

Ephesians 4.1-6

Unity worth Keeping

½ Way thru Letter Apostle PAUL wrote to Xtians in Ephesians 2000 yrs ago  
 CLAIMS in 6 Verses – Hard to BELIEVE Today – ONE Church? REALLY??  
 Over 2 Billion Xtians – Over 40,000 Denominations - DOZENS in this Room  
 If Don't Like what I Say > You might GO OUT Start ANOTHER Denomination!

2<sup>nd</sup> half of Letter > TURNING Corner in Paul's ARGUMENT > **Therefore...**  
 Now MOVE From DOCTRINE to DUTY > From CREDENDA to AGENDA  
 Heaven-touching INTERCESSION >> Earth-transforming INTEGRITY  
 INDICATIVE: What God Done for Us > IMPERATIVE: What we do for Him  
 Declared GLORY of CHRIST > NOW Display GLORY of CHURCH

Chap 5: Paul likens LOVE in Marriage / Love of Christ for His Bride > Church

### 1. What God has Joined Together...

vs. 4-6 One Sentence: 7 Ones > Centered ONE GOD Father, Son, Holy Spirit

a. One Body empowered by One Spirit v. 4 There is one body and one Spirit

When PLANE Load of PENTECOSTALS landed in HEAVEN'S AIRPORT

Very EXCITED to get FIRST Tour Heavenly Home: NEW JERUSALEM

Lots of Shouting – “Glory to God!” “Praise Jesus!” “Hallelujah!”

Came to area with HIGH Walls – Angel told them to BE QUIET!

Shhh!!! LUTHERANS Live in There – Think they're ONLY One's Here!

On this ALL SAINTS DAY - Christians Around World CONFESS...

I believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic church... Nicene Creed

Many churches with small “c” > But ALL True Christians belong to Church “C”

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male  
 and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3.28

## b. One Hope through One Faith seen in One Baptism under One Lord

It is Jesus Christ in whom we have believed, Jesus Christ into whom we have been baptized, and Jesus Christ for whose coming we wait with expectant hope.

John Stott

v. 5 “one Lord” – Greek word KURIOS / Used in Greek OT for GOD - YHWH

“there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live”  
1 Corinthians 8.6

LORD Jesus Christ – RULER over CREATION / REDEEMER of CHURCH

v. 5 “one faith” – Paul using FAITH as NOUN – WHAT we Believe

v. 13 “the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God”

Few Minutes > Hear 5 People, different Places, different Stories > ONE FAITH

Once were LOST – But NOW they’re FOUND > Mercy & Grace of Lord Jesus

v. 5 “one baptism” – by the HOLY SPIRIT – Not ref to SACRAMENT in Water

*For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.* 1 Corinthians 12.14

Spirit of God Gives us FAITH and UNITES us to ONE LORD

Even Earliest Church different OPINIONS on WHO and HOW of Baptism

Now concerning baptism, baptize as follows: after you have reviewed all these things, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in running water. But if you have no running water, then baptize in some other water; and if you are not able to baptize in cold water, then do so in warm.

*Didache*, ch. 7 (early 2nd century)

Peter: “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by *giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us*, and he made no distinction between us and them...”

Acts 15.7-9

INWARD Baptism of HOLY SPIRIT Symbolized NOT by Speaking in Tongues

SYMBOL of being Baptized by Holy Spirit is WATER BAPTISM

No such thing as Christian who does NOT HAVE the Holy Spirit  
 Should be NO Such thing as Christian does Not Confess Faith in Water Baptism  
 Far North SCOTLAND – Small Island just ONE Church – PRESBYTERIAN  
 Christians from OTHER Denom had to WORSHIP there Too – It Worked OUT  
 NEW Presby Pastor sent from HQ in EDINBURGH – Learning the church  
 CRISIS – First death in Community – Asked by Family to lead FUNERAL  
 Found out PERSON was a BAPTIST – Never done Baptist Funeral Before??  
 Send a MESSAGE to Presby Denom Office “Can I BURY a BAPTIST?”  
 Answer from HQ – Of Course! BURY ALL the BAPTISTS you Can!!

c. One God and Father over All v. 6 one God and Father of all

“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in  
 heaven and on earth derives its name.” Ephesians 3.14,15

There *can* be only one Christian family, only one Christian faith, hope and  
 baptism, and only one Christian body, because there is only one God, Father,  
 Son, and Holy Spirit. You can no more multiply churches than you can multiply  
 Gods...The unity of the church is as indestructible as the unity of God himself. It  
 is no more possible to split the church than it is possible to split the Godhead.

John Stott

## 2. What God has Joined Together...Let Not Man Separate

We Belong to Families, We're Family for LIFE > Many ESTRANGED Families

Move FAR AWAY – Live Separately – No Communication for YEARS

Hey! When was Last Time you CALLED your PARENTS!!

Family only FEELS like Family with LOVE and COMMUNICATION

Paul > BOLD Announcements, ONE 7 x's – Still be Bitterness, Pride, Separation

Paul begins SPECIFIC Description – What should CHURCH DO...

