。你會在空白處填什麼？在做結論時我會根據今天的經文把我的答案告訴你。我們已經學完了以弗所書的前半部份。記得那所教會的大多數成員是外邦信徒。保羅寫這封信是為了提醒他們，神已經賜給他們豐盛的恩典。我把前三章稱為：領受神的恩典。保羅分享了一些關於救恩的重要真理。神在創造萬物之前就揀選了祂打算拯救的人。當他們的靈魂還是死亡的時候，神就賜給他們新的生命。那些憑信心回應神恩典的人就能得救。神將猶太人和外邦基督徒歸入一個教會。從第四章開始，保羅告訴我們應該如何在新生命中應用信仰。因此，我將第二部分稱為：活出神的恩典。保羅首先把焦點放在教會。以弗所的信徒來自不同的背景。唯有透過基督，他們才能像一家人那樣相處。我們的教會也是如此。我們有三個語言組別。就算是說同一種母語的人也可能來自不同的地方。另外，我們也有不同的個性、經歷和喜好。然而，我們在基督裡是一家人。我們每個人都必須為共同的目標努力。今天信息的主題非常簡單。如果你離開時什麼都忘記了，就請記住「一」這個字。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 肢體的合一 Unity of the Body

首先，保羅強調肢體的合一。讓我們先來思考合一的**基礎**。保羅從第 4 節到第 6 節提出七個「一」。那些元素就是我們合一的基礎。我們在清單中看到三位一體的真神：聖靈、主耶穌基督和天父。聖經說只有一位神，但祂以三個位格存在。這一個教義將基督信仰與其他宗教分別出來。除了三一真神之外，保羅還提到另外四個要點。在第 4 節中，他說只有**一個身體**。世界上有許多地方教會，但它們在耶穌裡組成一個普世教會。此外，基督徒也懷著**同一個指望**。當他們離開世界時，他們將永遠與神同在。然後保羅在第 5 節說，他們有**同一個信仰**。我們唯有信靠耶穌才能得救。他們也接受**同一個洗禮**。浸禮是讓信徒見證他們信仰的儀式。這七個元素奠定了我們合一的基礎。任何基督教會都應該接受這些信仰內容。接下來，我們來看合一的**建立**。將一群人聚集在一起並不會自動產生合一。我們每個人都必須努力建立合一。保羅在 2-3 節鼓勵我們：**2 凡事謙卑、溫柔、忍耐，用愛心彼此寬容，3 用和平彼此聯絡，竭力保守聖靈所賜合而為一的心**。我們在這裡找到一個 3-2-1 的方程式。我們必須發揮三個美

德、做兩件事情，才能達到合一的結果。三種美德是謙卑、溫柔和忍耐。你向別人展示出這些品格，希望他們以同樣的方式回應。耶穌是我們的模範榜樣。祂謙卑自己，以人的身分來到世上。祂像僕人那樣服事別人。而且，祂以溫柔的方式引導人們。耶穌對人們的不信和門徒的無知也表現出忍耐。我們需要以謙卑、溫柔和忍耐來採取兩項行動。首先是用愛心彼此寬容。我們輕看別人的錯誤但是不妥協罪。只有當我們被愛充滿時，我們才能做到這一點。當我們還是罪人之時，耶穌就愛我們並為我們而死。祂的愛激勵我們，並賜我們力量去接納別人。除了彼此相愛之外，我們還必須用和平彼此連結。耶穌使我們與天父和好。如此，我們成為和平之子。我們必須使用神的和平像黏膠一樣來互相聯合。如果我們展示三種美德並採取兩項行動，結果便是合一。許多年前，我參加了葛培理佈道會的詩班。合唱團的成員來自不同的教會。他們對洗禮方式、預定論和超自然的恩賜都有不同的看法。但那幾個晚上大家只有一個共同目標：歌頌主。結果是一個美麗的和諧。那是我經歷過最接近天堂的場景。合一是反文化的，甚至是反人性的。我們生活在一個個人主義的社會。但聖經告訴我們要先愛神，多愛別人，少愛自己。我們很容易讓分歧分裂我們的教會。我們常常根據家鄉、母語、社會地位等因素把人分類。我們需要努力加強我們的合一。最基本的條件就是認識別人。如果你連對方的名字都不知道，你怎麼能關心他們呢？我知道有幾位說英語的成員正在學習普通話。這一點很難得！我鼓勵大家不要只是和你的朋友談話，而是每次來這裡至少多認識一個人。在小組中，學習多聽少說。如果別人的看法不違反聖經，就尊重他們的不同觀點。請記住，他們是你的家人，而不敵人！

