

The Light - Junior Series
Lesson 30
Winter Gathering

The Unity of the Church of Jesus Christ



Friday, February 18, 2011
Saturday, February 19, 2011
Sunday, February 20, 2011

Eph 4:3 "...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, take a moment to name your sins to God the Father. This will allow you to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and in fellowship with God as you study and learn this lesson. It is the Holy Spirit who teaches us these spiritual things. [Eph 5:18](#) & [1 John 1:9](#)



But IF YOU HAVE never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have that opportunity right now to do so. Simply tell God the Father that you are believing in His son Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior because He died spiritually on the Cross for your sins and the sins of the whole world. He took our place and paid the penalty for sin since God can have nothing to do with sin. Then He died physically was buried but rose again. He is alive today seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. If you make that decision to believe in Him in simple faith based on His work on the Cross, you are now a believer and will always be a child of God. When you die, you will spend eternity with Him ([Acts 16:31](#)) ([John 3:16](#)).

"For the natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually understood." (1 Cor 2:14)

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life but he who does not obey the command to believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36).

Lesson

Hi kids, welcome to our first conference in Lighthouse Bible Church. I hope you are ready to learn this weekend all about what Jesus wants us to do in and for our local church, the local body of Christ. You know that Christ is our leader, our Head and we are His body here on earth after salvation to glorify Him and serve Him. He unites us in His gift of salvation and by giving us Spiritual gifts to serve Him and our fellow believers and all of mankind.



This passage is what you and I will be working on throughout the conference: [Eph 4:1-7](#) *"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the (Holy) Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) There is one body and one Spirit...just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (7) But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."*

Unity and Walking Worthy of our Calling

As you can see in this passage, it's all about UNITY. It'll help us to know just what we mean by "unity." The word in the English means "agreement" "harmony" as well as "getting along with one another with a purpose in mind." The word 'unity' only has meaning when more than one is present...the body of Christ. That's what we're talking about here...believers being united in Christ and with each other. A unity can occur when people have the same mindset. They think the same about some certain matters. Of course, no one thinks absolutely the same. We were made with differences, including the different ways male and females see life and their roles in life. Unity refers to a joint mind or attitude in spite the our differences. In other words the way the body of Christ is unified or united in Christ is to imitate Christ's behavior...walk like Him...think like Him...be like Him...act like Him...using the Word of God



in your souls and applying it through the power of the Holy Spirit to get along and serve Christ and one another in love.

We are going to see what our wonderful Bible has to say about unity in our church so you, young people, can learn about this and obey this command in our Bible everyday. This will certainly honor Jesus, who saved us and gave us citizenship in Heaven forever.

Eph 4:1-3 Paul tells us “...to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the UNITY of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The “bond of peace” in our passage is our reconciliation with God (our peace treaty with Him) that Jesus accomplished on the Cross and we receive at the moment when we believed in Jesus as our Savior. The sin barrier was removed and God brought us near to Him through His Son Jesus. That bond of peace or peace treaty is our relationship with God that keeps our unity with Him, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit...our family! Christianity is a relationship with Christ. So we walk freely in Christ because we have been united in Him at salvation! So now we have to walk in a way that is pleasing to our Lord Jesus. We were called to Christ for salvation and now after salvation we are called to walk in a way that will please God. We were called for a purpose...our spiritual gift...our service to Christ...God’s plan for our lives.



Look at the characteristics of walking worthy in a way that is pleasing to our calling in Christ: humility, gentleness, patience and bearing with one another in love. These are attitudes produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit and these characteristics are naturally connected when in fellowship with God. The opposite of these characteristics are pride, arrogance, selfishness, violence and hatred.

Let’s look a little deeper at each one of these characteristics okay?

“With all humility” means the need to recognize the importance of others including those who are somewhat hostile toward us. This doesn’t mean that we as individuals have no value, but instead calls us to keep the right point of view towards others and not be confused by our high opinion ourselves over others. Our old sin nature just naturally has us think more of ourselves as more important than others. This is the enemy of impersonal or unconditional love. A good test of our humility is to ask, “Do you see the need for others?” Humbling ourselves is thinking like Christ in regards to ourselves and our place in life...last not first.



