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## Epistle to the Ephesians: The Basis of Christian Unity (4.4-6)

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- Pastor Paul Goh
- Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church

### Sources:

Martyn - Lloyd Jones, *Christian Unity*, 47 - 143  
James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians*. 126 - 132

- I. The Basis of Christian Unity (verses 4-6), generally
  - A. The unity of the Godhead (Trinity)
    1. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit
    2. Here, it is presented in a different order:
      - a) The Holy Spirit
      - b) The Son
      - c) The Father
    3. Why the different order?
      - a) It begins with the Spirit because it follows from verse 3 of endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace
      - b) It is an argument from effect to cause
  - B. The 7 things that consist our present unity can be divided under the 3 persons of the Godhead
    1. The Holy Spirit
      - a) One body
      - b) One Spirit
      - c) One hope of your calling
    2. The Son
      - a) One Lord
      - b) One faith
      - c) One baptism
    3. The Father
      - a) One God
      - b) One Father
- II. The basis of Christian Unity, specifically
  - A. One body
    1. Meaning
      - a) Refers to the body of Christ - the Church
      - b) Where Christ is the Head and we all are members of this one body
    2. Its character
      - a) It organic character
      - b) Diversity in unity
    3. Implication
      - a) "The way to cure ourselves of most of our ills and problems is to lift ourselves right out of this subjectivity and to see ourselves as the New Testament describes us, and especially in the words, 'ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular' (I Cor. 12.27) - Martyn Lloyd Jones, 48
      - b) We should see ourselves as the members of the Church and the Church as a reflection of the oneness of the Trinity

- c) Question: Do you belong to this ONE BODY OF CHRIST? If you are, we are one in Jesus Christ
- B. One Spirit
  - 1. Meaning
    - a) The Church is formed by the Holy Spirit gathered by the calling and preaching of God's Word
    - b) It is only One Holy Spirit which is indivisible
    - c) The evil spirits are many - "legion" but God's Spirit is One
      - (1) One is number
      - (2) One in Unity
    - d) The work of the Spirit is one and applies to all the elect though it is not administered in the same way
      - (1) Conviction of sin
      - (2) Quickening or Regeneration
      - (3) Incorporating us into the body of Christ
    - e) The Holy Spirit makes all these work one and when we are cleansed we are made to be like the Lord Jesus Christ
  - 2. Question: Do you belong to this ONE SPIRIT? If you are, we are one in Jesus Christ.
- C. One hope of your calling
  - 1. Hope
    - a) The Christian hope is certain and sure
    - b) Hope is the to the ultimate glory, the final appearance of Christ and setting up of His eternal kingdom
  - 2. Implication
    - a) Not looking back but looking forward
      - (1) "We must always be looking forward, because if we dwell on what we are not there will still be the tendency to divide and to separate" Lloyd- Jones, 89
      - (2) "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" Phil 3.14
      - (3) Looking forward to the house of many mansions (John 14.1-3)
      - (4) Looking forward to the glory that shall be revealed ( II Cor. 4.17-18)
    - b) Though now there are differences and divisions, sins and temptations but a day is coming where there will be the unity of the faith
- D. One Lord
  - 1. Meaning
    - a) There is only one who can really truly be described as the Lord
      - (1) "The Lord Himself leads to unity and always produces unity"
      - (2) Christianity is Christ
      - (3) He cannot be divided (I Cor. 1.11,12)
    - b) Christ is unique in His work
    - c) Unique in His relationship to us
  - 2. Implication
    - a) We are one with those who have one Lord, Jesus Christ
    - b) Furthermore, we are one with those who believe in the same Christ in His work and relationship to us
- E. One Faith
  - 1. Meaning
    - a) 2 possible meanings - either justifying, or saving faith or faith as a body of truth
    - b) The latter is correct - there is a set of Christian doctrines that all Christians believe
      - (1) From the apostle creeds

- (2) From the Reformed creeds
- (3) In the main we believe the fundamentals of the faith and we differ on the non-essentials
- 2. Implication - Question: do we have the one Faith? We are one.
- F. One baptism
  - 1. "It is not the mode of baptism that matters, it is the thing signified that matters"
  - 2. Significance of Baptism
    - a) Baptism is into one name only - the Lord Jesus Christ and into the Holy Trinity - a unity
    - b) We no longer belong to this world but we belong to Christ
    - c) We have forsaken all else and followed Him for He alone is our Lord and Master
    - d) Baptised into the body of Christ - the Church
  - 3. Implication
    - a) Question: have we been baptised in Jesus Christ? If we are, we are one though the mode differs!
    - b) An interesting question - are we one with the Roman Catholics? Many Reformed Churches accept converted members from those churches and do not baptise them again because their own baptism is valid. They are baptised according to Matt. 28.19. What do you think?
- G. One Father
  - 1. Meaning
    - a) There is one Father
    - b) The Father is above all
      - (1) God is over all
      - (2) The supremacy of God the Father to be exalted position of God the Father
      - (3) His plan is to re-unite, to gather together in one all things in Christ
    - c) The Father is through all
      - (1) He is the energy in all
      - (2) God pervades the whole life of the Church and sustains it
      - (3) The energy of God that has brought the church into being, and keeps the church in being and will hold it I being until the final consummation
    - d) The Father in you all
      - (1) The church is the habitation of God; he dwells in her, and therefore in us (John 14.23; 17.21-23)
      - (2) The Holy Spirit dwell sin us
  - 2. The trinity is concerned in your redemption
    - a) This makes us one
    - b) "The end of all doctrine is to lead to the knowledge of God, and the worship of God"
- III. Conclusion
  - A. These are the 7 things that make us one with other believers
    - 1. That does not mean that we can join their churches nor partake their communion or have joint activities
    - 2. And does not mean that we condone the false doctrines others Christian hold
    - 3. Our unity on earth may be fragile and weak but one day it will be perfect and will have the unity of the faith
  - B. What do want to emphasize? the differences or the common or core doctrines we believe.

Notice, the apostle Paul emphasizes what we have in common amongst Christians.