**We Are One**

*Ephesians 4:3-4*

**Introduction**

1. A key feature of the gospel is unity – ***“There is ONE body”*** – such is worth protecting – ***“endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit”***
2. Sadly, much of the so-called “Christendom” has completely watered down, and even nullified the Biblical concept of unity. This takes away from the glory of God in Christ and robs men of joy that God offers in Christ.
3. That “we are one” in Christ is a most wholesome truth which must be known, appreciated, practiced, and protected.
4. The Power of Unity
5. The hope of the Messiah pertained to the Jews – **Ephesians 1:12**
   1. ***“first trusted”*** – *proelpizō* – “to be prior in hoping, hope before, be the first to hope” (BDAG)
   2. ***“we who had before hoped in Christ” (ASV)***
      1. ***“in Christ”*** = in the Messiah (General, not specific to Jesus as the fulfilment)
      2. **Romans 9:4-5** – to the Israelites pertain the promises, and the coming of the Messiah. (**cf. John 4:22** – ***“salvation is of the Jews”*** – i.e. through them the Savior would come)
      3. **Acts 26:6-7** – the hope of Israel.
   3. **(v. 13)** – ***“you also”*** – Gentiles.
6. This distinction aroused animosity by the Jews toward the Gentiles – **Ephesians 2:11-12**
   1. **(v. 12)** – not being of the physical Jews, they were without the promises of the Messiah, without hope, without God (He was the God of the Jews).
   2. **(v. 11)** – they were uncircumcised (and still are) but were CALLED UNCIRCUMCISION by the CIRCUMCISION.
      1. **Uncircumcision** – *akrobystia* – foreskin, implying an uncircumcised person.
      2. **Term of derision** – though true, it was used with malice many times by Jews.
   3. Jonah is an example of the disdain the Jews had for Gentiles – **Jonah 4:1-4, 10-11**
   4. This attitude was perpetuated throughout generations – **Acts 13:42-48** – the Jews listened to Paul for a time until he preached to the Gentiles.
   5. Even Peter, Barnabas, and others had trouble breaking from the ungodly attitude – **Galatians 2:11-13**
7. This distinction is no more in Christ Jesus – **Ephesians 2:13-22**
   1. **(vv. 14-15)** – there were causes of separation between Jew and Gentile that have been eradicated.
      1. **The law especially** (for Jews) – and all it entails – covenants, promises, etc.
      2. **Literal physical wall** – “Many have identified this wall with the stone wall of the Jerusalem temple, 1.5 m. (5 ft.) high, beyond which no Gentile was permitted to go. Inscribed on the pillars of the wall were warnings to Gentiles that trespassing was a capital offense. The destruction of this wall would be a particularly vivid metaphor for the new unity and equality between Jew and Gentile in the Christian Church.” (ISBE)
      3. (**v. 16)** – one new man from two, no more enmity – which had lasted for centuries.
   2. **(v. 19)** – contrast with **(v. 12**)
   3. **(v. 21-22)** – where the Lord was linked to the Jews before in connection with the temple (**cf. 2 Chronicles 7:1-3),** He is now in fellowship with Christians, Jew and Gentile, and they are the temple He dwells in.
8. There is power in the unity provided in Christ:
   1. **Ephesians 3:10** – the manifold wisdom of God is displayed even to spiritual beings.
   2. **Galatians 3:26-29** – no distinctions in Christ.
   3. **Isaiah 2:4** – opposed nations unite under one banner and work together for the God who saved them.
   4. **John 17:20-23** – there is evangelizing power in the unity provided in Christ.
9. The Mechanism of Unity
10. Jesus Christ is the historical figure who brought unity to the earth in a way none could ever have imagined – **Ephesians 2:13-14**
    1. Note the change – **Ephesians 1:12; 2:12** – from simply Christ (the Messiah) – to ***“Christ Jesus”*** – ***“He Himself”***
    2. **The Christ was a purely Jewish figure in the minds of men, until the Man Jesus, who is the Christ, revealed the inclusivity of all men to the saving work of the Messiah:**