“And gentleness” focuses on the kind way that we respond to people that we differ with. It is easy to respond nicely to nice people, but when we meet a nasty or a mean guy or girl, it is easy to be nasty right back. The Holy Spirit will tell your conscience what to do...be nice! You will be tempted not to be gentle or nice especially in a bad situation but ask God for help if this is an area of weakness for you. I know for a fact that I’m a different person in my car than I am anywhere else...I get so angry at other drivers that I have to confess more in my car than anywhere else! I need help. Do you see what I mean? God helps me when I stay in fellowship.

“Be patience” means having to live with others and their time schedules as well as our own. This means having to wait for things we want. We have to wait for others to take their turns if they are ahead of us. Only the Word of God and the filling of the Spirit can help you do this. Also when someone hurts you terribly or consistently you must be patient and wait for God to handle the situation and He will in His timing. We must not take out revenge or cause punishment towards others. Wait patiently for God to handle it. Remember we are all sinners and therefore,

cannot judge or punish anyone for wrongs done to us. The wonderful relationship we have in Christ is proof of God's patience with us! We would be ashes if it weren't for God's patience with us! We need patience. Patience is that special 'art' produced by having the Word streaming through your soul so you can get excited helping others be better in what they are doing even if it means spoiling some of our own plans. When we are patient, we will not so easily blow up or react against others. Instead, it allows us to show a kind spirit in upsetting situations.

"Bearing with one another in love" emphasizes the need to actually forgive one another. Patience does not mean someone has wronged you, but bearing with one another contains this idea: something wrong is being done to you. The word literally means "to suffer." In other words, we are called here to put up with the improper behavior of others. This might come in the form of calling names, selfishness, stealing from you, hitting, gossiping, or even hatred. We need to bear up under the power of the Spirit and Jesus' love. We are to be forgiving as He has forgiven us. Bearing with one another in love is the result of all the other characteristics we just spoke of. Being patient with the faults and failings of others is the responsibility our Lord demands of us. This kind of love is called impersonal, virtue, or unconditional love. It is very difficult to do without God's Word in your soul or the filling of the Spirit...requirements to be able to obey these commands from God.

Let's step back a moment, kids because in order for us (believers) in the local church to accomplish unity or walking in a manner worthy of our calling in Christ after salvation as mentioned above, there are some steps we must take to do so. This is a major part of our walk that is pleasing to God:

1. First and most importantly we believers must constantly confess our sins so we will be filled with the power of our Holy Spirit who lives inside (indwells) our physical bodies. This allows Him help us to understand and to guide us towards unity and to walk in a way that is worthy of our calling (election) in Christ. Eph 5:18 "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is sin, but filled with the Spirit..." 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Rom 1:6 And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ." Rom 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." 1 Cor 1:2 "...to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...heir Lord and ours..." 1 Cor 1:9 "God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful."
2. Secondly we must learn to think like Christ from studying the Word of God daily so we can have the same "mind of Christ," which helps us to be united in Christ and walk in a way that pleases God the Father and imitate Christ. Philip 2:5-8 "Have this mind (of Christ) among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but made himself nothing (He was humble), taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (for us)." 1 Cor 2:16 "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ." Having the mind of Christ will help us obey Christ, think of what others need, and then do what we must to help them especially in the local church. This keeps unity among our group in our church. We lift each other up. We show them what Christ is like. We walk in a manner worthy of Christ.

We are brothers and sisters in Christ and we represent Him on earth. If our brothers or sisters are in need we must help them spiritually and materially if possible with the blessings God has given us to do so. Sometimes it's just giving them God's point of view from the Bible and



steering them in the right direction. The Holy Spirit guides you all the way. Remember, it's His power in us.

Think about it. There are different degrees of spiritual growth in the local church. New believers need the examples of more mature and growing believers in order to handle the various tests and trials they will go through as they grow up spiritually. The new believers will see the more mature or growing believers pass their trials and tests through their spiritual gifts and the Word in their souls. The new believers will also see the growing and more mature believers come to the aid of each other whenever they are in need of spiritual advice or any personal help. This is what unity means: we assist each other in the local church...Lighthouse Bible Church...and each believer plays a part (through his or her Spiritual gifts), and adds to the success of the whole body of the church. We need to do this in a way that is pleasing to God our Father. That is, we must act in the filling of the Holy Spirit and then through His power behave with humility, gentleness, patience and bearing with one another in virtue love.

