



Sermon – July 14, 2019
Chris Osborne

Verses Covered

Ephesians 4:14

1 John 2:22

My, I have this really social grandson. As a matter of fact, when he comes here he'll leave us when I get him here at 9:00 and he'll say, "I'll go to where I'm supposed to sit, Pops." Because he just likes to roam and talk to people. So a few, couple of months ago my wife was kind of prepping him for what might be coming. That we might be leaving and moving. And so she began to say, "You know, Pops may one day retire and he might go teach at the seminary. And so, I want you to know we'll sell the house and we'll move." So he said, "So Pops wouldn't be there anymore?" "No." "So I won't be famous anymore." So if down the years you see my grandson, if you'll just say hello. Because apparently that's a huge issue in his life.

We looked last week and we're going to continue through the text. It's a long section. I do the opposite of what they teach in seminary which is why a couple of guys are going to hate me coming. But I want you to understand every little phrase so that we're walking through this correctly. He started off back here saying that He gives certain gifts to the church, apostles, prophets, pastor, teachers, that kind of thing. Their job is to equip the people, get them ready, give them what they need. And then he talked last week about the fact that we're going to walk together in a unity based on our faith in what this says. And then we're going to be unified around that and that we're going to experience Jesus Christ. We're going to become mature where we decide no matter what He says or how He says it, we're in. And then we're going to measure our lives and the decisions we make by whether or not they accentuate or detract the fullness of Jesus Christ in our lives. Now that's part of where he's going. That's the direction. That's the argument that he made last week.

So I want you to listen. We're only going to look at a couple things today. But I want you to listen to what he says because, again, this is absolutely critical. And again, look at 13, Ephesians 4.

¹³until we all attain unto the unity of the faith,

Now let me say that what we're going to talk about here applies to us. Forget about every other church. Forget about the church universal. Let's just talk about us here at Central. This is where we're to be. So everything in this passage is going to lock down on us. Now here's what he says:

¹³until we all come to the unity of the faith, experiential knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, and to the measure of the stature the fullness of Christ.

Now watch.

¹⁴So that,

In other words, here's the purpose of us. So understand. The purpose by being unified, the purpose of all of us in this room being unified in our faith. Now remember, ok, I'm going to say this as long as we're inside this text. We're going to be unified around our faith, not anything else. There's some of you that are Democrats, that's fine. Some of you are Republicans, fine. Some of you, Independent. That's fine. We are not going to diverge from each other based on those things. If you homeschool, you public school, you private school, that's your call. We're not going to diverge from each other on those things because the unity of the commonality of what we have in Jesus Christ is bigger than anything in our culture. That's what he says. We're part of the body of Christ. We have an eternal hope. The Holy Spirit indwells us. We have all these seven things that are bigger than anything in our culture. So inside this room, except for those from Auburn, inside this room, we're going to be unified. I said that for a particular person here whose name will remain nameless. Now so in this church, in this room, we're going to wrap ourselves around those seven things. You can be anything you want outside of that. We're going to make sure we're unified. Why? So that we will know, and the reason we're going to walk this way, is so that, verse 14,

we will no longer be children,

Now there it is. When you meet Jesus Christ, you experience the Holy Spirit telling you that He's your Redeemer. You put your faith there. You are reborn as a child, as an infant. And so the idea is you don't stay as an infant, you grow. So the purpose of us, walk together in unity toward experiencing Christ, being mature, and experiencing the fullness of Christ in our life, is to get us to grow, to be different than when we came in. This is an issue. Paul writes to the Corinthians and he says, "You guys are a bunch of babies. I wanted to give you some real meat. I wanted to give you a T-bone. Instead we're looking at lactose free milk. You guys just can't get it." I don't want to do it and the reason is because you've got a certain style of preaching you don't like and it's ridiculous. Some of you like Paul. Some of you like Peter. Some of you like Apollo. Some of you are spiritual and act like you don't care. Listen. He says, "As long as you're that way, you're still a bunch of little babies. And it's killing the church at Corinth because you have not grown." When you read the book of Hebrews, it's probably one sermon. And in that book, the reason it's even written is because you have a group of Jewish Christians who have come to Christ. But they have decided they like the rules better and so they've gone back into that. And he says in chapter 6 of Hebrews, I wanted to move on from certain things, but I can't because you're not able. So the purpose of us being unified and walking together is so that nobody here in this room stays as a child. We should move past being a child into some sort of maturity. Now what that