2. 肢體的分工 Diversity of the Body

我們應該珍惜教會中肢體的合一。我們有共同的信仰。然而，平等並不意味著我們是一樣的。神賜給教會肢體的分工。保羅在第 11 節介紹了教會中不同的事奉：**他所賜的，有使徒，有先知，有傳福音的，有牧師和教師**。聖經稱這些角色為屬靈恩賜。神賜給信徒不同的才幹，使他們在教會中服事。其他屬靈恩賜的清單可以在羅馬書 12 章、哥林多前書 12 章和彼得前書 4 章中找到。在這裡，保羅告訴我們一些**不同的恩賜**。使徒和先知是神話語的使者。他們接收來自神的信息，並將其寫下來成為聖經。保羅是這些聖經作者之一。整本聖經已經完成了，因此那兩個恩賜就不再存在了。然後名單上有傳福音的人。我們可以將他們理解為旅行的傳教士。他們傳福音、拯救靈魂、建立教會。傳教士可能會去不同的地方，但牧師和教師通常服事本地的會眾。兩個角色有一些重疊的地方。所有牧師都是聖經教師，但並非所有聖經教師都是牧師。在整本聖經中，這是「牧師」這個字唯一出現的經文。這個希臘文的字一般翻譯為「牧羊人」。例如在約翰福音第 10 章中，耶穌稱自己為好牧人。祂引導跟隨者，就像

牧羊人照顧祂的羊一樣。牧師應該學習耶穌的榜樣來帶領會眾。這裡的五種屬靈恩賜有一個共同點，他們都是神話語的僕人。使徒和先知記錄神的話語，傳道者分享福音，牧師和教師解釋神的話語。儘管他們有不同的恩賜，但這些同工都朝著**相同的目標**努力。保羅在第 12 節描述了三個漸進的目標：**為要成全聖徒，各盡其職，建立基督的身體**。保羅說他們的短期目標是要裝備教會的成員。這就像師傅訓練一批沒有經驗的工人一樣。他們的中期的目標是分派他們去服事。學習技能之後，工人便在工頭的監督下完成任務。最終的目標是建造教會。如果整個團隊有效地協調，結果便能完成項目。在聖經中，耶穌是我們該效法的完美導師和領袖。祂呼召十二個人成為祂的門徒。耶穌以真理來塑造他們的思想。祂也向他們示範如何服事別人。祂以愛和同情心對待人們。祂尋找迷失的羊並將牠們領回來。主裝備門徒之後，便差派他們出去傳福音。耶穌回到天上後，門徒重複同樣的模式來招募、裝備和分派教會領袖來執行福音使命。就算在今天，教會的同工也應該朝著建造教會這個目標努力。我們教會有領袖來帶領不同的事工，他們的部分責任應該是裝備別人。他們分享技巧和經驗來訓練新同工。在一個健康的教會裡，應該不斷有接班人。現有的領袖必須為下一代的同工做好準備。教會的成員不是師傅，就應該是學徒。這個教會的領袖需要你的幫助。神賜給你某些恩賜。問題是：你是否積極地運用你的恩賜？不要對自己說其他人已經在做一切的事情了。既然神把你放在這個家裡，祂已經為你安排事奉的崗位。你甚至不用填表，也不需要面試。我們會提供需要的培訓。你只需要有一顆願意被神使用的心就可以了。