Each and every believer has a VERY IMPORTANT part to play in the ongoing work of the Lord in the Church Age. We can only accomplish this in our church by upholding the unifying work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Compare Eph 4: 4-6 "There is one body and one (Holy) Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." with Eph 1:10. "...as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth." We base what we do for others in our local church by the unifying work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. We are so grateful for Christ that we respond by blessing others in need and supplying what they need through the power of the Holy Spirit...His guidance.



What exactly is the unifying work of Jesus on the Cross? It is all His work on the cross for salvation: redemption from the slavery to our sin nature; reconciliation or peace with God the Father; propitiation, which is God being satisfied completely with Christ's work on the cross; expiation, which is the penalty Christ paid for on our behalf; sanctification, which set us apart in Christ for service; justification, which declared us perfect in the sight of God; imputation, which credited us Jesus' righteousness (+R), which made us perfect in the eyes of God the Father; and unlimited atonement...He died for ALL human beings. He did all the work so sinful condemned mankind can be saved by His WORK...by believing in HIS WORK so they can become His brothers and sisters on earth...little Christs! Jesus Christ united us together into the His family...His royal family...the Church to serve Him and others. When we serve others we are serving Him and we honor this unity in our church with our many different spiritual gifts.

The Church is the "Body of Christ" and is therefore the way by which He desires to accomplish His will on earth. Our behavior as His body is to "walk worthy." The secure foundation of our faith (Eph 4:3-6) and proper function of each member (Eph 4:7 Spiritual gifts) provides the wisdom (Bible doctrine) and strength (from the power of the Holy Spirit) for us to imitate Christ on earth and serve others. This glorifies or praises Him and the angels watch and cheer us!

As I have already mentioned, Ephesians 4:1 talks about who we are by virtue of our calling. We are called into fellowship with God, not as an individual only but as part of our local church...the body of Christ. We cannot and must not ignore our peace with God and with other believers. Peace with God also means peace with believers. The cross settled the peace issue with God. Jesus gave us reconciliation at the cross and we get peace with God the moment we believe in Jesus as our personal Savior. Peace with God has already been accomplished in Christ's work on the cross. However, we must also have peace with other believers. In Ephesians 4:1 Paul says again "Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called." He pleads with us to allow the great calling of God to influence us more than our feelings, pride or difficult situations

with ourselves and other believers. The word “urge” in this first verse shows that this was heavy on Paul’s mind. He knew that we could accomplish a lot if we didn’t stray away from God’s good promises.

Satan and the kingdom of darkness want to stop believers from having this unity with other believers and he hates it when we walk in the filling of the Spirit, obeying Christ...walking worthy of Him. He hates this relationship believers have with Christ and he wishes to take it away by stealing hope and peace from believers. This is why Jesus and the Holy Spirit both pray for believers.

Look at Jesus’ high priestly prayer or pleading for believers...us!

John 16:32-17:26 “Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone (when He went to the cross). Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. (33) I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

John 17:1-26 “When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, (2) since you have given him authority over all flesh (mankind), to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. (3) And this is eternal life that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (4) I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. (5) And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence (when Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father’s throne) with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. (6) I have made your name known to the people (apostles) whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. (7) Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. (8) For I have given them the words (Truth) that you gave me, and they have received them (Words of Truth) and have come to know in Truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. (9) I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world (unbelievers) but for those whom you have given me (apostles and all believers), for they are yours. (10) All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. (11) And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me and that they may be one, even as we are one (unity). (12) While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction (Judas), that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (13) But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. (14) I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. (15) I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one (Satan). (16) They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. (17) Sanctify them (set them apart) in the Truth; your Word is Truth. (18) As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world (to preach the Gospel of Jesus to unbelievers). (19) And for their sake I sanctified (set apart) myself that they also may be sanctified (set apart) in Truth. (20) I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their Word (Gospel), (21) that they may all be one (unity), just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us (unity), so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (22) The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one (unity) even as we are one, (23) I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. (24) Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am (Baptism of the Holy Spirit placing all believers in union with Christ), to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. (25) Oh, righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have



sent me. (26) I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them (union with Christ)."



We must understand this calling to unity is given to all the saints. Not one Christian is excused. However, only a few obey the calling of believers by God. A calling is a special instruction of the Lord that shapes our lives...our personal plan from God. We are in Him...in union with Him so we must also "Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called." The calling is from our Lord. It is an invitation that we must respond to in order to glorify God on earth. We must remember that if there is no peace or unity, it's not because God hasn't set us under this call to have unity of the Holy Spirit, but it's because we have refused to allow Him to rule our lives in order to have unity. We might feel like paying more attention to our jealousies, anger or pride with believers, but none of these are important compared to the high calling given to us to preserve the unity of the Spirit among believers. This pleases Christ!!!

