

“One Spirit”
Ephesians 4:1-6
(Preached at Trinity, November 30, 2014)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As I pointed out as we entered **Chapter 4**, while the first half of Ephesians is largely doctrinal the final chapters will be of a more practical nature. Paul passes from what we must *believe* to what we must *do*. Doctrine defines how we live.
2. In **Verse 1** Paul admonishes us to walk worthy of our calling. Christians are called to a particular kind of life. The emphasis in the second half of **Ephesians** is the way our Christian calling transforms everything aspect of our lives, particularly our relationships with one another.
3. In **Verses 2-6** Paul stresses the wonderful unity shared by Christians. Paul maintains in these verses that unity is something we DO have. It is of the essence of being the body of Christ. Unity is something we share but it is also something we have to preserve.
Ephesians 4:3 NAU - "being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
4. In **Verses 4-6** Paul sets forth the foundations of our unity using a seven-fold expression of the word "One." Using these seven "ones" Paul sets before us the very foundation of our unity. They are not exhortations but declarations. They describe what we are, what we share. He is not saying, "Let us be united as one body" but "There is one body, one Spirit, etc." Our duty is to preserve the unity we have.
5. Paul arranges these groups of "ones" around the Trinity:
The first three belong to the Holy Spirit, the second three to Christ, the Son, and the final one to God the Father.
6. Last time we focused our attention upon our unity as "one body." Paul is reminded us that as Christians we are a part of Christ's body.
While this is pointing to what we call the mystical, invisible, universal church, it also finds its expression in the local church where believers enjoy this union together.
7. This union is made possible through the Holy Spirit as we are united to Christ. Paul says in **Verse 4** - "*There is one body and one Spirit*"
8. We should understand this as referring to the Holy Spirit with a capital S. It is not referring to the human spirit or the human heart as if to refer to a spirit of unity.
This morning I want us to delve into the work of the Holy Spirit. He has been given as God's blessing upon the church.

- I. The Holy Spirit is unique to the church.
- A. He is given as a New Covenant blessing
1. The Holy Spirit was promised in the OT
Ezekiel 39:29 NAU - "I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD."
Joel 2:28 NAU - "It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions."
 2. The OT promises of the Spirit were fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost
Acts 2:16-17 NAS - " but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ 'And it shall be in the last days,' God says, 'That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams'"
 3. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be sent forth who would teach us and enable us to understand the truth.
John 14:26 NAS - "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."
- B. The church has been blessed with the Holy Spirit in ways unknown in the Old Covenant.
1. In the OT the Holy Spirit came upon men for particular purposes for a particular duration but not in an indwelling sense
 - a. We can see this when the seventy elders prophesied before Moses
Numbers 11:24-25 NAS - " So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD. Also, he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and stationed them around the tent. ²⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed *Him* upon the seventy elders. And it came about that when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do *it* again."
 - b. We can see this with Saul –
 God put His Spirit upon Saul that Saul might be anointed and empowered to sit as king over Israel
1 Samuel 10:6 NAS - "Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man."
1 Samuel 10:9-10 NAS - "Then it happened when he turned his back to leave Samuel, God changed his heart; and all those signs came about on that day. ¹⁰ When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among them."

- c. God then withdrew His Spirit from Saul and placed Him on David
1 Samuel 16:13-14 NAS - "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah. ¹⁴ Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul"
 - d. Matthew Henry – “the Spirit of God came upon him, strongly and suddenly (so the word signifies), but not so as to rest and abide upon him. It came on so as to go off quickly.”
2. Although the OT saints did not have the indwelling Spirit as received at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was still the agent of salvation
- a. The Holy Spirit was the agent of convicting the OT saints of their sins
 - b. The OT saints still needed regeneration – to have circumcised hearts.
 - c. But the OT saints did not have the indwelling Spirit – this wouldn’t take place until Pentecost. This is a blessing for the church
 - d. Jesus foretold this
John 14:16-17 NAS - "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷ *that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you."
3. The church is the fullest expression of Israel. The church is the fulfillment of God’s promises. The church is true Israel. It is the new Israel. But the church is also superior to Israel in at least two distinct ways:
- a. The church has clear understanding of the truths that were previously veiled.
1 John 2:20-21 NAU - "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. ²¹ I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth."
 - The church shares a common doctrine
Acts 2:42 NAU - “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
 - The church is the pillar and support of the truth
1 Timothy 3:15 NAU - “I *write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.”
 - b. The church has a new spirituality. The Holy Spirit has been given uniquely to the church.

- II. The Holy Spirit is unique to the church – “One Spirit”
- A. The indwelling Spirit is related to the unity of the church as the body of Christ.
2 Corinthians 13:14 NAU - "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."
1. The Holy Spirit corporately indwells the people of God as God’s spiritual temple. We are the church, the holy temple of God.
1 Corinthians 3:16 NAU - “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?"
 2. There is a church-wide working of the Holy Spirit.
1 Corinthians 12:13 NAU - "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."
 3. Old Covenant Israel never experienced this corporate spirituality.
- B. The Holy Spirit is the power behind God’s transforming grace
1. We are born of the Spirit.
 2. The Christian has a new nature. The Holy Spirit indwells us working all manner of transforming grace in us. We are truly a new creation. This is the unique experience of Christians made possible through the unique work of the Holy Spirit – there is One Spirit
- C. We share the ministry of the Holy Spirit together – He is given universally to the church.
1. The indwelling Spirit is one of the marks of a Christian – without the Holy Spirit we do not belong to Christ.
Romans 8:9 NAU - "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."
 2. Professing Christ demands the Holy Spirit
1 Corinthians 12:3 NAU - "Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit."
 3. As the body of Christ we are all adopted into God’s household – We are a part of the same family. The Holy Spirit bears witness to this.
Romans 8:16 NAU - "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God"
Galatians 4:6 NAU - "Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
 4. As the body of Christ we share in God’s worship – this is made possible through the Holy Spirit.
John 4:23 NAU - "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."
 5. The Holy Spirit is our common source of holiness
Paul speaks of the “Fruit of the Spirit” in **Gal. 5:22**

- D. The Holy Spirit is the power behind the work of the church
1. The Church shares a common work in the Gospel
1 Corinthians 3:9 NAU - "For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building."
 The Holy Spirit is the power behind this labor
Acts 1:8 NAU - "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
 2. Each individual Christian is given particular gifts which mark his particular place within the body. The one body is made up of many distinct and divers parts.
 1. There are a great variety of gifts bestowed by the one Holy Spirit
1 Corinthians 12:4 NAU - "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit."
 2. Each of us has distinct gifts
Ephesians 4:7 NAU - "But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift."

Conclusion:

1. The body of Christ is permeated by the same Holy Spirit. He is the ultimate ground of our unity as the body of Christ. All sins against unity are, therefore, sins against the Holy Spirit.
2. The charge to us is to preserve the unity God has given us by His Spirit.
Ephesians 4:2-3 NAU - "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, ³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."