

# Sunday, January 30, 2005

## Unity in the Church

### Part 2

#### By Nick Bibile

**Ephesians 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;**

We will continue where we stopped before. Remember I said when the unbelievers are united one in mind it can be very dangerous. We saw the example of the tower of Babel. Then on the other hand when true Christians are united it can be a blessing and a powerful witness of Christ to an ungodly world.

#### **One Body.**

When you say one body it means there is only one true church consist of different denominations. As we saw last time there are lot of churches who call themselves Christians but they do not hold to the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, they are not part of the body of Christ. Just because it has the banner of Christ, the name of Christ it does not mean they are in the body of Christ. Again I ask this question why is it that the Reformation broke away from Roman Catholicism? Because Roman Catholicism believes it is not Christ that leads us to the church but it is the church that leads us to Christ. All the emphasis is given to the visible church here on earth. That's why there was a Reformation as the reformers broke from the Roman Catholic view and saw that the church is a spiritual organism, it emphasized there is no church apart from the redemptive work of Christ.

#### **When did the church begin?**

According to dispensational theology the church began in the New Testament as the dispensational theology believes God has two people. Israel and the church. Israel the earthly people and the church the heavenly people. Dispensational view is new, it owes much to J.N. Darby (1800-1882) who was the father of the Brethren movement. The following people taught and spread this theology.

C.I. Scofield. (Scofield Ref Bible); L.S Chafer; C.C Ryrie; J.F. Walwood , Dave Hunt, Chuck Smith and others.

Reformed theology way before dispensational theology flatly deny as Reformed theology believe God has one people, that's the church. The church began in the O.T.

#### **What is the meaning of the church?**

We know which one is correct when we look at the meaning of the church. There are two Hebrew words used. One is qahal which comes from the root word qal meaning to call. The second word is edhah which comes from ya'adh to appoint, to come together to an appointed place. The word qahal is used for the assembly or the congregation. When

Moses told the people that the Lord said to him, "Gather the people to me." The Hebrew word qahal is used meaning to summon or assemble. The New Testament word for church in Greek is ekklesia which means the same assembly.

Stephen used the word church for the children of Israel when they were in the wilderness.

Ac 7:37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

38 This is he that was in the **church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.

Ps 22:22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Compare Ps 22:22 to Hebrews 2:12

Heb 2:12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

### **What do you mean by body?**

Eph 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Body is a metaphor of the church. There are other metaphors given to the church. The church is called an olive tree, branches of a vine, a building, a kingdom, a family, a temple, a bride and here we see it is called the body.

The body of Christ is applied not only to the universal church but also to a single congregation.

Why is it called a body in this context? It is the body of Christ because of its union with Christ. Body is made up of different parts but one unit, the parts of the body work together. Do you know that 747 airplane is made of 6 million parts, next time when you fly at a speed of 500 miles per hour 35,000 feet high you will be glad to know that one part does not fly itself! But all 6 million parts are assembled as one machine then it flies as one. One body stresses the unity of the church and the relationship to our Lord Jesus.

There is one body, means there is one true church and the church is the body of Christ. There is one head of the church and that head is the Christ. We the members are knitted in love together and to Christ the head.

Col 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Eph 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

1Co 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

1Co 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

1Co 12:20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

The church which was mainly Jewish now Gentiles are grafted in, the mystery of God is that the Gentiles too are in the body of Christ.

Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Now if we are in one body knitted together in love there is unity, we rejoice together and we weep together as our love to each other cannot be separated.

1Co 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

### **One Spirit.**

Paul is not saying that we are one spirit as we are one in mind united in our goals. But the Spirit is capitalized; we are one because what the Holy Spirit has done in us. Who convicted of sin, which awakened us, gave us life when we were dead in sin? It is the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who brings us from spiritual death to spiritual life, there are different spirits of religions but there is only one Spirit that convicts of sin, enlightens, regenerates and makes us alive. Bring us into the body of Christ. It is only one Spirit that comforts the saints, helps in prayer in access to God through Jesus Christ. It is the spirit of adoption and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

This same Holy Spirit creates a holy fellowship in the bonds of love. (Gal 5:22) No matter what background or what nationality we come from it is the Holy Spirit that has united us together in the church.

Just like in Acts 4:32 it is said there was one heart and one mind so Paul tells us there is one body and one Spirit, means to say that we are all one in Christ Jesus. We are joined together like the fingers of one hand. We will have brotherly love and union with Christ not in the flesh but in the spirit of God. God's spirit governs us, reforms our affections in a way that we are joined together.

### **One hope of your calling.**

The word hope has suffered much in our English language speech. In today's meaning it is something we hope for but not sure, something perhaps may come true. The biblical idea is different. The Greek word *elpis* means a confident expectation. It is not an uncertain hope. It is a certain hope. A sure hope. It is a true hope. Hope is the anchor of our soul staying amidst the storms of this life.

Heb 6:19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

A blind man who became a Christian, at his death bed he said, "My eyes are going to be open in heaven and the first person I am going to see is my Lord Jesus Christ."

We have a glorious hope laid up in heaven. There are no degrees of hope, meaning I hope a little, or more, or God loves the pastor more and the laymen a little. If one goes to school and study hard he can get a good job and a good salary. Your salary depends on your education, experience and your skills. So you hope for these things. That's not the way it works when it comes to Christianity.

We are loved by the same love, and purchased with the same price of Christ's blood, justified with the same righteousness and equally the sons of God, heirs to the same heavenly inheritance; all are made kings and priests unto God into one kingdom.

Therefore we should be united in our affections to one another here on earth.

Jesus will come back, we will be with him, and there is a home for us in heaven. If we believe this we can be united together as a church. We should labor and strive to live together as because we shall be one in glory in heaven.

Col 1:5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

We cannot walk alone in this pilgrimage as we need one another.

Ps 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Before King David came into being there was confusion and division in the kingdom. He was alienated and there were divisions among King Saul's people and his people. But David praise God in the highest terms for the peace and the harmony which came from the goodness of the Lord when he became king. There was peace where it had never known before because of the brotherly love.

### **Application**

A Brahmin from India wrote to a missionary: "We are finding you out. You are not as good as your book. (Meaning the Bible) If your people were only as good as your book, you would conquer India for Christ in five years."

The apostles lived Christianity. Today many Christians live like the unbelievers and the only way that they can be distinguished when they carry a Bible to the Church. When we see someone with a Bible we think they are Christians and without the Bible it is hardly noticeable. The apostles and the early Christians did not have Bibles at that time and they did not carry Bibles all over with them but the Bible carried them. They lived Christianity.

During puritan era, there was this little boy carrying large Bible for family prayers. His Dad said, "My boy, you carry your Bible now, but the time is coming when you will find that the Bible will carry you."

Out of the seven churches in the book of Revelation, what is the only church that the

Lord did not rebuke? The church of Philadelphia. The name Philadelphia signifies brotherly love. The Lord commends the church for keeping his word.

1Jo 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.

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