Also, kids, it's very hard to place the unity of others high on our priority list when others in and around us are being selfish, misunderstanding or too busy for us or our needs. We have to face our disappointments in believers in light of God's high calling. He is saying to us that this calling to unity is much more important than the many minor or major differences we have with one another.

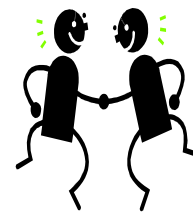


Listen, don't settle for anything less than the great, wonderful and glorious harmony with God and with other believers. Do not allow present or past arguments or troubles with other believers to keep you from claiming what is yours in Christ. God's favor and grace are upon you. Do your best to restore all broken relationships. Forgiveness is key and it is Christ. Arrogance and ugliness is the fruit of the evil one. Hate is from Satan. Fellowship is the result of the Holy Spirit's work. You might not be able to fully restore all your relationships but as the scriptures says, "Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification (set apart to Christ) without which no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). They see Christ in you when you forgive and forget.

We really need to learn this doctrine of peace and unity and forgiveness. Take a moment to think about our present individual situations and how we can have the same mindset in Christ. Do you find harmony or tense feelings in your relationships with others? Do you enjoy those relationships? Why or why not? Was it always like this? You have the Word of God circulating in your soul and



ready to apply to any difficult situation with other believers. Open up your heart and life before God, like a flower opens up in the morning sun. Allow the Lord's love and grace to pour into your soul and let loose the power of the Holy Spirit so you can forgive and forget any past hurts. It might be a family, friend, teammate or someone else. Just ask the Lord as you confess to forgive you for any bitterness you may have against anyone and let the Holy Spirit's power restore you back to unity with one another. We all need to learn what this unity of the Spirit is and once we learn it from the Bible, we must make an effort to keep the unity of the Spirit and as I said earlier this requires constant confession, hearing and learning the Word of God. Romans 10:17 says "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."



The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 1:10 says "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." Then walk by the same rule of Philippians 3:16-21, which says "Only let us live up to what we have already gotten. (17) Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live



according to the pattern we gave you. (18) For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. (19) Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach (their feelings), and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things (the cosmic/world system). (20) But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, (21) who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will change our poor bodies (into resurrection bodies at the Rapture) so that they will be like His glorious body.” Don’t be surprised that Paul is scolding us to maintain the unity of the Spirit here in this passage. This unity or “sameness” is expressed in the Word the Holy Spirit has revealed to us in the Bible. We don’t get unity or walk in a way pleasing to the Father from human teachings, inventions, or institutions because these are against the Word of God and are events for disagreement, stumbling, and division in the religious world today...Satan’s invention...human good and Religion and human good are rejected completely by our Father in heaven.



God is calling us and the Holy Spirit is obviously leading us to pray for unity in our local church and even in our community or city. Pray for those who are being tested and suffering. But remember, we cannot know why they are going through what they are going through...only God knows...don’t judge...just pray for them. God allowed the test or suffering into their lives and we must never question what God has allowed. We can pray they will pass their test and endure their suffering through God’s grace.

As we unite together in obedience to God’s Word and will, we must also humble ourselves under our Savior, Christ Jesus who is the Head of the body...believers! He begins to bring about a greater love for others through the filling of the Spirit than what we could ever experience on our own power. We first live in obedience; gain more faith through God’s Word; receive grace and blessing; and finally receive the ability to love God personally and all mankind with impersonal love. That’s the greater love we’re talking about here. *Agape* love, which is unconditional love for believers and unbelievers alike.

We are going to look at each part of this section of our passage: ***Eph 4:4 "There is one body and one Spirit just as you were called to one hope when you were called (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."***

“One Body”

Paul is writing in these verses about the entire body of Christ...the church. Here’s an example of Jesus saying “My church” in **Matthew 16:18**. “**And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**” This is again made absolutely clear that Jesus is the Head of all the Church in **Eph 1:22- 23**. “**And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be Head over everything for the church, (23) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.**” It is also made clear in **Colossians 1:18**. “**And He is the Head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy (supreme reign over all of us).**” The church (Christians...believers) at Ephesus were the ones Paul was speaking to in his letter but it applies to us today as well as in EVERY generation of believers since Christ ascended into Heaven. We are His Royal Family!

