

## THAT THEY MAY BE ONE

### The Prayer of Jesus

When Jesus prayed the night before He went to the Cross His prayer was, *“that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me...”* **John 17:21**. The result of becoming one, in the same manner that Jesus and the Father are one, is that *the world may believe that God sent Jesus!* In these days many are striving to see the outworking of this prayer.

There are many “unity” movements, based around prayer, that have begun with the focus of drawing leaders from all denominational backgrounds to work together. However, very few leaders have become untied from their denominations, and have thus kept the divisions and walls even though gathering together once a week for prayer and even partnering in community events. The Father and Son did not just agree to disagree on some issues! They were and are ONE! God is calling us into His Oneness. It is time for us to measure ourselves by the Word of God and not settle for a superficial unity of working together while not being in real agreement together.

### There is One

The apostle Paul by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gave us the Word by which we can measure the extent of how effectively we are walking as one. He said, *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”* **Ephesians 4:4-6**. Paul lists seven “ones”. There are seven measures of oneness that we are to be walking in. These seven “ones” are absolutes. There is no room for disagreement. This is a complete (seven) revelation of the One God in the One body. This is the revelation of how we walk as one with God and each other. It is by coming to understand these “ones”.

### The context of ministry

The ministry gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (**Ephesians 4:11**) are mentioned in the context of these “ones”. So all ministry is to be on a foundation of knowing *“there is One”*. All ministers are to minister to the **One body by the One Spirit, establishing us in the One hope, teaching the One Lord, bringing us to the obedience of the One faith, immersing us in the One baptism, so we can know the One God and Father of us all**. Ministry is to build up this One body into the *“fullness of Christ”* who is the *“fullness of the Godhead”* (**Ephesians 4:13, Colossians 2:9**). We are not to be building our own denominational churches, but labouring to see Jesus’ body *“grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ”* **Ephesians 4:15**. The result of this ministry will be that we will be one with God and each other and the world will know Jesus is the One sent by God!

## THERE IS ONE BODY

The first **“one”** mentioned is that there is **“one body”**. We must come into agreement that there is actually only one body. This body is not made up of lots of parts that disagree with each other. In the context of people following particular ministers over and against others Paul writes, **“Is Christ divided?” 1 Corinthians 1:13**. There is no division **in Christ**. We need to ask ourselves, **‘are we in Christ?’ “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ” 1 Corinthians 12:12**. This verse says that Christ is actually **one body! Christ is one many-membered body!**

### Set in the body to function

**“But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased” 1 Corinthians 12:18**. God is in charge of placing you as a member in His body where He wants you. How does He **“set you in the body”**? **“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...” 1 Corinthians 12:13**. Three **“ones”** mentioned in this one verse. Through baptism by the Spirit in water into Christ, you become a member of this one body. Membership is not through signing up on paper – it is through being baptised into Christ that you are now a member of His body! The role of ministry is to **“equip [set in order] the saints”** properly connecting them to the **“Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God” Ephesians 4:12, Colossians 2:19**. Do you know your placement by God in the one Body? Is your identity as a member of the Body of Christ?

## THERE IS ONE SPIRIT

We are to **“endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” Ephesians 4:3**. There is only one Spirit and as we all strain every nerve to keep one with the Spirit, we will be kept in the bond of peace. If we have learnt to **“live in the Spirit [born again], let us also walk [in step with] the Spirit” Galatians 5:25**. If we all learn to not only live but also to **walk** in the Spirit, we will find ourselves more and more functioning as one body.

### Who is the one Spirit?

Let us look at a number of descriptions of the one Spirit in this one body.

He is:

- **“the Spirit of God” – Romans 8:9**
- **“the Spirit of Christ” – Romans 8:9**
- **“Christ in you” – Romans 8:10**
- **“the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead” – Romans 8:11**
- **“God is Spirit” – John 4:24**
- **“the Spirit of your Father” – Matthew 10:20**
- **“the Spirit of Jesus Christ” – Philippians 1:19**
- **“the Lord Spirit” [literally in the Greek] – 2 Corinthians 3:18**
- **“the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” – Romans 8:2**
- **“the Holy Spirit” – Acts 2:38**

- *“the Spirit of truth”* – John 14:17
- *“the Eternal Spirit”* – Hebrews 9:14
- *“the Spirit of adoption/sonship”* – Romans 8:15

There are other names given to the one Spirit mentioned in the Scripture. All of this helps us understand who this one Spirit is and how to receive Him in our lives as the one body that He inhabits! Have you received the one Spirit? Are you walking in step with Him, endeavouring to keep one with Him? Sons are those who are *“led by the Spirit of God”* Romans 8:14.

