

Walk In Unity
Ephesians 4:1-6
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Beginning in Ephesians 4:1, we'll read down to verse 6. Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech," or beg, "you that ye walk worthy of the vocation," or calling, "wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit," there's our theme, "in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Back in Ephesians 2:8-10, we came across that classic passage where Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast." Then, he went right into verse 10 to say, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should," here's the key word, "walk in them." Paul was actually anticipating that what we are in Christ would be lived out, or that we would walk in those good works. We move from the section of Ephesians 1-3 of the wealth of the Christian to now the walk of the Christian. You might divide the book into the wealth and the walk, and we're going to see then the warfare of the believer.

We start the walk of the believer tonight. Ephesians 1-3 are doctrinal ending with doxology, and we saw that in Ephesians 3:20-21 last Wednesday night. Then, beginning in Ephesians 4-6:9, we have actually duty—doctrine, doxology leads to duty, or principles lead to practice. I mentioned it a thousand times, but Paul's epistles are all laid out this way. First he starts with doctrine, then he moves into duty. It's a natural transition. What we believe determines how we behave. We move into the section of practical truth, and we leave the section of position truth.

In this section of the walk of the believer, and the title of my message tonight is to Walk In Unity, Paul is going to tell us in these closing chapters that we are to walk in unity, which is actually Ephesians 3:1-16; then, we're going to walk in purity; thirdly, in harmony; and fourthly, how we walk in victory. That's pretty cool because that summarizes the Christian life. We're to walk in unity in the fellowship of believers, the body of Christ; we're to walk in purity before God and the watching world; we're to walk in harmony; and then we are to walk in victory. The harmony is in the home, wives and husbands, parents and children; and in the workplace, employees and employers. Then we're to walk in victory by putting on "...the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We move from the positional truth to the doctrinal truth.

Let me say something that just popped into my brain, and I want to say it before I forget. That doesn't mean that in the doctrinal section there's not practical truth, and it doesn't mean in the practical section there's not doctrinal truth. It's not a real clear distinction. You find practical exhortations in the first three chapters, you find doctrinal information in the last three chapters,

and we're going to point that out to you tonight. But what we believe determines how we behave. Have you ever heard somebody say, "It doesn't really matter what you believe as long as you live right?" That's a pretty common theory, but it's a fallacy. What we believe determines how we behave, and so sound doctrine is so very, very important because it's the foundation for our behavior. Our belief comes first, and then it flows out from our lives.

One of the weaknesses today in the Church is a lack of doctrinal preaching. The more time goes on, the more adamant I get about it and the more set I am to preach doctrine because we go to church and hear feel-good sermons, happy sermons—how to be happy, how to be successful, how to have a good marriage, how to find your purpose in life and all that stuff. We like that. We eat it up. But we need a foundation for how we live. We need to know God, know about God, know the doctrines of God's Word so that we can live them out in our daily lives. Our Bibles should be bound in shoe leather to remind us that we're to live out God's Word in our daily lives. It is important to have right doctrine so that we might have right behavior. Paul said in Ephesians 1:1 that we were saints, and we are now to live like saints.

If you're taking notes, the first thing Paul does in verse 1 is that he calls us to walk in unity. That's really the theme from verses 1-16, so we're going to take a few weeks to get through it. Tonight he just lays down the foundation where we actually have the character we need for unity and then the foundation and the basis that we need for unity as well. The exhortations in verse 1, go back with me to verse 1, Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." I want you to note the transition of the section. It starts with "Therefore." That's always the case. In light of what we learned in Ephesians 1-3, "Therefore," this is the natural progression or application, this is how we are to live.

In Ephesians 1, we talked about blessings from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the Father chose us, the Son has redeemed us, the Spirit has sealed us. We talked about the formation of the body of Christ, Jew and Gentile in one body. Then, he closes with that glorious doxology. Now, he's saying, "Therefore," in light of this, put these truths into action. A classic example is Romans 1-11 are doctrinal; Romans 12 begins the practical, and how does it start? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." It's really kind of almost a repeat of what we read here in Ephesians 4:1, "I...beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation," my King James Bible, which actually is the same Greek word translated "called" in verse 1. He's actually saying that you should walk worthy of your calling by which you have been called.

