



# IMAGES OF UNITY

Lesson 6 for November 10, 2018

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The Bible contains diverse images that represent spiritual and theological truths. For example, water in John 7:38, wind in John 3:8 and a column in 1 Timothy 3:15.

There are several biblical images of unity in the New Testament that demonstrate the integral role unity plays in the nature and mission of the church.



**One temple. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17**

**One body. 1 Corinthians 12:12-26**

**One shepherd and one flock. John 10:1-11**



**One building and one home. Ephesians 2:19-22**



**One people. 1 Peter 2:9**

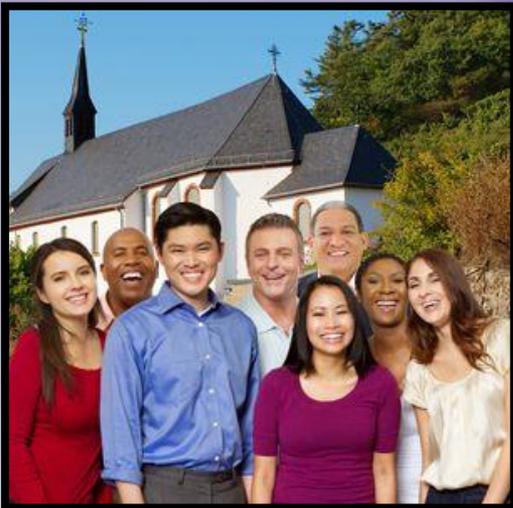


# ONE PEOPLE

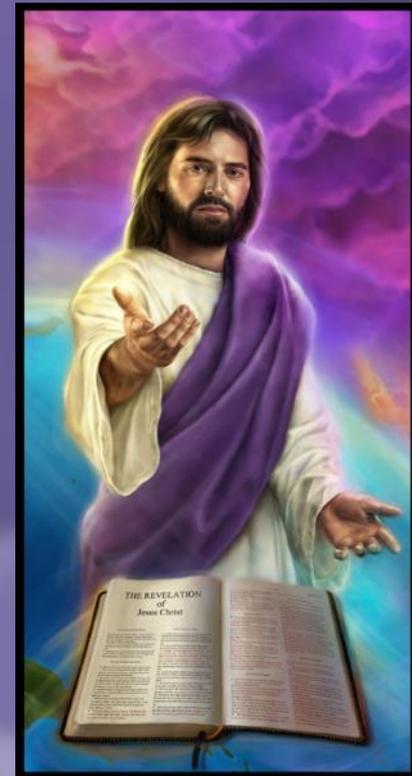
**"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)**



**People from every nation are part of the Church, but God considers the Church to be one people. A holy nation of holy men and women with one purpose: to proclaim God's love and salvation to the world.**



**There's nothing we can do to be suitable to be part of this people. God chooses us today as He chose the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6-8). We are called to show His divine character in our lives by His love and grace.**

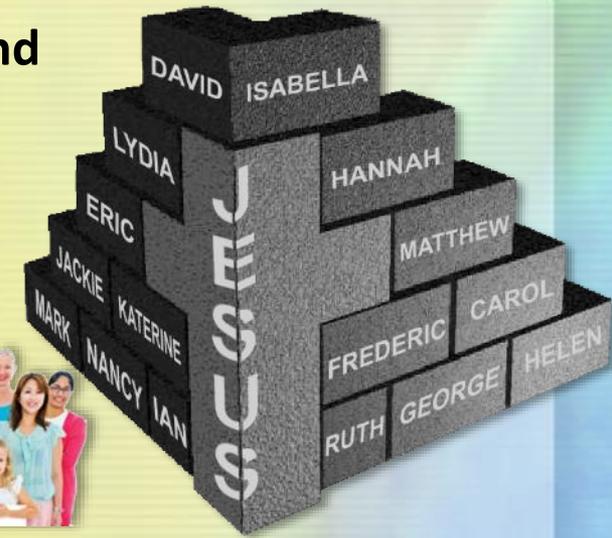


# ONE BUILDING AND ONE HOME

*"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." (Ephesians 2:20)*

In this metaphor, Paul combines the idea of a building and its stones with the home within it.