## THERE IS ONE HOPE OF YOUR CALLING

The gospel releases hope and there is actually one hope that we are called to. We need the *“the eyes of our understanding enlightened to know the hope of His calling”* Ephesians 1:18. We will be presented holy *“and blameless and above reproach in His sight – if...we are not moved away from the hope of the gospel”* Colossians 1:22-23. To be presented faultless, being like Jesus in perfection is our hope, *“but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure”* 1 John 3:2-3.

### What is the hope?

The hope is *“the hope of glory”* Romans 5:2. *“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil”* Hebrews 6:19. The hope is fully experiencing the glory which is the complete revelation of *“Christ in us; the hope of glory”* (Col.1:27). Our hope is in the complete transformation of our lives into the *“image of His Son”* Romans 8:29. We are to be *“looking for the blessed hope and appearance of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”* Titus 2:13.

Our hope is to see His glory appear and manifest not only to us but in us – *“for I consider that the present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us”* Romans 8:18. The hope of the gospel is that *“creation itself will be delivered from its bondage to corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God”* Romans 8:21. The hope is the fullness of the adoption coming to pass *“the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope...”* Romans 8:23-24. Do you preach the one hope? Is the one hope your goal and destiny in life? The church must be established in this one hope of our calling!

## THERE IS ONE LORD

There is only one Lord in this body. The word **“Lord”** in Hebrew which always refers to God is **“Adonai”**. It means the Lord in all His glorious attributes. The Lord in the Old Testament was Yahweh. Abram called Yahweh **“Lord [Adonai]”** five times in his conversation with Him in **Genesis 18:3,27,30,31,32**. When Peter was preaching on the day of Pentecost, the climax of his preaching was **“Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”** Acts 2:36. God made this Jesus **Lord!** The Lord Yahweh and the Lord Jesus, the Christ, are one!

### Who is the One Lord?

Let us look at who the Scriptures refer to as the Lord:

- ***“Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father” – Philippians 2:11***
- ***“Now the Lord is the Spirit...” – 2 Corinthians 3:17***
- ***“I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth...” – Matthew 11:25***

This is the revelation of the one Lord. The Lord is God in all His fullness! He is ***“Jesus Christ...Lord of all” Acts 10:36***. He is ***“the Lord of glory” 1 Corinthians 2:8***. ***“In Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” – Colossians 2:9***. Do you have a confession of the One Lord?

## **THERE IS ONE FAITH**

In the church that Jesus is building there is ***“one faith”***. This is quite shocking when we see the major doctrinal divisions people have camped behind. A true test of becoming one as Jesus and the Father are one, is our willingness to repent from wrong doctrine and believe the Word of God as it is written. One of the signs of a mature church arising is that ***“we all come to the unity of the faith” Ephesians 4:13***. *The faith* is speaking of the truth of the gospel. Jude exhorts us ***“to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” v.3***. The faith is ***“the faith of Jesus” (Rev.14:12)*** and ***“Through Him [Christ Jesus] we have received grace and apostleship for obedience of the faith among all nations for His name” Romans 1:5***. The name of Jesus is glorified by nations being obedient to **the faith!** The work of discipleship is to bring nations to obey the faith!

### **The one faith is the apostles’ doctrine**

The one faith we are to adhere to is ***“all that I [Jesus] commanded you...” Matthew 28:20***. Jesus said ***“My doctrine is not Mine but His who sent Me” John 7:16***. Jesus spoke the doctrine He received from His Father. The night before Jesus went to the Cross He prayed, ***“For I have given them [the apostles] the words which You [Father] have given Me...” John 17:8***. Jesus was faithful to deliver the faith (the doctrine, the words) He had received from the Father to His apostles that He had raised. After the day of Pentecost, the early church ***“continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine...” Acts 2:42***. **The one faith is the apostles’ doctrine.**

### **The apostles’ doctrine brings us into fellowship with God**

The apostle John writes that he and the apostles had seen, handled and touched the ***“Word of life – the life was manifested...” 1 John 1:1-2***. This Word of life was what the apostles ***“declared to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” 1 John 1:3***. True apostolic doctrine is the **Word of life**. When the Word of life is declared, preached and taught, it brings us into fellowship with the Father and the Son. John also calls this the ***“doctrine of Christ”*** by saying ***“he who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” 2 John 9***. The apostles in the early church ***“did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” Acts 5:42***. **Through faithfully bringing this doctrine, the one faith, they brought the early church into fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus the Messiah!**

## **Apostles' doctrine brings us into oneness with God and each other**

When Jesus prayed that we may be one He said *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their [the apostles'] word... John 17:20.* Jesus was not simply praying for *believers* but He was praying for those who would believe in Him according to the *apostles' doctrine*. These were the words they had received from Jesus, and those words came from the Father! When we believe in Jesus according to what the apostles preached and taught then *"we will be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one with Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me"* John 17:21.

