

The Church Today (Part 3) The Fundamentals of the Church (Ephesians 4:4-6)

Introduction: In our current series, we have been studying the doctrine of “The Church Today.” What the church is. What the Bible has to say about the church. We have confirmed, Jesus Christ is the founder of the church – without Jesus, there is no church. We have confirmed, the foundation of the church is the Bible, given to us by Holy Spirit inspired apostles and prophets. Now today, we want to talk about the fundamentals of the church. (These are the essentials, the ground rules, core doctrines if you will, that we believe) So, what are these vitally important truths?

I. The truth of one body:

- A. **What is that body?** That body is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. **Who is the body?** The Bible say we are when... (1 Cor. 12:12-13)
"For by one spirit have you all been baptized in to one body."
- C. **The body of Christ is not divided.** *There is one body...*
- D. **The body is not a denomination** - Salvation is not in a denomination. Salvation is in *the person* of Jesus. Col. 3:11
All of God's family, one body of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that body is made up of those who have been saved, born again, and baptized into that body by the Holy Spirit.

II. The truth of one Spirit:

- A. **What is that one Spirit?**
- He is the Holy Spirit of God. (Isa. 11:2; 61:1; 2 Cor. 3:3), He is the source of our life. (Rom. 8:2), He is the strength of our life. (Zech. 4:6)
 - The Bible teaches us that we must be filled with the Holy Spirit of God. (Eph. 5:18)
 - And when we are filled with the Holy Spirit of God that becomes the basis for our fellowship with one another.
- B. **When you have a spirit filled body** you have the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. One Spirit that brings us together and He is the basis for our unity.

III. The truth of one hope:

- A. **What is that hope?** (Tit. 2:13)
- B. **It is the hope of the second coming of Jesus Christ.** (Eph. 1:13-14)
- Paul is suggesting here that the believer who realizes the existence of the one body, who walks in the Spirit, is one also one who looks for the Lord's return!
 - The second coming of Christ is mentioned 318 times in the New Testament alone.
- Why? Because it is one of the most important doctrines of our faith. *It is the glorious and blessed hope of God's church.*

IV. The truth of one Lord: (v.5)

- A. And who is that Lord, His name is Jesus, the Son of God. (Rom. 10:9-13; 1 Cor. 12:1-3; Phil. 2:9-11) Only believers, speaking by the Holy Spirit, acknowledge that Jesus is Lord. (We have this in common!)
- B. Early believers stood their ground and professed; Jesus is Lord. And there is only one Lord. *That is one confession that you must make.*

That is a great truth upon which the New Testament church is built. Jesus Christ is Lord.

V. The truth of one faith:

- A. **What is this one faith?** Paul is not talking here about the capacity to believe; he is talking here about the faith as a revealed body of truth.
- He is talking about common faith we share in our core biblical doctrines. (Jude 3)
 - When he says there is one faith, he means there is one thing upon which you need to build your life and that is the Bible, the Word of God.
- B. **There is a reason He did not say experience** - *The early Christians recognized a body of basic doctrines, based on the Word of God, given to them by the inspiration of Holy Spirit, from the Prophets and Apostles, that they taught, guarded, and committed them to others (2 Thess 2:2)*

And regardless of what men have written or experienced, the Bible is where the basis for our beliefs come from!

VI. The truth of one baptism:

- A. **The baptism of the Holy Spirit.**
- This is that act by which the Spirit when He places the believing sinner into the body of Christ at conversion (1 Cor 12:13).
 - When you receive Christ as your Savior you are placed in the body by the Holy Spirit. *You are baptized in the body of Christ.* Paul said, *"For by one Spirit have you all been baptized in to one body."*
- B. **Baptism of water** -
- The thing that represents that spiritual baptism into the body is believer's is baptism by emersion in water. (Mt. 28:19)
 - Why should I do it? Obedience, symbolism, the message it sends the example it sets.*
 - When should I do it? After you have been saved.*

It is the baptism of the spirit into the body of Christ, *but it is symbolized only by baptism in water.*

VII. The truth of one God: (v.6)

- A. **What does Paul mean that God is the Father of all?** He is talking to a church. (Eph. 1:1)
- B. **Paul is talking to and about the church** -He is talking to believers. God is only the Father of His children. (Eph. 2) Paul here, is talking here about being a part of the family of God. And he is saying that God is the Father of all of His family.
- C. **Paul likes to emphasize God as Father** (Eph 1:3,17; 2:18; 3:14; 5:20).