       1. **Luke 3:23, 38** – Luke’s genealogy descends to Adam, representing all of humanity.
          1. **Luke 2:10, 32** – all people, light to Gentiles.
          2. **Luke 4:24-27** – when rejected by Jews, Jesus cited God’s association with Gentiles in the Old Testament foreshadowing their inclusion.
          3. **Luke 7:9** – Jesus’ praise of a Centurion Gentile’s faith.
       2. **Matthew 15:21-28** – Jesus drew faith out of a Gentile woman of Canaan.
       3. **John 10:16** – the true Shepherd spoke of some who belonged to Him who were not of the Jewish fold.
    3. **(v. 14)** – ***“HE HIMSELF IS OUR PEACE”*** – not just our peacemaker.
       1. **1 Timothy 2:5** – this very Man is the ONE and only mediator between God and men (*anthrōpos* – mankind; **cf. Acts 17:26-27)**.
       2. **(vv. 15-16)** – one from the two – HOW? – both reconciled through the cross!
       3. **Acts 11:15-18; 15:8-11** – the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Gentile household of Cornelius illustrated that faith in Christ is the salvation of NOT ONLY the Jew, but the Gentile ALSO.
       4. **Galatians 2:14-16** – Paul’s argument that Peter should be united with, and include the Gentile brethren is THE SAME REQUIRED FAITH IN JESUS TO BE JUSTIFIED.
11. The Holy Spirit is instrumental in revealing Christ, and thus uniting Jew and Gentil in access to the Father – **Ephesians 2:18-20 –** fellowship/unity on foundation of apostles and prophets.
    1. **Ephesians 3:3-6** – mystery, including unity of Jew and Gentile, revealed by the Spirit.
    2. **John 16:12** – He guides into all truth.
    3. **1 Thessalonians 1:2-10; 2:14** – the Thessalonian Gentiles turned from idolatry to faith in Christ, to serve the true God, based on the powerful Gospel revealed and confirmed by the Holy Spirit – such conviction led to suffering even as their Jewish brethren had.
    4. **1 Corinthians 12:12-14** – the one body is composed of only those who have been baptized into that one body – this was by the ONE SPIRIT, by drinking into the ONE SPIRIT – i.e. obeying the Spirit revealed teaching – UNITES.
12. The unity is of the Spirit **– Ephesians 4:3**
    1. The Spirit revealed word of God is the mechanism of unity.
    2. **Philippians 1:27; 2:1-2** – one sprit, one mind in connection with the faith of the gospel (the ***“one faith”*** of **Ephesians 4:5**); mutual fellowship of the Holy Spirit promotes and demands like-mindedness.
    3. **Ephesians 4:11-13** – the Spirit revealed word taught leads to unity in the faith.
    4. Unity is a command – **1 Corinthians 1:10** – it only comes when each individual humbly submits to the word of God.
13. The Blessings of Unity
14. The unity in Christ provides one with spiritual family – **Ephesians 2:19**
    1. This family supports each other – **Ephesians 4:2**
    2. This family helps each other grow – **Ephesians 4:15-16**
    3. This family cares for each other, and is forgiving – **Ephesians 4:32; 5:1-2**
    4. This family aids each other through the evil days with encouragement and edification through Spirit filled worship – **Ephesians 5:15-20**
    5. This family petitions God on behalf of one another – **Ephesians 6:18**
15. The mere knowledge of others who are united in the same purpose strengthens us in our stand for truth – **1 Peter 5:8-9**
16. The concept of unity makes all others of greater importance than the individual leading to immense care – **Romans 12:3-4, 9-10, 16; 1 Corinthians 12:25-26; Philippians 2:3-4**
17. God has truly blessed us with unity in Christ! – **Psalm 133:1; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**

**Conclusion**

1. In eternity, God devised a plan in Christ where all sorts of people would be gathered together in Him – **Ephesians 1:10**
2. This plan of unity boasts of great power, reveals wonderful truths, and grants immeasurable blessings.
3. “We are one!”