

Sermon in a nutshell: “It is good for kindred to live together in unity”

(Psalm 133:1-3)

Pastor Lee

A song of Ascent

Psalm 133 is one of the songs of ascent. It is a song that people sang when they go to temple. It identifies one reason why we go to church. We go to church to have fellowship with others in God.

The Psalm says, “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” When we have fellowship in God, we are not just drink coffee together on Sundays, and live our individual lives during the week days. As the Psalm says, we live together in unity.

We share our joys and concerns. We visit each other and care for each other. Some of us go to hospitals together with our church members to be with them. We go to the burial sites to bury our brothers and sisters together and to be with the family. We celebrate new beginnings and retirements together. We congratulate birthdays, anniversaries, and promotions. We grieve the loss of beloved ones and cry with others.

We are one in God.

The Psalm says, “It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.”

Aaron represents the forgiving grace of God. God’s love is proven when God sends his only begotten son, Jesus, to die on the Cross, to forgive our sins. When Aaron was ordained, they pour oil on the head. The oil runs down from head to the beard, down over the collar of his robes. Aaron wears the ephod on his robe, which has precious stones, inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes. It symbolizes the whole 12 tribes. God’s grace unites the 12 tribes.

We are all sinners and are one in God’s forgiving grace. We accept others because we are accepted first by God.

We share our blessings with others

The psalm also says, “It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore.”

We are not just sharing God’s spiritual blessings, forgiveness, but also sharing material blessings. When we say that we have fellowship in God, we help others with our material resources also.

The early church communities.

The Acts 2 shows how this works. Acts 2:43-47. “Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke

bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” When people read this passage, they think that this is the root of communism. However, this passage has nothing to do with communism. Actually, it is quite different from the communism community.

First, it is voluntary community. In the Communist countries or communities, they use force to make people to share what they have. In the early church people gave voluntary donations.

Secondly, it was done among closely knitted small group members. It was not done on national level. Communist countries share resources on a national level and the communist party oversees the management of all the resources and personnel. In the early church it was done in small groups One of the characteristics of the early church was a house church.

What is described here is a small group of people who worship together and share their lives together. They become closer than their blood brothers and sisters, and they were able to share even their resources. It is not a nation-wide communist revolution which forced people to give up their private properties and to live as slaves of a communist party.

Small Group ministry

To experience such love and fellowship, we need to belong to small groups. I will introduce small group leaders. They share their joys and concerns in confidential setting. They read the Bible together and teach and learn from each other. They pray together and share time and treasure together. When one member is in need, everybody else helps out to relieve the burden from the member. This is truly a community that the early church shows in Acts 2.

Find a small group for you and experience the biblical fellowship there. If you cannot join an existing small group, you can start a new one and invite others to your group. I will help you how to start and how to serve others. May God bless your heart and efforts for small group ministry this year.