One body means that we cannot separate ourselves from other Christians, even if we wanted to. Since we are one and not many, we are forced to think of ourselves as one and therefore should live for one another. This doesn’t mean we neglect ourselves. This means we put ourselves behind the needs of others. Jesus’ teaching on love comes from this...we are His family...we are there for each other. Once we understand this teaching, then all our efforts to help care for

others makes a lot of sense. So does using our gifts to help another build up his or her faith. Paul constantly teaches about the body of Christ in many other of his letters in the Bible.

Perhaps most importantly, this teaching of "one body" does not allow for arguing, selfishness and the many other things Paul later mentions in the Book of Ephesians. We really need this teaching because there are arguments and divisions in the family of God and in the local church...all the more reason of our need of God's Holy Scriptures.

"One Spirit"

Then Paul says "one Spirit," which of course as you know is God the Holy Spirit. Well the Holy Spirit has a GIANT role in our lives as believers. I don't have to tell YOU that. You can see by all of our previous lessons we've had about Him. You are getting to be Holy Spirit experts. Remember? He's a real Person who indwells us to make a home for Jesus and He baptized us into Christ so we are in union with Christ, which as you know is the reason we can have unity with all believers (saints). They are our brothers and sisters. **1 Cor 2:13** teaches us that "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jews or Greeks (Gentiles), slave or free and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." We are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk in a manner worthy as sons of God in Christ. **(Romans 8:13b-14)** "...but if by the Spirit you put to death the sins of the body, you will live, (14) because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." When led by the Holy Spirit we cannot be divided.



We, as God's children, are made alive by one Spirit to live in the plan God has for each of us. It is because of this truth, we can trust God to work through our authorities such as our parents or other authority figures. This pleases God and lets other believers see Christ in you. Remember, it is the Spirit of God that continually, like a strong constant wind, pushes us back into unity with one another. It is our duty to obey. The teaching of unity is based on Truth and is at all times calling us back to oneness in Christ.

"One hope when you were called – One Lord"



You have only "one hope when you were called" and that is in Christ...faith alone in Christ alone. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Together we hope in the same Jesus to deliver us from the slavery we had in our sin nature. Each believer (us) in Jesus' family has the same hope...eternal life in Heaven forever with HIM. Our hearts are set on the same Savior to rescue us from sin. Just as you were called in one hope (of eternal life) of your calling, we are "called" by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

The only hope of salvation and eternal life the world has is through Jesus. Once in Him, we are all family forever. Religion focuses on everything else but faith alone in Jesus alone for salvation especially human works and feelings. This is from the kingdom of darkness...who tries to blind unbelievers from the saving precious work of Jesus. Because of these false teachings from religion and the many attacks to weaken our faith, we need to stand together to support each other's faith so that we will not lose focus and drift away from our hope, which is in unity in Christ.

"One Lord"

This one Lord is Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, risen, glorified, and given all authority in Heaven and earth. Having only one Lord means we are loyal to ONE alone. We have no other promises that call us to lessen our loyalty to Him. We love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. We might have many authorities, but we all have one Lord to follow. We sing to Him. We worship Him as one body. We as one follow His leading through His Word daily. We are UNITED in HIM!

“One faith”

Our common faith follows our one hope in our one Savior. Our salvation is well-defined; there are not two, three or more faiths. We cannot say as the world does that ‘all the religions are the same.’ Our faith is in Christ’s work for us on the cross and His work alone. Without this faith, there is no salvation or eternal life in Heaven after we die physically. Heb 11:6 “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. ”

Paul has really made his point about the truths of this one faith in one Lord and gave a great explanation for them in the first three chapters of this Book of Ephesians. If we wanted to see it in summary, we would see it in Ephesians 2:8-10. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God (9) not by works, so that no one can boast. (10) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand (His plan for our lives), that we should walk in them” Jude 1:3 says “Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to argue for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.” In other words, be ready to give a good argument for your faith. Be prepared to give the Gospel verses that will lead an unbeliever to Christ. Be ready to point out any false beliefs that might be brought up by the unbeliever that would keep them from knowing the Truth of the saving work of Jesus on the Cross. Be a willing and very good ambassador for Christ by praying for opportunities to witness to family and friends who are not yet saved.

