

Unity in Christ Eph 4:4-6 Pt. 1

4:4. "There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Now Paul stresses unity as the Church through the Father Son and Holy Spirit, using the word "one" seven times. By repeating the concept of "one-ness," "unity," and so forth, this section emphasizes the closeness and harmony we are meant to demonstrate as believers. Because of the repetition and meter, some people think that this is an early Christian confession or hymn.

There is one body and one Spirit. The word "one" is used seven times in verses 4-6, emphasizing unity, and especially that we are to have the same harmony and the same unity that exists amongst the trinity, just as Jesus prayed during his high priestly prayer for the apostles.

First, there is one body, the Church, (Eph 1:23 **23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.** We are one in the unity which has been purchased for us by Jesus on the cross. Eph 2:16 **16 and that He might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the hostility.**

there is the one Spirit

We all have the same Holy Spirit. When Jesus prayed for the church in John 17, His central request for us was not for power, nor for success, nor for persuasiveness, or oratory skill. It was for unity and Agape love among believers. Listen to John 17:21-23 **21 that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 The glory which You have given Me I also have given to them, so that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and You loved them, just as You loved Me.** His only unique command to us was to love one another with the same love that He has loved us with.

The objective of this unity is clear: "...so that the world may believe that you have sent me," and again in the latter part of Verse 23, "...so that the world may know that you have sent me." There is the great objective. God's whole redemptive plan is aimed at one target: the world. **"God so loved the world,"** we read in John 3:16, **"that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."** The focus of it all is the world. So that sinners may be saved.

Nor is our job as Christians left here on earth primarily to improve the world, and make it more livable. Sometimes we become so concerned about necessary social changes that we give the impression that the church exists in order to make the world a better place in which to live. But that misses the point, because the whole picture of the world is that it is irredeemable apart from Christ. Our task, as believers in Jesus Christ, is not to save the world. Our job is to bring it to an awareness of who he is, and when men and women come to that awareness they will do one of two things: they will either accept him and be saved, or they will reject him and continue in the lost condition in which the whole world continually exists.

The church exists in order to bind us together as an instrument to reach people for Jesus. We are to pervade every area and every aspect of human life in every area and at every level so that we can bring the light of Christ. Only the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ as lived out through love toward one another, and love for sinners will allow people to see that in Jesus Christ there is the authentic voice of God to men—that we can be saved from our sins, and have a relationship with the Holy God of the Universe, made possible by what Jesus has done for us on the cross.

But the world, in its pain, confusion and blindness, will accept help from the Church, will accept social programs from the Church, but will not accept the Reason for the church—Jesus Christ. We all know what unbelievers whose pain and confusion has blinded them to the truth. They are suspicious and ready to find any excuse NOT to accept Jesus. We know, because we've also been on the other side of the fence, we've been there, we all started out there. 2 Cor 4:4 **The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

But, somehow many Christians justify standing with those who hate God, as if He won't notice. Ezekiel 9:9 **Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with blood and the city is full of perversion; for they say, 'The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see!'"** And many in the world are going to believe these false teachers.

Unity must begin with "Unity in Christ". Submission to Him. Walking as He walked. Unity by the Power of the Holy Spirit, as living stones building up a Holy Temple to God! Making all Christians one does not depend upon us, it depends upon the Spirit of God. He came for that purpose. Paul's great chapter on the Holy Spirit in First Corinthians clearly establishes the fact that in his coming he accomplished what Jesus prayed for. This is the divine strategy by which the world may be led to believe. We must continue to make known the name of Jesus through our love, and leave the rest up to God. **"I made known to them thy name, and I will make it known, that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."**

The unity of the church is visible when Christians love one another. Our lack of love for other believers is the reason for the failure of the church to reach the world in our day. This is why Jesus, gathering here with his disciples in the Upper Room, in one final word said, **"A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another,"** (John 13:34). This is why Jesus said, **"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."** (John 13:35) John says, **"By this shall we know that we love God, because we love the brotherhood."** 1 John 5:2) It all begins with love.

Genuine, unfeigned love involves mutual concern, and by that I do not mean some superficial greeting, some passing, "How are you doing?"—and not even noticing that they don't answer, but just ask "how are you doing?" back. But, instead a willingness to listen to the answer. We need to be ready to help, to share, to listen, to pray, a willingness to bear one another's burdens in the Lord and so fulfill the law of Christ. True Christian love is marked by a mutual sense of contribution. That means a recognition that we need each other, that we are not condescending when we give ourselves to another Christian; we need each other. You have what another one needs and he has what you need, and we minister to one another alike, even though they be older Christians with younger Christians.

All Christians have the same Holy Spirit, and as Eph 2:18-22 says **18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. just as also you were called in one hope of your calling. in one hope**

We are all called in the same hope. We are all waiting in eager expectation of the outworking of God's plan. The hope presented in Ephesians is the reality that all things will be headed up in Christ (1:9) **9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He set forth in Him, 10 regarding His plan of the fullness of the times, to bring all things together in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.**

We have a hope that is laid up for the believers (cf. Col 1:5 **5 because of the hope reserved for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel 6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth; ; Rom 8:24 24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, through perseverance we wait eagerly for it.** and this serves as the basis of our hope. Hope for believers is not the world's "hope so" but the absolute certainty that God will deliver what he has promised. This hope is part of our calling as believers. It's something that we get to enjoy and that we depend upon!