3. 肢體的成熟 Maturity of the Body

我們應該重視肢體的合一，我們也應該善用肢體的分工。接下來，保羅提到肢體的成熟。他在 13-16 節中用一個小孩的成長來解釋他的論點。當小孩身體的機能正常運作時，他就會不斷成長。對教會來說也是一樣。保羅在第 16 節中說，教會會不斷成長，如果：**...照著各體的功用彼此相助，便叫身體漸漸增長，在愛中建立自己**。我們需要每一個人的參與來建造這個教會。當你運用神給你的恩賜時，你就能扶助別人。例如，小孩的老師照顧兒童，讓家長有空來服事。設施的同工細心地維護場地，使廚房的同工可以專心煮菜。小孩除了功能上的成長外，也必須在知識上成長。因此他們去上學。教會是我們學習聖經的教室。保羅在第 13 節中描述：**直等到我們眾人在真道上同歸於一，認識神的兒子，得以長大成人，滿有基督長成的身量**。我們透過小組學習和聽講道來認識耶穌。我們探討耶穌的身份和工作、祂在歷史中的計劃以及祂對我們的期望。這些真理必須應用在日常生活中。因此知識的成長與辨別能力的成長息息相關。父母教導兒女要分辨是非，希望他們做出明智的選擇。同樣，保羅在第 14 節說：**使我們不再作小孩子，中了人的詭計和欺騙的法術，被一切異教之風搖**

動，飄來飄去，就隨從各樣的異端。撒旦從未停止散播謊言，例如物質主義、追求金錢和驕傲等。他也欺騙我們，定別人為罪人是一種冒犯，愛別人就必須認同不敬虔的生活型態，而得救的目的是要建立一個和平的社會。唯有當我們知道什麼是神認為是對的時候，我們才能看清什麼是錯的。除了身體機能、知識和辨別能力的成長以外，成熟的第四個標誌就是品格的成長。小孩最終會獨立。他們要倚靠正確的判斷來做出正確的行為。同樣，教會的標誌必須是真理。在第 15 節中，保羅希望教會「用愛心說誠實話」。我們經常在溝通上使用這個原則。我們必須帶著愛心去講出事實。雖然這一點很重要，但這並不是保羅在這裡的重點。「誠實話」應該理解為真理。這就和前一節提到的假教導形成對比。神的教會必須是真理的出口。如果人們無法從教會得到真理，他們還能去哪裡聽真理呢？我們必須毫不妥協地宣講和實踐真理。但是我們要本著愛的精神去講。如果人們感覺到我們自以為比他們聖潔，他們可能會把耳朵關起來。上面所提到成長的各方面都是大腦正常運作的結果。這個最重要的器官指揮每個部份和組織的功能。保羅在 15-16 節中描述教會的大腦：15 ...凡事長進，連於元首基督，16 全身都靠他聯絡得合式，百節各按各職，照著各體的功用彼此相助...。耶穌是教會的頭。祂透過聖靈將所有肢體連繫起來，就像關節連結骨頭一樣。耶穌以祂的話語發出指示，就像大腦藉著神經傳遞訊號一樣。祂協調信徒使他們和諧地工作，像大腦組織身體的各種功能一樣。任何器官與大腦分離只會變成一塊死肉。與耶穌分離的基督徒將無法達成祂分配給他們的任務。

結論 CONCLUSION

我們在主裡合而為一。耶穌基督建立了這個教會。祂拯救我們，並從不同的地方招聚我們。祂挪去了語言和文化的障礙，使我們成為一個群體。祂也賜給我們屬靈的恩賜。祂呼召一些人成為領袖，裝備其他人去服事。耶穌對教會的最終目標是在祂裡面的成熟。這個時候讓我們回顧一開始的問題：沒有_____，教會就不是教會了。你的答案是什麼？用英文來講的話，教會是關乎三條「船」：耶穌為元首、同工作帶領和成員相連繫。沒有耶穌，這只是一個學習道德教育的社區中心。沒有我們的領袖，我們可能會失去方向。但如果沒有人，這個地方就會變成空洞的樓房。如果沒有人與人的互動，來這裡就跟去超市沒有兩樣。我們只是各取所需然後便離開。只有當我們彼此相連並與耶穌連結時，我們才能建造一個美麗的傑作。