

Five Key Points for Evolution/Folk Music Sunday Ephesians 4:11-16

1. The overall context of chapter four is that this section is referred to as paraenesis (moral advice or admonition). This form of Pauline teaching has close ties to the forms and content of Hellenistic philosophers. Ancient moralists believed that people should be reminded of what they know so that they will act accordingly. It doesn't mean that this section was addressing specific situations. The exhortation begins with a personal appeal, "I therefore..." (v. 4:1a). This is followed by the exhortation to fulfill their "calling", which reflects Jewish understanding of divine election (v. 4b).

2. Verse 11 picks up the gifts theme mentioned in verse 7, "each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift" - which resembles Roman 12:6. Although particular offices are then mentioned, apostle, prophets... who are responsible for guiding the church after Paul's death, Ephesians assumes that all Christians are part of the building process (Galatians 6:1-6). Maturity involves the community as a whole, and not merely particular individuals. The contrast between maturity and childishness is commonplace in ethical exhortation.

3. Verse 15 and 16 are one long sentence, that shift the emphasis back to the positive conditions for building up the body of Christ. particularly "speaking the truth in love". Paul used "love" (agape) as the key to communal solidarity (Romans 12:9-10). This kind of speech contrasts with the cunning of false teachers (v. 14).

4. Ephesian's focus for the image of the body of Christ has as its focus the head's holding parts of the body together. All the parts of the body need to work properly for the body to grow. Medical thinking at the time believed that the operation of the body was explained by its being articulated and joined together with the head through the nerves ("ligaments").

5. The verb "knit together" appeared in the architectural image of Ephesians 2:21. The focus here for the image of the body of Christ is not on the contrast to disunity (as in 1 Corinthians and Romans). Divine calling requires that Christians live a style of life appropriate to their calling (this style is the "ligaments" of the body)

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