Just quickly, notice he refers to him being a "prisoner of the Lord." Again, not of Rome, not of the Roman government, not of unbelievers, but he's a prisoner because God has ordained and planned it to be so. That makes your time in jail a whole lot better. By the way, did you know a lot of great men and women that God has used have been in jail? I think of John Bunyan writing *Pilgrim's Progress* in Bedford prison, one of the greatest spiritual allegory books. Second to the Bible, it's outsold more books than any other book in history. If you haven't read it, you should read it. Paul spent time in jail. Peter spent time in jail. John the Baptist spent

time in jail. These are good quality people, but God used that for His good and for His glory. Paul's not making a plea for sympathy when he says, "I'm the prisoner of the Lord," but rather he's testifying to his acceptance of the present circumstances as God's will.

Amy Carmichael, one of my favorite writers, has written about the disappointments and setbacks of life. I found this years ago and thought it was so good. She gave four things that we need to remind ourselves of when life throws us reverses, like in Paul's case when he was actually put into jail. They are: (1) we're here by God's appointment, (2) we are in His keeping, (3) we are under His training, and (4) it's for His time. I'm going to go over those again because they're so good that I think it's important to remember this. When you're going through a time of difficulty or hardship—maybe you're sick or in bed, maybe you're watching this message from a hospital room tonight or maybe you're even watching from an ICU ward—remember God's appointment: God brought you here. Secondly, you are in His keeping: He's going to take care of you. Thirdly, you're under His training: He's trying to teach you something. Learn your lessons well. Fourthly, it's for His time: God might have this time for you to be in this situation. You need to rest in His love, His providence, and His grace.

Paul's plea is in verse 1, "beseech." That word actually means "beg of you, please." Paul is on his knees pleading with us. He's pleading because he knows how important these truths indeed are. It's the same phrase used in Romans 12:1, "I beseech you...by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies...unto God." What is he begging us to do? Here it is. This summarizes the whole next three chapters: Walk worthy. That's a very important word. "...walk worthy of," your calling. The term "walk" is a frequently used metaphor to describe the Christian's life and how we live. It pictures the daily activity and progress of life. Walking speaks of progress, when you're walking somewhere, unless you're on a walking machine and not getting anywhere; but if you get out and walk, you're moving ahead, progressing. It's speaking of the way we live, the way we grow, the way we walk with the Lord. How are we to walk? In a worthy manner of our calling.

This is something very important. Maybe you've already heard me say it, maybe you haven't, or maybe you've forgotten it, but get this. It's so important. The etymology of the word "worthy" literally means to weigh the same as. I'm holding my hands out. It's the image of a scale, and we don't use scales anymore, we have electronic digitalized scales, but in the markets, they would actually have a weight and put something on the other side. You had the two sides of the scale. Here's the mental picture. Kind of picture in your mind a scale. On one side of the scale we put Jesus, we're already in trouble, right? On the other side of the scale we put ourselves. Now, will you weigh the same as Jesus Christ or is Jesus going to weigh a lot more? Are you a lightweight Christian or are you living up to Christ's likeness? To walk worthy means to walk like Jesus, to weigh the same as Jesus Christ.

That's not to say that we will ever be divine or that we'll ever be perfect or sinless, but what the goal of the Christian life is, is you bring your practice up to your position. If you're taking notes, you should write that down. The goal of the Christian life is to bring your practice up to your position. Your position is you are perfectly righteous in Christ. He's imputed, that's the doctrine

of imputation, His righteousness to you. You can't get any more righteous positionally. Now, the goal is to practice it, to live it out. Again, the scale, you want to weigh the same as Jesus. People want to look at your life and see Christ in you. That's the thing he's telling us. He's basically telling us to live the Spirit-filled life, to live the Christ-filled life, to live the Word-filled life, to weigh the same as Jesus Christ—walk in a worthy way.

Write down 1 John 2:6 where John actually says, "...walk, even as he," Jesus, "walked." I remember that slogan years ago, "What would Jesus do?" The idea was to live the way Jesus would live and think the way Jesus would think. This worthy walk in verse 1 sets the stage, we want to live like Jesus Christ. We want to weigh the same as Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Paul moves, verses 2-3, to the character that we need for unity, or you might write down the graces needed for unity. Let's look at them. We need to walk with lowliness. In a sense, the worthy walk mentioned in verse 1 is now being described in verses 2-3, "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;" that's the Greek word *agape*, "Endeavouring to keep," maintain, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Paul talks about the virtues—the things the Spirit produces in our lives like Jesus, the worthy walk—that will result in unity. When you have a church where there's disunity, no harmony, and divisions, it's an evident sign they're not walking worthy of their calling. It's an evident sign that they're not walking in the Spirit. They're not having the fruit of the Spirit.