obviously dictates is that I can't do that on my own. If we're walking in a unity of faith, that absolutely implies and infers, categorically actually, that we have to have each other to be able to grow. Nobody can grow just on their own. We need other people around us. And, now listen, there are three kinds of people inside this room that you can put in your life and only one's correct. Jesus said, "Don't listen to the leaven of the Pharisees or the Sadducees." So there's three sources of belief for us in this room. We can live off people that are rules-oriented. We can live off people that are not rules-oriented. Or we can live off what Jesus Christ says here. Now those are our options. The problem is there are a lot of us, we all kind of shift back and forth. There's some of us that live off the Pharisee thing of rules. It's really what happened to the Hebrews. The reason we do that is because it's an easier life if I have a bunch of rules. It'd be great if as a parent the Bible gave you eight things to do and you do them and your children will never whine, never rebel, and grow up to be the three "G's": godly, gainfully employed, and gone. So it'd be great if there were eight things we can read here and go, "Got it!" But the problem is, and we're going to look at this in a couple weeks when we look at Ephesians 5, assuming we get there. No, we'll get there. So there are no rules. There are principles, directives, that you have to apply to your children under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Because every kid is different. Every kid comes out of a different family background. Every kid has different genetic makeup. Every kid has a different calling in his life. And so the Holy Spirit's going to take the directives of scripture and allow you to know how to pull those into your life. That requires on your part some prayer and some thought and some sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. It'd be nice if there were just eight rules and you went home. But the Bible doesn't do that. So when you live inside that rule thing, the Pharisee concept where you're actually adding to this book, you're in problem. Then you have the Sadducee thing of taking away from this book. That's become, and I hope it doesn't come to us, but I fear it's coming to Southern Baptist life because of certain things that are happening. The, there's a battle, obviously, over same-sex and all that in our denominations. But the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., the other day in their general conference, offered in unison a prayer to Allah, thanking him for his beneficence and his kindness in all that he brings to the world. That, ladies and gentlemen, is Old Testament idolatry. That is beyond the pale. Here is a church that at some point, probably somebody has a Bible in there, and they pray to Allah? A false, absolutely non-existing god. There is one God, Jesus Christ. And so when you come to this book and go, "You know I like this part, but I don't like this part." It's because you're afraid of your culture. It's a whole lot easier if I can take some parts of this out and then people in my culture will like me. So there are three ways to live in this room. We can live where I don't want my culture mad at me. We can live where I don't like being sensitive to the Spirit, I want a bunch of rules. Or we can live where Jesus tells us to live and we allow the Holy Spirit, who has been implanted in us, to be able to guide us to where we need to go and what to do.

Now we need each other. And so here's what you do. You go to a church that that's their mindset. You find a pastor that his mindset is what this says; nothing else. And you find people in your life that this is who they are. I golf and hunt with people only that that's their passion. Because I want people in my life, even at the point of where I am, that will keep me locked into the correct unity and the correct direction because I don't want to go backwards. You say, "Well how do you go backwards?" Because of what happens in your life. Now I want you to listen because I'm going to read you from the Greek the next phrase which is crazy in the Greek. Now listen to this. That we might no longer be children, carried about by waves. Now obviously, they were a big sailing people. It says: I don't want you to have waves carry you around. In other words, where you're

not in control of what you believe. But the waves are pulling you. Driven about by every wind of teaching, and I don't want the wind shoving you everywhere, in the dice throwing of men. That's literally the Greek word: to throw dice. Which was what? Cheating. Trickery. You load the dice, you weight them, throw them out, and go, "Oh! Seven. Sorry. Take your money." It was great trickery. He says, "I don't want you in that." In the cunning, the absolute brilliance, that results in a scheme of deceit. The Greek word deceit there is *planes*. We get the word planet from it. And the reason they used that word for deceit is because when you look at the sky, the way they discovered the planets is they were deceitful. Constellations stay exactly in the same position. But these little lights that didn't blink, would shift position. They were deceitful. They looked like they were here, but then they'd be here next night. So you have this long, almost, hyperbole except that the Holy Spirit wrote it, that you are in danger in your life. That there are people that are going to come along with scheming and craftiness and trickery and bring you a teaching that will pull you away from the unity of the faith so that you miss the fullness of Christ in your life. And that is absolutely correct.

