

## One Church: One God and Father

### Ephesians 4:1 through Ephesians 4:6 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, <sup>2</sup>with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup>endeavoring to keep 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 in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

### Series Introduction:

What does God have in store for Greater Friendship? What does God want to accomplish through Greater Friendship? I cannot tell you that I have a vision for us just yet. Right now, I do know is this: we won't get anywhere divided.

For seven weeks we have been working to draw every member completely into the family. We've been crossing barriers. We've been challenging everyone to get on one accord. We have been creating singleness of purpose and unity of spirit. We have been striving to become One Church in Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians 4 Paul tells the believers about seven things that are unique in the church. We have examined each one in hopes that they will turn all of our heads in the same direction and cause our eyes to all behold the same glory of God.

In the first week we began with One Church: One Body. In that message, we were encouraged to acknowledge the head. We were also encouraged to accept one another. Lastly, we were told to find our place in the body. Next, we talked about One Church: One Spirit. In that message we learned some critical truths about the Holy Spirit. We talked about his purpose, his presence, and his power. Then, we talked about One Church: One Hope. We learned that we have one eternal hope in Jesus Christ. Three weeks ago, we discussed One Church: One Lord. We learned that we have one Lord who is master, owner, and authority to the church. Two weeks back, we talked about One Church: One Faith. Primarily we learned that we needed to take our faith out of the box. Our faith is flawless and limitless when activated by the word of God and it can release the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Last week, we shared One Church: One Baptism. We learned that baptism is a function of the Holy Spirit. It saves us and it changes us.

### Introduction

Today as we look at Paul's final singular item, I pray that we will all be better rooted in our faith.

## **There is one God.**

Paul says there is “<sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.”

This concept is very important in modern times because not everyone is ready to accept the truth. We have become tolerant toward many types of people, faiths, and cultures. That’s okay. We can tolerate them, but we can’t become them. We can’t accept what they are offering.

### **1 Corinthians 8:4 through 1 Corinthians 8:6 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup>Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* no other God but one. <sup>5</sup>For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), <sup>6</sup>yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*.

Paul especially dealt with issues of polytheism as he interacted with Greek and Roman people. Polytheism means they worshipped many different gods. They had gods for everything. There were gods for fertility, gods for the harvest, gods for love, gods for war, gods for times and seasons, gods for life, gods for death, and even political gods such as Caesar himself who was regarded as a god.

So just imagine being in Corinth or some other city of the ancient world where people worshipped many types of god. With all of those influences around them, imagine how difficult it must have been to keep the church on track. Paul declares to the saints “**for us**, there is one God”.

## **II. The True God**

*We believe the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.*

Believers need to choose which side we are on because **for us**, there is one God. For the people who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives, there is one God. For the redeemed of the Lord, the called out, the ecclesia, the church, there is one God. If you are a member of Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Tuskegee, Alabama, you must believe that there is one God.

We don't need any other gods. We don't need a separate god for fertility because our God says he opens the matrix and he gives life. We don't need another god for prosperity because our God said the cattle on a thousand hills is his, the silver and the gold, too. We don't need to find some idol to give us success because God told Joshua if he kept his commandments he would have good success. We don't need a god to escort us into death, because our God has given us eternal life. We don't need to create some god to teach us how to love because God is love. We don't need a god of war because God has said vengeance is his and he will repay. We don't need gods for the seasons because God ordained that morning and night, seed time and harvest, would not fail from the earth until the end. We don't need to make our political leaders into gods because God has taught us that any authority they have is given by him.

We have one God and we know he is not the God of Islam because they don't believe Jesus is the son of God. We have one God and we know it's not the same thing the Mormons talk about because they believe God was a man once who evolved into a god like material being, even though the Bible says God is a spirit. We have one God and we know it's not the God of the Hindus because they worship animals and things that are made by God. We know it's not the Jehovah's Witness because they don't believe in God the Son or God the Holy Spirit. They believe Jesus was God's first created being. We know it's not what the Buddhists talk about because they believe people can experience salvation or enlightenment through self effort.

Don't get confused. We believe in one true and living God. And the God we believe in is everything he says he is. He has introduced himself to us in the scriptures so that we may know his nature and his will for us.

This one God that we believe in is the creator of the heavens and the earth. John said "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." It doesn't matter if it was things in the physical world or spiritual world, if it exists, God made it.

This one God is self existent. He has declared "I Am that I Am." God just is. This one God is the definition of love. Love is of God because God is love. This one God is pure and holy. He has said to his people "be ye holy for I am holy". There is no other being in all of creation that can be compared to God. This one God loves us. Jesus said "for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son."

There is only one God who says "vengeance is mine. I will repay." There is only one God who gives vision to his prophets to tell the end from the beginning. There is only one God who is bread when you are hungry and water when you are thirsty. There is only one God who shall supply all of your needs according to his riches in glory.

There is one God but even more impressive is the fact that this one God is also Father.

### **There is one God and Father.**

#### **John 1:12 through John 1:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup>But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

He has given us power to become the sons of God. We are born again, not of the flesh or blood or will, but of God. He has birthed us again by his Spirit. Remember it was Jesus who told Nicodemus “Verily, verily I say unto you except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

This is important because we are born originally in sin. Sin can't stand in the presence of God. No flesh shall glory in his sight. So every man, woman, and child that does not believe the word of God is child of the devil. The word of God gives us power to become the children of God. Without it, we are automatically on the enemy's side. There is no middle ground.