You should write these down. The first quality we need for unity...and the unity here in context is talking about us in the body of Christ, the brothers and sisters in the church getting along and loving one another. He says, "What we're going to need is humility." My King James translation has "lowliness," but it's the same as the word humility.

Did you know that humility was despised by the Greco-Roman world, but it was valued by God in Heaven. Christianity brought in the virtue of humility and meekness. In the Greco-Roman world they despised people who were humble. In the Greco-Roman world they despised people who were meek. Christ brought in humility and meekness, and it's Christianity that brought it into the world. The world, as we've been seeing in the news just the last few days in our nation today, the more we drift away from Christianity in America, the more violent, more harsh, more wicked, more crime, violent crime, we're going to see in our nation, and less politeness, less humility, less meekness because less of Christ. We're going to live in a very dark world. We're living in a dark nation right now. The context here, Paul's not talking national, he's talking about us as Christians getting along in the body of Christ with one another.

What is humility? I love Griffith Thomas' definition of humility. It's the unconscious self-forgetfulness. That is so spot on! In other words, when you know you're humble, you're not. If someone says, "Who's humble tonight?" and you raise your hand, you're not humble. I heard of a pastor that was given a medal by his church saying, "The most humble pastor in America," and then they took it away from him because he wore it on Sunday. When you know you're humble, you're not. The person who is truly humble does not know they are because they basically forget about themselves. Humility is not thinking too little of yourself, it's not thinking

too much of yourself, it's just not thinking about yourself. We call it selfless or they're thinking of others. That's a very humble individual. It's so important for us if we're going to have unity in the church, we're going to walk in unity, then we need to walk in humility. It's so necessary.

Again, Romans 12:3, which so parallels this section, says, "...not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." It's so very, very important.

Notice the next virtue in verse 2, meekness. These go together. Humility is not quite the same as meekness, and I discovered a new phrase concerning meekness today that I just fell in love with. I wrote it down: gentleness toward man and submission toward God's will. A meek person is gentle toward others and submitted toward God. Meekness is not weakness. It is literally power under control, that's why it's submission to God. I've often given the explanation of a horse that was sensitive and obedient to the rider's commands and directions. It's called a meek horse. Just about any horse, when you get on it, could throw you off; but a meek horse is a horse that yields to the rider's directions. You may have strength, but it's yielding that strength to God and letting Him control that by the power of His Spirit.

By the way, these virtues have such great application to the marriage relationship. If you're here tonight and you're married, I want you to think in terms of your marriage relationship as well as your relationship to one another in the church of the Lord. Jesus is described as meek and lowly in heart. Again, it's like Jesus.

Moses was described as the meekest man who walked at that time upon the earth, but he was very strong. He took the Ten Commandments and broke them in anger. Jesus went into the temple, made a whip, and overturned the changer's tables and drove them out with a whip. He wasn't kind of meek and mild little Mr. Milquetoast thing, but He was submitted and surrendered to the Father's will for His life.

I don't think a man is ever more manly than when he is humble and meek. If you are a man of God, what a great model for you to give for your sons, daughters, and for your wife, to be a man of humility. Spiritual leaders in the church must be humble, and the congregants of the church need to be humble so there won't be strife and division in the church. It is power under control.

The third virtue that we need, or grace for unity, is longsuffering. We find that in 1Corinthians 13, which is the fruit of agape love, which is the fruit of the Spirit. The phrase literally means long tempered toward people and relationships with others. It's being longsuffering toward others. It's actually literally connected to the idea of being long-fused. We use that as an expression or figure of speech like, "Hey, that dude blows up so quickly. If you light him, he'll blow up," or we'll say, "He or she has a short fuse." I have a pastor friend that we call the pyro pastor. He loves fireworks and explosions. On a trip to Mexico one time he bought an M-1000. He pulls it out of the car as we're headed for the border.

"You're going to get us arrested with that thing. We can't go across the border," I said.

"Okay. Just pull over. Pull over. Let's light that thing right now."

"You light it. I'm going to stay in the car."

It's about the size of the inside of a paper towel holder, and it had a little tiny fuse on it. I'll never forget his face when he lit that sucker and started running back to the car, "Ahhhhhhh!" BOOM! It blew a big hole in the ground. He's like, "Oh, that was awesome! Oh, that was awesome!"

People are often like that, right? They have a little short fuse and the slightest thing will just cause them to blow up. We need to be longsuffering toward people. How important that is today in the church.