It's been amazing to me over the years. The people I've seen that I thought, "Oh my goodness, they would never go wrong." Have absolutely struggled with crazy stuff. There was a couple that we were very, very close to in our second church. Came to see us in Midland. Came Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night. And all of a sudden quit making contact with us and I found out from a buddy, he said, "Well they, they said the last time they saw you preach that there were demons all around you." I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Well they've joined Milt Green. Milt Green, he didn't have a long ministry, but he and James Robinson who was kind of a guy that was a really famous preacher in my day, they thought he'd probably be the next Billy Graham. He and Milt joined forces with this teaching. One real teaching. They said, "Every sickness, every problem physically in your life is because of some sin you have not repented over. And if you'll repent over the sin, then the sickness will be relieved by God." So they took that position and these people bought into it that I was stunned at. But it is, this is why you have to have other people in your life. None of us in here are smart enough to handle the enemy. He knows this book better than I do. He knows this book better than I'll ever know it. Why do you think He tempted Jesus? Because he really thought he could get Him. Because he's sharp. Adam and Eve have this wholesome relationship with each other. A great relationship with the world. Perfect relationship with the Father. They experience daily His love, His affection, His kindness, and he talked them out of that. Do not think that on your own, you can handle his cunning. There's not a person in this room that can handle his cunning. That's why we need the room. So that what I've been tempted to do and I've discovered is wrong as I'm walking along and you're with me, and you begin to step away, and I can go, "Hey, wait a minute. That's crazy."

Listen to this. Stay where you are.

[Who is the liar, this is 1 John, except the one who is denying that Jesus is the Messiah. This is the antichrist who denies the Father in the Son.](#)

There were people that John was writing to that said that Jesus was not the Christ. And they were in the church because there was this weird belief of Gnosticism that said, anything physical is not of God. So Jesus could not have come in the flesh. It looked like He was in the flesh, but He wasn't. And so Jesus is not the Messiah. Christ is, but not Jesus because He's in the flesh. He

would have been evil. If we hear that, and the first time I studied that in seminary I thought, “Boy they are the dumbest people on the planet.” But the fact is they bought into it because you can be talked into anything. I want to be careful here, but I want to prove my point. I can go into 92% of Christian homes and make them Mormons. All cults deny the deity of the Son and the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit. All cults. That’s the definition of a cult, whether it’s mainline or extremist. The orthodox position we live in in Christianity is that Jesus was fully God and fully man. That’s our position. Anything else is heresy. God, though, is defined by three things. He is omniscient, He knows everything. He’s omnipresent, He is everywhere. And He is omnipotent, He is all-powerful. Jesus was none of those. He said, “I don’t know when I’m coming back. Only My Father knows that.” He was not omnipotent because He was tired in John 4. Sat by the well. Couldn’t even get his own water. They went into town to get Him food because He was exhausted. If you’re omnipotent, you don’t become exhausted. And if He was in Jerusalem, He couldn’t be in Nazareth. He was not omnipresent. So I come into your house, I tell you that, and then I sit down with you and say, “Well, listen, man. You’re going to a church that’s telling you that Jesus is fully God and I’m telling you He’s not. None of the requirements that make a person God does He fit.” What do you say to that? I can answer it really simply. Philippians 2. The Bible says that Jesus emptied Himself, became a man and lived here in submission to the Father. He chose not to know. He chose to be limited. He chose those things still as fully God, but He didn’t live His life relying on His deity. He lived His life as a man relying on His Father. He was fully God and fully man, most amazing thing in history, so that He could live as a perfect man and He would die with two kinds of righteousness. Righteousness as fully God and an earned righteousness as fully man. Tempted like we are. Never sinning so that His sacrifice would be perfect on the cross. But if you’re not careful, these guys will pull you away so you and I need each other in this unity so we walk towards experiencing Him, listening to Him, and having His fullness so that we won’t be a child anymore. Capable of being pulled away. It’s critical.

So what do you do? I think a couple things. I think, I’m obviously saying some of this for the future, but I think you make sure your pastor is centered here. I don’t care whom you pick next, just make sure his heart, his life, and his passion are inside these pages. That’s one. Number two, you pick people in your life whose heart and passion is inside these pages as it relates to the person of Jesus Christ. And thirdly, not anti-Facebook, but don’t you dare think that Facebook people can keep you in this group. Facebook is never this group. They’re an aside to this community, but you’ve got to have people in your life, one on one, personally, who will help you stand and step correctly. One thing I’ve learned in pastoring, I’ve been preaching for 49 years and pastoring for 42, I learned something that I didn’t realize until just a few years ago. When a guy’s a young pastor, the enemy tries to discourage him. Make him want to quit before he ever reaches a place where God can actually use him. But if you reach the place where God’s using you, that what he then tries to do is pull you into some sort of immorality so that you die and you damage who and what you are. Paul said, “Finish the race, kept the faith, and now there’s laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” My heart, whether I’m here or not, is for every person in this room to achieve that through making sure they don’t stay a child and they walk to the fullness of Jesus Christ.

Let’s pray.

Father, enemy’s so good at giving us goofy teaching and pulling us out. Hold us. Let us be unified in what You say and who you are and nothing else and hold us, tether us to Your decision to save

us, to God the Son's decision to act that, and to the Holy Spirit's decision to tell us about it and fill us. Tether us to who You are and what You've done. I ask You that in Jesus Christ name.