

# THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

***Ephesians 4:1-6** I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, <sup>2</sup> with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> endeavoring to keep **the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

***John 17:20-23** ..... that they all may be one, as You, ....; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. <sup>22</sup> ....., that they may be one just as We are one: <sup>23</sup> I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

## **1. Paul make a clear call to all believers**

- To 'walk worthy'
- This is how we are to walk - live, think, behave

## **2. What is Unity of the Spirit?**

- It is not a union or uniformity

*It is: "To believe, think, act and behave as those whose faith in the Lord Jesus Christ results in them to living a life of harmony, love, respect, forgiveness, serving, patience and Christlikeness - that reflects the person of Jesus Christ to one-another and to the world in which we live"*

### **3. What destroys the Unity of the Spirit?**

- Gossip, Criticism, Back-biting, Pride, Little foxes, White-anting, Unforgiveness.

***Song of Solomon 2:15** Catch us the foxes, The little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.*

***Proverbs 11:13** A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.*

***Proverbs 16:28** A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends.*

***Proverbs 17:9** Whoever would foster love covers over an offence, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*

***2 Corinthians 12:20** For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.*

***James 4:11** Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.*

***Matthew 7:1-5** Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup> For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup> ‘Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your*

*brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

***Galatians 5:15*** *If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.*

***My mother taught me: "If you can't say anything nice about someone, don't say anything at all!"***

- **Factions and Cliques**

***1 Corinthians 3:1-9*** *Brothers and sisters, ....Are you not acting like mere humans? <sup>4</sup> For when one says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not mere human beings? <sup>5</sup> What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. <sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.....; you are God's field, God's building.*

#### **4. How do we keep the Unity of the Spirit?**

- **Not by rules**

- Laws, rules, commandments, etc

- **Not by the 'lowest common denominator'**

- Compromise and negotiation

## **5. Unity of the Spirit is based on seven foundations:**

*Ephesians 4:4-6. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

- **One body**

- *We love and Honour the church that Jesus loves*

- **One Spirit**

- *The Holy Spirit of God who empowers us - BHS*

- **One hope**

- *We share a wonderful hope of the resurrection and heaven*

- **One Lord**

- *We acknowledge our only Lord, Saviour and King*

- **One faith**

- *Our faith in Christ alone for salvation and eternal life*

- **One baptism**

- *Our identification with Christ and separation from our former life*

- **One God**

- *We believe in one true and living God, Creator, Commander and Supreme Ruler – who is above all, through all and in you all*

## 6. Attributes of unity

*Ephesians 4:1-3 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, <sup>2</sup> with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> endeavoring to keep **the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace.*

- **Humility**

- *Lowliness – being humble and unimportant*
- *We do not provoke or are easily provoked*
- *We do not offend or are easily offended*

- **Repentance**

- *Being quick to repent and ask forgiveness*

- **Forgiveness**

- *An ongoing mindset of forgiveness*

- **Respect**

- *Honoring and esteeming each other*

- **Gentleness**

- *Exhibiting kindness, grace and gentleness*

- **Longsuffering**

- *Patience with each other*
- *Not seeking revenge*

- **Bearing with one-another in love**

- *Bearing one another's shortcomings*

- **The bond of peace**

- *United to strengthen each other for a common purpose*

- **Serving one-another**

*Matthew 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. ”*

<b>We are to live by ‘The Law of Love’</b>
--------------------------------------------

*Ephesians 4:1-6 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, <sup>2</sup> with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> endeavoring to keep **the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

**We are called to: “Keep the Unity of the Spirit”**