Fourthly, notice verse 2, "...forbearing one another in," God's agape, "love." This is kind of a summary at this point of these virtues that he's described. Again, all of them, Galatians 5, are the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the Bible says, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." What do we need in our church? Spirit-filled Christians so there's unity. What do we need in our marriages? Spirit-filled husbands, Spirit-filled wives. A Spirit-filled husband will love his wife as Christ loved the Church. A Spirit-filled wife will submit to her husband as unto the Lord. Spirit-filled children—there are such a thing—will submit to their parents. Spirit-filled parents will not provoke their, "children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," so there'll be harmony even in the home. So, we are bearing one another's burdens.

Notice we must work at this. This is why it made me think about the marriage relationship. Notice he says, verse 3, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." That word "endeavoring," indicates that we put forth some effort. You say, "Well, Pastor John, it's the fruit of the Spirit." Yes, but we must pray, read God's Word, shut out the flesh, yield to the Spirit, practice discipline, and we must be eager to commit ourselves to unity with other believers in the body of Christ. That word "endeavoring" means make every effort, some translations have.

If you have a good marriage, it's because you've worked hard at it. You've made effort at getting along with one another. Paul says we're, "...to keep the unity." I want you to note that word "keep." It doesn't say we're to make or produce it, we already have it, and that's what we're going to go into in verses 4-6. We have the ground for unity, now we need to make every effort to maintain or to keep it. It's not something we manufacture or produce positionally, and this is a little doctrinal section in the practical section, because even when he's trying to get us to live the Christian life, he's trying to show us that it's based on doctrine, our position. You can't separate the two. If you only get practical preaching and you don't have doctrinal preaching, you have no foundation for how you live. He's telling them here that we need to endeavor to maintain what is already ours in Christ, the unity of the Spirit. We do that, verse 3, "...in the bond of peace." This is how we should walk in the church.

Remember, the Church is the theme of Ephesians. In Colossians, the theme is the head of the

Church, Christ. He's the focus. It's an epistle that focuses on Christ. In Ephesians, it's talking about the corporate body of which Christ is the head. It's so very important.

We move now to the third section tonight, verses 4-6, where we have the basis of our unity. Verse 1 is the call to walk in unity; verses 2-3, the character needed for unity; and verses 4-6, the basis, which is the ground or the foundation, for our unity. There are seven principles. It's so very important. Again, I really urge you to write these down. They're super important. Paul names seven basic spiritual realities that unite all true Christians. Paul's going to list seven basic spiritual realities that are true of all Christians or unite all true Christians. This is what we hold together in common as believers. It doesn't matter what denomination you're of, if you're a true Christian, you're part of the Church, the universal body of Christ, and these are true of every believer.

Let's look at them. In verse 4 we have "There is one body." Again, remember he's exhorted us to unity. He told us the graces that we need for unity, and now he's telling us the ground doctrinally for unity, "There is one body." This means there is only one Church. Yes, there are a lot of different denominations, but there's only one true Church, and that's the universal body of Christ. Who are members of that Church? Everyone who is born again—born of the Spirit, who is truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit, who's a true Christian—is part of the Church, the body of Christ.

In Romans 12:5, Paul says, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." The concept of "body," again, is a metaphor that's used because Christ is the head, and the head tells the body what to do. Did you know your brain tells your body everything—everything you think, everything you feel, everything you do, every sensation. Everything that goes on comes from "Grand Central Station," your brain. Your brain is telling you what to do, that's why you protect the head at all costs. It's so very important. Christ is the head. He's the One that leads, guides, and dictates to the Church. We have to be vitally linked with Him and responding to His direction.

It tells us here that we are one body, so remember that when you are getting along with one another in the church that we are all part of one body. The hand can't say to the eye, "I don't need you." The foot can't say to the mouth, "I don't need you." The arm needs the hand, the hand needs the arm, and we need one another. Amen? There are no vestigial organs in the body of Christ. We all need one another.

There's also one Spirit. Again, these are all true of all Christians in the body of Christ, "...and one Spirit." This is a clear reference to the Holy Spirit. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you're not a true Christian, you're not a part of the body of Christ. Romans 8:9 says, "...Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Of course, the Holy Spirit is the third Person in the Godhead. By the way, we're going to see the Trinity in verses 4-6. The Spirit is mentioned in verse 4, the Lord is mentioned in verse 5, and God the Father is mentioned in verse 6. All three of the Persons of the Godhead are in verses 4-6. This is a reference to the Holy Spirit, and that's one of the things I want to do, probably on Sunday mornings, a miniseries

just on the Holy Spirit—all about the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. We need that, “...one Spirit.” We all have the same Spirit. If you don’t have the Spirit of God, you’re not a believer.

