The Peace of God Ruling in the Body of Christ  
Col. 3:15

Introduction:
A. We are now turning to peace of last half of verse.
B. We turn to Ephesians as a book on peace in the church.
   1. "One" - 11 times
   2. "Together" - 7 times
   3. "Peace" - 7 times.
   4. "Unity" - 2 times.
C. We are taught to overcome two fundamentals causes of division and strife in Ephesians:

Discussion:
I. Strife and Division Caused By Mishandling Necessary Differences.
   A. Ethic Differences.
      1. All sinners in need of grace. (2:1-10).
      2. All saved in same way in same body. (2:11-3:21)
   B. Positional Differences.
      1. Under positions behave as Christians - wives, children, poor, servants, citizens.
      2. Over positions behave as Christians - husbands, parents, rich, masters, officials.
   C. Growth Difference.
      1. Each at different growth stage. (2:21; 4:15,16; cf. Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8)
      2. Each needs to "bear with the other". (4:2).
   D. Ability Differences.
      1. Functions and responsibilities differ with ability. (cf. Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12).
      2. Functions blend into one body. (4:16; cf. 1 Cor. 12).
         a. Without envy of other's function.
         b. Without flaunting own function.
         c. Without demanding responsibility beyond ability.

II. Strife and Division Caused By Creating Unnecessary Differences.
   A. By not walking as new creatures. (4:17-32).
      1. Old man tends to strife: greed (19), lying (25), theft (28), corrupt speech (29), bitterness, etc. (v. 31).
      2. New man tend to peace: righteousness, holiness (24), careful speech (29), kindness, etc. (32).
   B. By not walking in love. (5:1-7).
      1. Opposites of love cause discord: fornication, covetousness, deception.
      2. Fruit of love causes harmony: self-sacrifice (v. 2), obedience (v.6), purity (v.7).
   C. By not walking in light. (5:8-14).
      1. Approves things acceptable to God. (v. 8-10).
      2. Reproves works of darkness. (v. 11) - promotes real peace.
         a. Compromising with darkness does not serve peace. (v. 11; Rom. 16:17).
         b. Compromise causes further division. (cf. Man on border during civil war.)
   D. By not walking in wisdom. (5:15-17).
      1. Foolish and divisive to be drunk (v. 18 cf. "given to wine" and "brawler".
      2. Wise and peaceful to:
         a. Sing together. (v. 19).
         b. Pray together. (v. 20).
         c. Yield to each other when possible. (v. 21)
            (1) Can yield on matter of judgment.
Conclusion:

A. We need to let peace of God rule in our hearts and in church.
B. We need to "keep the unity of the Spirit" in one body. (4:1-3).
   2. By practicing forbearance and longsuffering.
   3. By treating all as one in spite of natural differences.
   4. By removing differences caused by ungodly attitudes and actions.