#### **John 8:42 through John 8:44 (NKJV)**

<sup>42</sup>Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. <sup>43</sup>Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. <sup>44</sup>You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Jesus is talking here to the religious leaders and reveals how far they were from God. They wouldn't listen to this word and believe. So he informs them that they are the children of the devil. Any person who does not stand in the truth is of the father of lies. Jesus is the way and the truth. So anyone who does not stand in Jesus is outside of the family of God.

Let's explore this a little further. Do you remember the parable of the wheat and tares?  
**Matthew 13:36 through Matthew 13:40 (NKJV)**

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”

<sup>37</sup>He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

<sup>38</sup>The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. <sup>39</sup>The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup>Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

In this world, there are some people who have been planted by God. We are planted on jobs, in schools, in neighborhoods, in organizations, and in churches. These are the children of God who are the good seed. They are the wheat. But along with the wheat, the enemy has sown in tares. They are the sons of the wicked one. They desire what he wants them to desire. They are influenced by his nature. So throughout the world we live in there are tares on the job, in the schools, in the neighborhood, in organizations and in the church.

This may come as a shock to you, but there are some good church members who are really just full of the devil. Right next to Deacon "Do Right" and Sister "Hallelujah" you may find Brother Liar or Mrs. Hateful. Brother Divisive or Sister Busy Body may be members of our church. Sister Doubtful and Brother Prideful will sometimes creep in unaware.

It is not our responsibility to drive these people out of the church. The Lord will handle it at the end. He will gather his wheat into his barn. But what did Jesus say about the tares? He said, they are going to be gathered up and cast into the fire. So if you are a tare, it is a good idea for you to change families. **God wants us in his family.** One of the ways the bible explains how to join God's family is by adoption.

#### **Galatians 4:4 through Galatians 4:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

<sup>6</sup>And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" <sup>7</sup>Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Write this down.

#### **Romans 8:14 through Romans 8:17 (NKJV)**

Paul says God sent Jesus to redeem us from the law. This is important because the Law revealed to us what sin was and the enemy could use the law to justify dragging us down with him. Jesus has made it possible for us to be free from the guilt and condemnation of the Law because we can now be adopted into the family of God.

Once we are adopted, the enemy has to give up his claims on us. He can't own us any longer. He can't drag us down to the pit with him. You see, if we are the children of the wicked one, we would inherit everything that is his. We would inherit his fate.

The adoption of God makes us heirs of those things that belong to God and we are joint heirs with Jesus Christ. We just need to make the transition into our new, holy family life. The Holy Spirit helps us with this transition by teaching us about the Father.

*Training to know God.*

*When DeVonti was very young and also when Faith was very young, Dr. First Lady and I wanted to be sure that our children knew who we were to them. So we called each other Mom and Dad. Any time we were in front of the kids we called each other Mom and Dad as if it were our names. We were training our kids to recognize who we were to them. It was a way for them to know where they stood in the family. It was a way for them to learn our roles in the family so when they get out in the world, they will know what a mother and wife looks like. They would know what a husband and father looks like.*

*I'm not Domecia to them. Domecia is my legal identification in the world. It is a name I respond to and a name that I'm bound to. To my children, I'm Dad. Dad is more personal. Dad is there to sit by their bed and pray at night. Dad helps with homework. Dad provides. Dad instructs. Dad blesses. Dad corrects. Dad will give up his last to provide for them. Dad is always looking out for what's best for them. You don't get the Dad part of me, they do. They are in my house and part of my family. Every time my wife calls me Dad she is introducing me and affirming me to them.*

In the same way, the Holy Spirit that is within us is helping us get to know God. By divine adoption, we are now grafted into the family of God. Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are teaching us about the Father. Jesus said when you pray don't call God by some name or title. Call him Father. Pray, our Father who are in heaven.

The Holy Spirit causes our hearts to cry out Abba Father or daddy. The Holy Spirit shows us what the Father is like. The Holy Spirit reveals the Father's character. The Holy Spirit can even give us the mind or will of the Father. He teaches us to cry out Abba Father until we can cry Abba Father for ourselves. For many people God is on the outside of them. He is far away from them. He is up in heaven and he is mysterious, and he is mean, and he is strict.

They know about God but they don't know the Father. They know about the wrath and the judgment but they don't know the Father. They know about church but they don't know the Father. They know about the blessings but they don't know the Father.

God is just. God is righteous. God is holy. God is love. God is merciful. God is gentle. God is faithful. God is compassionate. In his presence is fullness of joy. At his right hand are pleasures for ever more. He is looking out for what's best for us. He is ordering our steps. He is already in our tomorrows making a way for us.

This one God and Father is above all. God is above all. He is over it all. He is in charge. He is creator. He is ruler. He is sovereign. He is eternal. He is all in all. Everything is subject to him.

This one God is through all. God is through all. He is the channel by which everything exists. In him we move and breathe and have our being. He is working through us. He is blessing through us. He is reaching the world through us, just as he did through Jesus.

And this one God is in you all. John 14:23 says ...

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

If we would believe, God the Father would make his abode with us. If we would receive his promises, God would make his dwelling within us. If we would be faithful God would make his home with us.

### **Conclusion:**

There is one church and it has one body. There is one church and it has one spirit. There is one church and it has one hope of our calling. There is one church and it has one Lord. There is one church and it has one faith. There is one church and it has one baptism. There is one church and it has one God and Father.

There is one church and it must work together. There is one church and we must move in the same direction. There is one church and it cannot be divided. There is one church and the gates of hell can't prevail against it.