We all have one hope. The first triad comes from the work and is related to the third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. What does he mean “one hope?” He means one hope of our calling which is the third stage of our salvation, our glorification. Salvation involves justification, I’m declared righteous; sanctification, I’m being made righteous; and glorification, I will be totally righteous. That’s when we will be completely like Jesus because we will see Him as He is. If you don’t understand justification, sanctification, and glorification, then you don’t understand the Christian life. Positionally, you’re justified, you’re declared righteous; practically, you’re being sanctified, it’s a lifelong process, made more like Jesus or made more holy; thirdly, you either die or you get raptured, one or the other, let’s hope we all get raptured together soon, and we’re caught up to meet the Lord in the air. It says “...but we shall all be changed...In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and “...we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

If we get raptured, immediately we’re going to get a brand new body, an eternal, immortal body—no pain, no weakness. You can bend over and tie your shoes. I’ll stop there. What a blessing that will be, to be like Him. That’s the third state. You can look around the sanctuary tonight. There are people who are justified. There are people who are more sanctified than others, being sanctified, but nobody here tonight is glorified. Some of you are pretty good-looking, but nobody’s glorified yet. Some of you need, like me, to be glorified big time! But that’s our hope as a Christian. He’s basically saying that if you are a Christian, that you’re not only one body, one Spirit, but we all have the same hope—we’re going to go to Heaven! We may differ on a pre-trib, mid-trib, or post-tribulation rapture, or we may be pre-mil, a-mil, or whatever it might be, but we all believe in Heaven. We’re all going to go to Heaven; we’re all going to be with the Lord.

This is what Jesus said in John 14. He said, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” That’s what a Christian is looking for. That’s what a Christian is longing for. That’s what a Christian is groaning for. I do it every morning when I get out of bed. I groan for glory. When I try to tie my shoes, I groan for glory. This is what we all share in common, so let’s love one another. Let’s get along in the church. We’re going to be in Heaven. You might live next door to each other in Heaven. We don’t want to sit next to each other in church, but we’re going to be neighbors for all eternity. Let’s learn to love one another, “...one hope,” and Jesus is our hope. He’s “...the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Fourthly, verse 5, “One Lord.” There are three triads, and I don’t want to emphasize this too much, but it’s kind of cool. The first one deals with the Spirit, the second one with the Son, and the third one with the Father. “One, Lord,” this is obviously clearly a reference to Jesus Christ. Romans 10:9, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” It’s confessing that Jesus is Lord.

In the early Church, the Roman government, you talk about government intrusion, required every Roman citizen to put a pinch of incense on an altar and declare Caesar to be god. How radical is that? If you refused to do that, it's off with your head—they feed you to the lions or put you on a stake and set you on fire. I think of the early Church Father, Polycarp, who was the bishop of Smyrna. He was asked to declare Caesar as lord. He said, "I will not. Eighty and six years I have served Him, my Lord Jesus Christ, and He has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my Savior and my King?" He was tied to the stake, lit on fire, and he went to glory because he was declaring Jesus as Lord.

It's basically saying that in the Church, we all have the same Lord, so we all need to obey Him. Why are we fighting, dividing, and arguing when we have one Lord, one Head dictating to us. We need to respond in obedience to Him.

Fifthly, verse 5, "...one faith." There are two ways you can interpret this, and I'll tell you which one I favor. One is that it's "the faith," spoken of by Jude, "...that ye should earnestly contend for," and that's a possibility. More likely, it's the individual subjective faith of every believer that all of us as Christians have something in common, we're all saved by faith. There are two aspects of it that unify us: our faith's essence, it's the same kind of faith, and our faith's object. We all put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

I've traveled the world. I can't speak any other language but English (and I can't do that one very well, either). When I meet a Christian in a foreign country, language barrier or no language barrier, there's a fellowship there. I always use the word, "Hallelujah," and they say, "Hallelujah," and we just shake hands. Praise God! The cool thing is to realize that we're all brothers and sisters in Christ, and we've all put our faith in Jesus who saved us. The same faith you exercise by trusting Christ to be saved is the same kind of faith I had to exercise to put my faith in Christ and be saved. You didn't get there because you worked for it and were better than me, and worked harder; we both had to just say, "Jesus, I trust You. Jesus, I believe in You. Jesus, I believe You died for my sins." What a camaraderie that is. We all get saved by grace through faith.

