

## Sermon Notes on Churched: We are One (Ephesians 45:1-6 & other references)

- God uses the metaphor of a physical body to demonstrate the unity and diversity of His church body of believers who are very different, yet designed to work as one unit (1 Cor. 12:13; John 17:20-21a; Rom. 15:5-6)
- Oneness is one of the distinguishing marks of the Lord's church, yet it is one of the most difficult aspects of ministry to maintain and accomplish.
- Some believe oneness is all about love and overlooking all our doctrinal differences. Others believe oneness is all about protecting the doctrinal truth we commonly believe, so we must not associate with those who compromise the truth.
- God's call to oneness involves two basic, but needed responses:

### 1. **Grasp your invisible and positional oneness in Christ** (selected references)

- One of the church's weaknesses in regard to our oneness is failing to know and remember what God has already done for us.
- God uses the method of position and practice to teach and motivate the knowing and doing or belief and behavior of our faith.
- Notice **three realities** of our positional and real oneness:
  1. **It's grounded in our special connection with the Triune God** (Eph. 4:4-6)
    - a. The "*one Spirit*" indwells and unifies us (He puts us into "one body" and guarantees our "one hope")
    - b. The "*one Lord*" unifies us as our only confession (Rom. 10:9-10), the sole "*head*" of the church (Eph. 1:20-22) and around the "*one faith*" (the truth that we believe) and "one baptism" which pictures our union with Him.
    - c. The "one God and Father" unifies us as we are born again into His family and we know He is "*over all, through all and in all*"
  2. **It's gifted as a special characteristic from Jesus Christ** (John 17:22-23): Jesus said He gave us "*the glory*" which the Father gave Him. This "*glory*" is being "in Christ" and receiving all His blessings (joy, love,

righteousness, forgiveness, etc.) as “*partakers of the divine nature*” (2 Pet. 1:4)

3. **It’s guaranteed through the special cross-work of Jesus Christ** (Eph. 2:11-18). Not only are we “*one new man*” (v. 15), but “*one body*” (v. 16) along with many other special features of our oneness (fellow citizens, being built together, make alive together, common salvation, all one in Christ Jesus and many more)

## 2. **Grow your visible and practical oneness in Christ** (selected Scriptures)

- God gave us this oneness we needed so we could display this oneness to others who need it as well (John 17:21, 23) and God repeatedly commends love “*which is the perfect bond of unity*” (Col. 3:14) and this practiced love will show everyone we are His disciples (John 13:35-36).
- There are as least **three ways** to develop and practice this oneness:
  1. **Work on developing your spiritual attitudes** (Eph. 3:1-3) which will be hard work as we commit to “*being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit*” (v. 3). Diligence is about having a sense of urgency and zeal to act now. There are **4 attitudes** that will help grow this practical unity (v. 2: humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance in love)
  2. **Work on developing your selfless actions.**
    - a. Give them God’s love in you. Look for ways to give others what is best for them
    - b. Address your sin that messes up oneness in the body (Phil. 1:27). What sins needs to be confessed and repented of in your life?
    - c. Don’t miss meeting together with your church family (Heb. 10:24-25). Is your absence valid or an self-motivated excuse?
  3. **Work on developing your Scriptural associations:** Oneness doesn’t mean we join hands with everyone who claims they know Jesus.
    - a. God’s goal for us is to “*attain to the unity of the faith*” (Eph. 4:13). “*the faith*” is the content of truth we commonly believe. The “*one faith*”
    - b. God warns us to be discerning and stay away from certain people who proclaim false gospels or doctrine (Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Thess. 3:14; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 5:9-11)