

One Faith, One People

What is the one thing you can't take away from Christianity and still have Christianity? Strip away the labels, the factions, the loyalty tests — what's left? Ephesians 4:4-6 provides the answer. Paul is saying: *Here is what is already true about you. The question isn't, do we agree on everything? The question is, do we share the one thing? And if the answer is yes, then we're already one. The only question left is whether we'll live like it.*

I. The Ones We Didn't Build

- A. Ephesians 4:4-6: *There is **one body** and one Spirit—just as you were called to **one hope** at your calling – one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.*
 - 1. Each of the seven ones is a declaration. Present tense. A description of what already exists.
 - 2. Before any of us existed, **God established the oneness.**
 - a) i.e., a people who have responded to the gospel, who have been buried in baptism, who have the Spirit living in them.
- B. It is about how we treat each other.
 - 1. If unity is something given, ... we don't get to decide who's in. God already did.
 - a) Romans 8:30: *And those he predestined, he also **called**; and those he called, he also **justified**; and those he justified, he also **glorified**.*
 - 2. The question isn't *how do we become one?* We are one.

II. What we Keep Doing with the Ones

- A. Romans 14:1: *Welcome anyone who is weak in faith, but **don't argue** about disputed matters.*
- B. Romans 14:4: *Who are you to judge another's household servant? Before his own Lord he stands or falls. And he will stand, because **the Lord** is able to make him stand.*
 - 1. When opinion and speculation become tests of fellowship, it always causes division.
 - 2. Galatians 5:14: *But if you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be **consumed** by one another.*
- C. Ephesians 4:3: *making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*
 - 1. If we ignore this and build walls instead... we are not protecting the faith ... **we are vandalizing something God built.**
 - 2. *The one body doesn't need us to defend it by dividing it ... it needs us to inhabit it.*

III. One Faith Means Something

- A. The **one faith** of Ephesians 4:5 is not a blank check.
 - 1. It's not *believe whatever you want and call it Christianity.*
 - 2. It centers on Christ. The cross, the resurrection, and the Lordship of Jesus are not negotiable. Baptism into His death and resurrection are not negotiable.
 - a) *The center is narrow enough to be meaningful and wide enough to be generous.*
 - b) *The faith that centers on Christ is enough to hold us together.*
- B. The question was never *do we agree on everything?* The question has always been, *do we share the one thing?* One Lord. One faith. One baptism. One God and Father of all.

IV. As We Close...

- A. Seven ones. Not seven goals. Not seven ideals we're still working toward.
- B. Seven declarations about what is already true of every person in this room who belongs to Christ.
- C. Will we live like it? Will we close the gap? We unite on one faith — not one opinion.
- D. *One faith. One people.* Not because we all see everything the same way. Because we all belong to the same Lord.