I believe that this faith here is most likely the second way, that it's our subjective, individual faith; and that what's unifying about that is, it's the same in essence and the same in its object, Jesus Christ, and Christ alone.

Sixth, we come, verse 5, to "...one baptism." Again, the question is, is this water baptism or Spirit baptism? It's a possibility that it could be both. I lean toward Spirit baptism for this reason: Not all Christians, whether at this time Paul wrote Ephesians or today, have been physically baptized in water but they're no less saved than someone who has been physically baptized in water. That's not to diminish the importance of baptism. There's something unifying in water baptism—we all confess Jesus is Lord and Savior, we all go under the water and bury the old man, we all come out of the water in newness of life, and that unifies us. But water baptism is an outward symbol of an inward reality.

Water baptism is only a rite or a ritual which speaks of Spirit baptism. You say, "Well, what do you mean by Spirit baptism?" Here's a very important verse for you to write down, memorize, and tie together with this verse in Ephesians. It's 1 Corinthians 12:13. You might write down 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, but let me read verse 13. Paul says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," notice a reference to one Spirit, a reference to baptism, and a reference to one body, "whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

I could actually teach on this for a couple of weeks. The moment you are born again, when you're taken out positionally of Adam with the condemnation, sin, and death in Adam and you're placed in Christ, remember Ephesians 1, that repeated phrase, "In Christ, in Christ, in Christ, in Christ?" All the blessings are ours in Christ. How did you get in Christ? By the work of the Holy Spirit, which I actually believe is the reference to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. All Christians have this. It happens the moment of conversion—you're taken out of Adam and you're placed into Christ.

When we hear the word "baptism," we think of immersion, we think of something that is immersed. There's another meaning to baptism. The word "baptism" also means identification. When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea in the Exodus, it says they were baptized into Moses, but they didn't get wet, none of them were wet. It means that they cut off ties with Egypt and were totally identified with Moses. They were baptized unto Moses.

This is a doctrine that divides Christians. This is a doctrine that Christians argue and fight over when it actually is to be a unifying doctrine that every believer, the moment you're regenerated, the moment you're indwelt, the moment that you're sealed, that you are actually baptized by the Holy Spirit—by, with, or in, same Greek word—and that you're placed into Christ. That's what the theme of this passage is, unity—what we all share together equally. If you teach that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is subsequent to conversion and that some have it and some don't, it doesn't unite but divides because you have the have's and the have not's, when the very doctrine itself is intended to bring unity, something we all share together in common. Not all Christians have been water baptized, but all Christians have been baptized by the work of the Holy Spirit placing them into Christ.

Then, seventhly, notice (we're almost there), verse 6, that he closes with, "One God and Father," this is actually the grand finale. We have the Spirit, the Son, our Lord, and, "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all," and here's Paul's southern accent, "and in you all." Paul was from Louisiana. I've been to Texas many times. John Stewart used to live in Texas. Pray for him. Everything is y'all, "How y'all doin? How y'all?" It's not you. There's only one of me. How are you saying, y'all? Paul says, "...and in you all."

I want to break this down. This is a marvelous verse, "One God and Father of all," this is not teaching the universal Fatherhood of God. The "...of all," in verse 6, is all saved born again, redeemed, true Christians. All of them that are a part of the, "...one body, and one Spirit...one hope...One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father," so we all have the same

Father. Again, the idea that God would be our Father was a mind-blowing concept that Jesus introduced and made so crystal clear, "Our Father, who art in heaven." It's not teaching that unbelievers have God as their Father. God created them, but He's not their Father. The Bible doesn't teach the universal Fatherhood of God nor brotherhood of man in this sense.

It says there, "...who is above all, and through all, and in you all." For a lot of time you read those and say, "I have no idea of what's going on here." Let me break it down for you. This is my favorite explanation by Charles Erdman. "Above all, He is sovereign in His power; through all, He is persuasive in His actions, He's working through every one of us as believers; in you all, He is indwelling in His presence." So, He's above all, He's sovereign in power; He's through all, He's persuasive in working through us in His actions. Some have that He is omnipotent and that He is in you all, that He's indwelling every believer. Every Christian has the indwelling Holy Spirit, and you have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all dwelling in you. How's that for a foundation and basis for unity? He's our Father who is in Heaven.

Basically, Paul's going to go on to talk about walking in unity. In verse 7, he now starts to talk about diversity through the gifts of the Spirit. He goes from unity to diversity, and it's a marvelous way he knits the two together. Let's pray.