“One baptism”

Paul is speaking here of what happens after we are saved by the efficacious grace the Holy Spirit provides at the moment we have faith or believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Paul is NOT speaking of water baptism at all here. If he was he would have mentioned it a lot more throughout his letters but he does not! The Baptism here is a spiritual baptism. The Holy Spirit alone does this baptism at the moment we believed in Jesus. He placed us all in UNION with the Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this baptism we are in Christ while He is seated at the right hand of the Father. It’s has another name...Positional Truth. All this means is in our SPIRITUAL position...we are IN CHRIST. John 1:33 “I would not have known Him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'”



Baptism means we believers have died to ourselves...that is to our old sin nature. Having died to our sin nature, we are then baptized into one body into Jesus Christ. Spiritual baptism is the very way by which we become one body in Christ. Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. Rom 6:3-7 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His (spiritual) death? (4) We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (5) If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. (6) For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin (7) because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.”

Water baptism is a ritual that a believer can choose to do or not. It represents our real baptism into Christ by the Holy Spirit. When the believer is put down into the water it represents our death to the sin nature, for which Christ died on the Cross. As the believer comes up out of the water it represents the resurrection of Christ and eternal life. We are buried with him in His death and raised with Him in His resurrection...that’s it...NOT REQUIRED FOR SALVATION!!!



Look at these verses so it will be more clear to you. 1Co 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Gal 3:27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. Rom 6:5 "If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in his resurrection."

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all"

Notice that this phrase in our passage is not just saying one God who is the Father. What we are seeing is the "one God and Father of all," that is, our heavenly Father. "All" equals "the household of God (believers)." Eph 2:19-20 "For this reason, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, (20) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone." Therefore, the



"household of God makes up all those who are in the "one body." No matter what angle you look at the "one body" or "all," who make up believers, it is God the Father who is "above, through, and in us all." We were born into one family by the same Father. We share God's image together and will forever share our Father's riches in Christ. Hebrews 2:11 "For both He (the Holy Spirit) who sanctifies (sets us apart as holy...perfect in Christ) and those who are sanctified (already set apart in Christ) are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brothers."

Ephesians 4:6 ends with a very detailed and difficult to understand set of phrases describing God. Maybe it's not so difficult if we look at it through the Holy Spirit's eyes in a simple way. God the Father is omnipresent...everywhere...all the time and in full control of everything. There isn't a place where God is not. When this verse is applied on a big scale to all people, this statement is against religion which says there are many ways and many gods. This is the strongest way to say religion is false. God is totally involved in the lives of mankind...ONE GOD and FATHER of ALL who gave us one way to Heaven through Christ His only Son. Satan invented religion, which is man trying to impress God with human good. Christianity is His Son and the Savior of the entire world.

When we look really hard at what these phrases mean, it can get rather difficult for you guys and for me, too. This is not due to our lack of understanding words or the way we speak or think though! These are some very simple vocabulary words used in this verse. Our problem is trying to get down to what it all means. That's why we have the Holy Spirit to teach us through our Pastor/teachers. We're going to look at each of the four phrases, separately okay? That way they'll be easier to understand:

"God of all" talks of His creatorship. God created mankind and continued after the fall of man to give each of us life at birth. So He is the God of all mankind...believers and unbelievers alike here. Remember He alone gives the breath of life. "God of all" is also speaking of all believers as well. The apostle Paul has written a very strong case for unity among believers in **Ephesians chapter 3**. Once saved we are God's family in Christ and His is our Father.

You might think that God is just a mushy spirit figure until we read the next phrase of our passage: **"Who is over all."** He is not just present everywhere but He's fully in charge! He is present and constantly puts forth His will to accomplish what we rightly know to be His will on earth and every single event that has happened in history, GOD has ALLOWED to happen! He is our Sovereign Ruler. In this way, He brings all things about to accomplish His will on earth and in Heaven. Remember His decree? Without controlling us (our volition or free will) He makes happen what He wants to happen in human history. Specifically, Jesus controls history by the Father's will. Man cannot stop the plan of God for human history. Satan tried and is still trying today and will

continue to try to stop it until the end of human history. But he always fails because God is Sovereign and His plan will RULE mankind. That is part of the Angelic Conflict!

