

Lesson #4 Oneness in Christ; “The Key to Unity”

Memory Verse (Oneness in the Book of Ephesians)

Ephesians 1:9, 10 (NKJV) “Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him”

John 13:35 (NKJV) “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” The devil fights for the opposite.

Read **Acts 19:1–10**. Paul’s concern for unity among Christ’s followers is the central theme of his Epistle to the Ephesians.

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the churches in Ephesus and the surrounding region AD 62 while imprisoned in Rome.

Blessings in Christ Redemption in Christ

Ephesians 1:3–14 (NKJV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

(The Jews considered themselves an elect or chosen people, and wished to monopolize the divine love. The apostle here shows that God had the Gentiles as much in the contemplation of his mercy and goodness as he had the Jews;)

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. ¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

(God having determined to bring both Jews and Gentiles to salvation, not by works, nor by any human means or schemes, but by Jesus Christ;)

¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Acts 11:15–17 (NKJV) And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ‘*John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.*’ ¹⁷ If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?”

United Into a Family

***Galatians 4:7** (NKJV) Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

United As Servants

Matthew 20:25–28 (NKJV) But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. ²⁷ And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Breaking Down the Wall Unity Through The Blood

Ephesians 2:11–18 (NKJV) ¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

United As One Spiritual House

Ephesians 2:19-22 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:4-6 (NKJV) Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

***1 Peter 2:9** But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

John 2:19-21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**" ²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

2 Corinthians 6:16 (NKJV) And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

Unity in One Body

Ephesians 4:1-3 (NKJV) I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NKJV) Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

***Ephesians 4:4-6** (NKJV) There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Church Leaders and Unity

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NKJV) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **(Why?)** ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, **(For how long?)** ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **(To protect us from What?)** ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

Human Relationships in Christ

Ephesians 5:15-21 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Ephesians 5:22-6:4 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. ³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. ⁶ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:

“Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of all the gifts of heaven and to exclude the rest of God’s family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth.

“The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life.”— Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, pp. 190, 191.

Truth Must Be the Foundation for Christian Unity

John 17:17–19 (NKJV) *Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

John 17:22–23 (NKJV) *And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

"We cannot purchase peace and unity by sacrificing the truth. The conflict may be long and painful, but at any cost we must hold fast to the Word of God" EGW (Historical Sketches 197).

Through the Holy Spirit, Christ will open more clearly to those who will believe on him that which he has inspired holy men to write concerning the truth. And it is thus that the unity for which Christ prayed is to be effected. We are to receive sanctification through obedience to the word and the Spirit of truth.

We cannot surrender the truth in order to accomplish this union; for the very means by which it is to be gained is sanctification through the truth. Human wisdom would change all this, thinking this basis of union too narrow. Men would effect a union through conformity to popular opinions, through a compromise with the world. But truth is God's basis for the unity of his people. {Gospel Workers 92 391

Amos 3:3 (NKJV) *Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?*

The secret of our success in the work of God will be found in the harmonious working of our people. There must be concentrated action. Every member of the body of Christ must act his part in the cause of God, according to the ability that God has given him. We must press together against obstructions and difficulties, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart.--Review and Herald, Dec. 2, 1890. {ChS 75.1}

If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world. -- Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 221. {ChS 75.2}

“To remain divided is sinful! Did not our Lord pray, that they may be one, even as we are one”? (John 17:22). A chorus of ecumenical voices keep harping the unity tune. What they are saying is, “Christians of all doctrinal shades and beliefs must come together in one visible organization, regardless... Unite, unite!” Such teaching is false, reckless and dangerous. Truth alone must determine our alignments. Truth comes before unity. Unity without truth is hazardous. - Charles Spurgeon