The doctrine we receive has a direct impact on the oneness we have with each other and God. Our foundation is not a denominational set of doctrines to believe. We are to receive the *apostles' doctrine, the doctrine of Christ, the faith of Jesus, the words of the Father given through Jesus to His apostles!* It is only as we come back to *the one faith* that we will be in true oneness with God and each other. It is time to humble ourselves, receive true apostles and come back to *the faith that once for all delivered to the saints!* Do you receive the Word as written? Are you willing to come out of denominational doctrine and obey the *apostles' doctrine?*

## **THERE IS ONE BAPTISM**

The *one baptism* is referring to the immersion we have into Christ through water. When we understand the one baptism we see how essential it is to bringing us into true oneness as the Body of Christ. Baptism is **not** to become a member of a particular church group or denomination. Baptism is *"into the name [Person] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* Matthew 28:19. Baptism brings us into the very Person of God, the fullness of the Godhead. The **name** is singular, one. That name Peter declared on the day of Pentecost when he said *"let every one of you be baptised into the name of Jesus Christ..."* Acts 2:38. **We are baptised into the Person, the name of Jesus the Messiah. He is the manifestation of God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16).** By being baptised into Jesus Christ, we are baptised into the fullness of God and thus are one in His name, *"Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are"* John 17:11.

## **What is this baptism?**

The one baptism is:

- *"into Christ Jesus", "into His death", "buried with Him through baptism", "raised...to walk in newness of life", "freed from sin" Romans 6:3-4, 7*
- Baptism *"saves us...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ", "not the removal of the filth of the flesh [the blood removes the filth of the flesh], "the answer of a good conscience toward God" 1 Peter 3:21*
- *"by one Spirit" [baptism is a spiritual reality, not a symbol or ceremony], "into one body" 1 Corinthians 12:13*
- *"into Christ" enabling us to "put on Christ" Galatians 3:27*
- *"through faith in the working of God who raised Him from the dead" Colossians 2:12*

Have you received the one baptism? Have you been immersed in Jesus Christ, the fullness of God?

## ONE GOD AND FATHER OF US ALL

The six *ones* that have preceded are all to lead us into the knowledge of the **One God and Father of us all!** *“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus”* 1 Timothy 2:5. The purpose of the gospel is for us to receive eternal life and *“this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”* John 17:3.

### One God

The revelation of God is that **He is one!** *“Hear, O Israel: YAHWEH our God, YAHWEH one”* Deuteronomy 6:4. This One God is revealed in the Scriptures:

- *“yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him...”* 1 Corinthians 8:6
- *“our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”* – Titus 2:13
- *“and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh”* – John 1:1,14
- *“God is Spirit”* John 4:24
- *“God was manifested in the flesh”* 1 Timothy 3:16
- *“His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life”* 1 John 5:20
- *“And the name of the Son will be called...Mighty God”* Isaiah 9:6

### The Father

He is the *“God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”* Ephesians 1:3. Jesus said, *“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”* John 14:6. The revelation of the Father is in the Son, Jesus Christ. *“He that acknowledges the Son has the Father also”* 1 John 2:23. The Father is revealed in the Scriptures as:

- *“the Father of mercies”* 2 Corinthians 1:3
- *“the Father of Lights”* James 1:17
- *“the Father of glory”* Ephesians 1:17
- *“the Father of spirits [He disciplines us]”* Hebrews 12:9
- *“And the name of the Son will be called...Everlasting Father”* Isaiah 9:6
- *“I and My Father are one”* John 10:30
- *“If you have seen Me [Jesus] you have seen the Father”* John 14:9

Paul writes that these ones bring us to the revelation that the **one God and Father is:**

1. *“of us all”* – He is our Father, the Father of us. *“Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us that we should be called children of God”* 1 John 3:1
2. *“who is above all”* – He has all authority and power. *“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me [Jesus] on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne”* Revelation 3:21. We are invited to share His power and sit on His throne in Christ!

3. ***“through all”*** – We see His handiwork through all things, our eyes opened to Him being through all. ***“For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.” Romans 11:36***
4. ***“and in you all”*** – Did you know that the Father is actually in you! ***“If anyone loves Me [Jesus], he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come and make our home with him” John 14:23. “I [Jesus] in them, and You [Father] in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may believe that You have sent Me” John 17:23.***

Are you growing to know God as your God and Father? Do you see the Father in the Son?

**Let us measure ourselves and be founded on these seven “ones”. This is the measure of true oneness in the Body. As we are grow in the reality and experience of these “ones”, we will be found in Him and we will truly be one!**

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