God has power over all believers and unbelievers through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus has power over believers to fulfill the Father's plan for their lives after salvation through the ministry of God the Holy Spirit and over unbelievers that they might believe in His only Son, Jesus. Jesus said it in John 17:2. **"For you granted Him (Jesus) authority (power) over all people that He might give eternal life to all those you have given Him (those who would believe in Jesus)."** What a gracious, wonderful God we have to give us this eternal life in Christ.

"Through all" refers to the way He awesomely works through believers to do His perfect will and makes what He wants to happen. Not only does He control history without messing with mankind's free will but He controls believers' lives without messing with our free wills either! God doesn't need us to agree with Him to accomplish His will through us. He will do it regardless. He wants all believers to be like Christ! He does this with or without our cooperation by means of the Holy Spirit's power. If we are willing to live in the plan He has for us it's blessing for us. Rom 8:28 **And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.** If we are not willing then that's where divine discipline comes into the picture. He'll get our attention and pull us right back into the plan. We will be like Christ with blessing or discipline. Remember we are His family. Philip 2:13-15 **"...for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. (14) Do everything without complaining or arguing, (15) so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and wicked generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe..."**

"Through all" refers to unbelievers as well. Unbelievers of the world must hate God because of this. The Lord is quite capable of working His good will (Decree) even through the most wicked or the most stubborn unbeliever. Just think of those who put Jesus to death. He used their hatred and unbelief to bring Jesus to the Cross and through that one AMAZING act, God established His kingdom forever. He completed His plan in Christ by using unbelievers who rejected Him!!!

Our perfect Lord died in the hands of godless men. Acts 2:23-24 **"Jesus, delivered up by the pre-determined plan and foreknowledge of God, they nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of (physical) death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."**



The last phrase, **"in all"** means that God the Holy Spirit is in ALL believers at the moment they believe in Jesus as their Savior. Paul spoke of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 1:13-14 **"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, (14) who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory."** God the Holy Spirit is working in and through the church...the body of Christ. Eph 3:20 **Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, (21) to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."**

"But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ assigned it"

The last phrase in our passage in Ephesians 4 refers to our spiritual gifts that Christ has planned for us and that the Holy Spirit gives to us at the moment of salvation. This gift when used by the believer who is growing spiritually in Christ, glorifies Christ and brings unity to the body of Christ. He has given each one of us grace or spiritual gifts as He has seen fit to use as part of the body of

Christ. Our gift serves Christ and others in our local church and with some gifts outside the local church and into the world.

Some of these are pastor/teachers, evangelists, deacons, church administrators, helpers, missionaries, those who give comfort to others, and many more. In this same way, Paul was given the grace or gift of being an apostle to the Gentiles. Gifts have been given since Christ died on the Cross. We will learn a lot more about our spiritual gifts in future lessons.

Application for Unity in the Bond of Peace



So what do you think about all of this? Maybe, in conclusion, we can think of one relationship that we have with another person that could be better. It might be your parents, a friend, teacher, coach, or school mates. Humble yourself and confess your sins constantly. You might have been rude, uncaring, said a thoughtless word, or just not really listening to them. It might be Christ!!! If so turn to the Lord and tell Him you are seeking His ways. You might not be able to change others but you want to be part of that power from the Holy Spirit that's like glue that brings change in you and real peace to God's family. Determine to love Christ and you eventually will love that person you have trouble with. Pray for them. Eventually you will feel for them and maybe even treasure them. Don't be happy with phony relationships either. We are to watch over our relationships because they are so precious in the Lord's sight...family! This is our opportunity to show God's love. Preserve the unity of the Spirit in the peace we have from God through Jesus spiritual death on the Cross and His resurrection to eternal life.

The Cross

We should see from the accompanying diagram that Jesus Christ through the work on the cross has secured for us the unity of the Spirit. There are two parts to this unity.

First of all, there is the vertical peace of God secured through the blood of Christ (His spiritual death) which resulted in all of us becoming priests at the moment of our salvation. This is taught in first two chapters of **Ephesians**. Then we have the horizontal unity. This is our ambassadorship with all mankind. This passage focuses on the peace between brothers and sisters in Christ (and unbelievers). This oneness in the body of Christ is seen in chapter 3 and further on as we move through the book. We can be at peace with one another. Love shows through the work of Christ in our lives.

Are you at peace with one another? These are things which Christ has obtained for us. Don't let the world rob you of your peace with God in Christ. The world peace that everyone wants through their human good ideas is only a substitute for God's genuine peace in Christ.

Close in prayer

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