If written by Modern American Churchman – Buildings, Programs, Media

PAUL > Most VITAL Ingredient of Church > GENUINE Christians

a. Character - Even SECULAR World gets Character trumps COMPETENCY

Not gonna want to Send Xmas Present to Brother > If he is a JERK!

LOVE Necessary OIL > Smooth Operation of Family

v. 1 walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called

1) Humble v. 2 with all humility / NIV “be completely humble”

WISH – Tone it DOWN > Try being Humble Sometimes, Once in a While

NOT New Idea in Ancient World – OFTEN Described by Ancient Writers

What IS NEW is POSITIVE EMPHASIS > Paul says Humility is GOOD

ANCIENTS & Many MODERNS > HUMBLE: Losers, Fools, Clowns, Pitied

Jesus Christ makes HUMILITY COOL > Greatest Man was Humble Man

Jesus: “I am gentle and humble in heart” Matthew 11.29

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus..”  
Philippians 2.3-5

2) Gentle v. 2 with all humility and gentleness

WHOLE Life DESCRIBED as Humble & GENTLE > KJV: “Meekness”

Meekness is NOT Weakness > STRENGTH under CONTROL

Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.  
Numbers 12.3

3) Patient v. 2 with patience

“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”  
Galatians 5.22

4) Forbearing v. 2 bearing with one another

Refers to BEARING the HURTS and Trails we Face from Fellow Christians

GRIM Reality of Christian Army > We OFTEN SHOOT our WOUNDED

1991 > Pastor of Historic, Traditional Church in HAWAII – founded in 1824

By 1840 one of Largest Churches in World – 10,000 Members

Then I became Pastor > Everyone LEFT > Smallest Churches in Hawaii!

Membership List 500 People > Sunday ATTENDANCE about 40!

Meet People > Bring SHEEP back into FOLD – Listen to STORIES > PAIN

One Member not been in church since 1950's > Donated 8 PIGS for LUAU

Went to get Pigs out of CHURCH IMU “ground oven” to Steam Pigs

ONLY 5 Pigs Taken Out!! Somebody in church STOLE 3 PIGS!! I QUIT!!

“Are you ready to Stand before God – Refused to Worship 40 yrs – 3 Pigs??!”

So MANY WAYS we in Church GET Eyes OFF of Jesus and His MISSION!

## 5) Love v. 2 “in love”

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”  
1 Peter 4.8

When I look at a brother whom I believe is wrong in his perspective, or has wronged me. I must look behind the eyes of one who has hurt me or is angry with me because he believes the offense is mine, and I must see Jesus indwelling. This is a person for whom Christ died and in whom the Son of God lives... Each of us for whom Christ died is called to love beyond differences of race, or class, or perspective, or personality... We have the same Father. Come, let us love one another beyond our differences...  
Bryan Chapell

## b. Community

v. 3 “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

Ch 2 > Jesus is our PEACE – Broken Down DIVIDING Wall – Jew / Gentile  
CROSS – Unites us ONE Another – TOGETHER to God – ONE BODY

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility Ephesians 2.14

Just as JESUS made EVERY EFFORT – Giving VERY LIFE – BUY Church  
 Now called to make EVERY EFFORT to BUILD & BEAUTIFY His Church  
 Church DESPISED ASSEMBLY > Many in World say is NOT RELEVANT  
 Only way to SILENCE our Critics > Show a Life lived Worthy of our Calling

Unless we are working to maintain, defend and develop the unity we already enjoy, and to overcome, demolish, and put behind us the disunity we still find ourselves in, we can scarcely claim to be following Paul's teaching. N.T. Wright

Big Church in Kampala “Miracle Center” – Pastor invites “Come get Miracle!”

Show you Miracle > Stubborn, Selfish Sinners, Living & Working Love & Unity

That is a Miracle > There is the Living Power & Presence of Jesus Christ

### c. Commitment

v. 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all

Looks at the ALL's – This guy is ALL-ABOUT GOD!

All PAST – FUTURE – PRESENT > World, Life from God & For God

v. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord – 2<sup>nd</sup> X Mentioned > MOST be ASHAMED

Not prisoner of Rome, both prisoner OF Christ and FOR Christ

Not having PITY PARTY in Prison > his God is ALL & ALL and IN ALL

v. 2 worthy of the calling // v. 4 you were called to the one hope

Chinese FRIEND Returned to BJ from Mother's FUNERAL Another City China

MOTHER died QUIT EATING > Quit Eating > HAD NO HOPE TO LIVE FOR

THIS Grand Vision of God – Him being OUR ALL IN ALL

“For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”  
Romans 11.36

This VISION will give us ALIGNMENT of Heart & Mind to Live this way...

vs. 1,2 walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love

Unity is NOT UNIFORMITY, how Boring that Would Be

ALLOW Me to Pray the PRAYER of our Lord Jesus...

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 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 have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 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. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. 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.” AMEN John 17.20-26

Ephesians 4.<sup>1</sup> I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism,<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Jimma, Joana, Samuel, Kerri & Paola