We are living stones that are part of a building. The cornerstone and the foundation is Christ (1P. 2:4-5).



There are no isolated stones. Every Christian supports others and is supported by them.

We are also part of a great family, but not by blood ties: God is our father.

We are united because we've experienced the new birth, and we share one doctrine and one mission: to preach the Gospel.

**"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)**

# ONE TEMPLE

**The image of the temple was very clear for the early Christians (both Jews and Gentiles): It was a magnificent building to worship and honor God.**

**The community of united believers is a temple. And God lives among them.**

**The temple is at risk of collapse when division invades the Church (v. 17).**

**Paul urged the importance of remaining united upon us, "in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10).**



# ONE BODY

"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ."

(1 Corinthians 12:12)

Every member is a part of the body and has a specific purpose. All members must work together in their diversity. The body cannot work if its members don't coordinate.

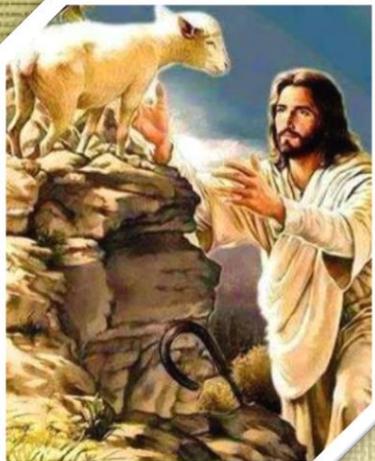
The Church is the body of Christ. He is the head and we are the members. As a result of this:



-  Our ethnic, racial, cultural, educational, and age differences must not be permitted to divide us in Christ.
-  At the foot of the cross we are all equal.
-  The gospel has a healing and reconciling power.
-  As each believer is spiritually connected to Christ, the entire body is therefore nourished with the same food.

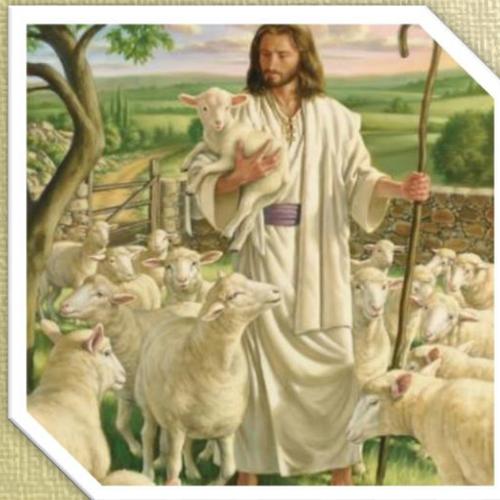


# ONE SHEPHERD AND ONE FLOCK



**"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." (John 10:11)**

**The image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is also used in Psalm 23. The Church is a flock. We are ingenious and fearful sheep that are guided by Jesus.**



**When the sheep get lost (sin), Jesus looks for them and brings them back to the pen. He constantly takes care of us (both as individuals and as the Church).**

**The important point is that sheep know the voice of their shepherd. Those who know the voice of Jesus will never wander alone. They will walk united to the rest of the flock.**



**In fact, the unity and safety of the people of God depend on their proximity to Him and are directly related to their submissive obedience to His voice.**



**“Under the figure of the vine and its branches is illustrated the relation of Christ to His followers and the relation of His followers to one another. The branches are all related to one another, yet each has an individuality which is not merged in that of another. All have a common relation to the vine and depend upon it for their life, their growth, and their fruitfulness. They cannot sustain one another. Each for itself must be centered in the vine. And while the branches have a common likeness, they also present diversity. Their oneness consists in their common union with the vine, and through each, though not in just the same way, is manifested the life of the vine.”**

