



UNIFYING REALITIES

Seven Unifying Realities Ephesians 4:4-6 July 21, 2019

One body. The church is like a human body with many individual parts that form one whole. We are baptized into Christ but also into that body and so become an integral part of it. People as drastically different as Jews and Gentiles are all reconciled to God in the one body. Christ is the head. Human leaders equip other members to serve and do their work so that the body is built up toward oneness and Christlike maturity. Being members of the same body leads us to speak truth to each other (Ephesians 1:12-13; 2:15-16; 3:6; 4:11-16, 25; 5:23, 29-30; Cf. Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

One Spirit. Everyone who becomes a Christian receives the Spirit as a down payment guaranteeing our eternal inheritance. He revealed to God's spokespersons God's plan of unifying mankind. We all have access to God through the Spirit, and he creates unity among us. He gives us wisdom to know God better and grasp the love of Christ more fully. He strengthens us with power within. We are to keep on being filled with him and to pray in him (cf. Romans 8:26-27). He uses God's word to shape us, and he is grieved when we rebel against him. (Ephesians 1:13, 17; 2:18, 22; 3:4-6, 16-19; 4:3, 30; 5:18-20; 6:17-18).

One hope. Before we knew Christ we were without hope, but then God called us to hope, and we put our hope in Christ for salvation and eternal life in heaven. We need prayer that God would enlighten the eyes of our hearts so that we might now our hope more fully. (Eph. 1:1, 18-19; 2:12; 4:4; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:8; Titus 2:13; 3:7)

One Lord. Our Lord is Jesus Christ. Through him God accomplished his purpose of making his wisdom known. We put our faith in the Lord, and we are now his people. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing

in him. We strive to learn the Lord's his will, what pleases him. Certainly this includes serving him, being strong in him, and giving thanks to the Father in his name. Husbands and wives and fathers and children all carry out their unique roles "in the Lord." One day the Lord will reward each of us for whatever good we do (Eph. 1:3, 15, 22; 3:8, 10-11; 18; 5:8-10, 17-22; 6:1, 4, 7-8, 10, 18)

One Faith. We are saved by God's grace through putting our faith in the Lord Jesus. By faith, he dwells in our hearts, and through faith in him we may approach God freely and confidently. Our faith helps us resist Satan's attacks against us, like a shield protects a soldier from flaming arrows. (The) Faith, along with the knowledge of the Son of God, creates unity and leadsto maturity (Ephesians 1:15-16; 2:8-9; 3:11-12, 16-17; 4:11-13; 6:16, 23)

One baptism. Baptism is in the name of Jesus Christ (or the Lord Jesus or the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and is to be done in faith. By the Spirit, we are baptized "into Christ" and also "into the body." Our sins are forgiven, we receive the Spirit, and we rise up with our Lord to live a new life (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-39; Romans 6:1-14; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:26-27; Colossians 2:11-12).

One God. God created all things. He is our glorious father. He is rich in peace, mercy, and grace, giving us the gift of salvation. He forgave us in Christ and loves us dearly. Yet his wrath will come on all who are disobedient. His eternal purpose is to create one new humanity. He accomplished this when Christ, his Son, gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Through Christ God forgave us our sins and reconciled all people to himself. We all have access to God through Christ. As a result, we are God's people, and God lives in us and among us through his Spirit whom he has given to us. He has put Christ over us as the head of his church. We are his handiwork, called to reveal his wisdom, live holy lives, and do good works. We are created to be like God and follow his example. He has also given us armor, his word, and his Spirit to help us in the battle against Satan. For all this and more, God is worthy of praise and we kneel before him (Eph. 1:1-3, 7, 14, 17, 22-23; 2:4, 6, 8-10, 15-16, 22; 3:4-12, 17-19; 4:13, 18, 24, 30, 32; 5:1-3, 5-6; 6:11, 17).

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