

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism

Ephesians 4:4-6

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, June 7, 2020

Good morning everyone and welcome to another Sunday morning message here at our Grace Fellowship YouTube channel. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jeremy Cagle. I'm the teaching pastor for Grace Fellowship Chilliwack. We're a Bible teaching church located in Chilliwack, British Columbia. And before we begin the message this morning, I just want to say for those of you who weren't able to join us, we actually had a service before the sermon today. That's the first time we've done that in quite a while, but we were blessed to have had a time of music and prayer and fellowship. Right before the message. We haven't done that since March 8, if you can believe that or not. It's been three months since we have had a chance to worship the Lord together in song, so this was a special occasion for us. You can't see them on the camera, but we have many of our church family here today and it is so good to see their faces.

As you know, when the Coronavirus first started, they asked us not to meet in groups of 10 people or more to flatten the curve. They asked us to do that in the interest of public safety, but recently the number has changed. It's gone up to 50 people which has allowed us to do this; it's allowed us to meet together and hold services once again, which we're very thankful for. I also want to add that we will probably be doing this for the near future. We're going to be meeting on Saturday nights for the foreseeable next couple of weeks, maybe even months, because it allows us to get the sermon ready for Sunday, since most of you aren't able to be here. This allows us to have the sermon recorded and edited and put together for the next morning. And so, we're going to be doing this for a little while. But all this to say it is good to see things going back to normal again. It's good to see things heading in this direction.

After the service last week, a few of us were visiting sitting around the table and one of our church members said, "It has been a long time since I've done this." She says, "It's been a long time since I've just sat around and talked to anybody." She said "I've done it over Zoom, I've done it over the internet, but I haven't talked to a human face in quite a while; and I'd forgotten how much it means to me. I'd forgotten how much I need this interaction." I think we could all relate to that, couldn't we? I think we can all relate to how much we need this; we need to talk to people face to face, it's not enough just do it over the computer. We need to see a human person, and Lord willing, we're going to be able to do that more in the weeks to come. And we're greatly looking forward to that.

With that said, this morning I would invite you to open your Bibles with me to a book that talks about that. It talks about the need to fellowship with others and meet with people face to face. And that is the book of Ephesians. So, if you have your Bibles with me this morning, if you

would open them to the book of Ephesians and we're in chapter 4. So, if you would turn there with me, and while you're doing this, I want to read the passage to you. I want to read Ephesians 4:1-6 to you and here the Word of God says this,

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is overall and through all and in all.

Just to explain this passage to you and walk you through it. If you notice, chapter 4 starts off with a transitional word because it begins with the word “therefore” which points us back to what was said before it points us back to what was said earlier. And if you look in chapter 3:20 Paul writes,

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

In other words, since God is able to do this, *therefore*, this is how you should respond. So Paul is saying here that “Since God is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we asked her think, *therefore*, I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of your calling.” The word “worthy” here it's an important word in the passage because it's the Greek word *axios* which means fitting or suitable to something. In some cases, it referred to an object that was balanced on both sides of a scale. We've all seen those ancient scales that had a weight on one side and a weight on the other, and they would go up and down until they were stable. They would go up and down until they were balanced. And that's what this word is referring to. Paul says when you're saved, your life needs to be balanced. When you come to faith in Christ, it needs to be stable. Your position and your practice in Christ need to match; your life and doctrine need to go together. As we said last week, so many Christians fall short in this because it's just doctrine, doctrine, doctrine with them. It's just knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, and that's all they care about. That's all they talk about. Paul says that's wrong because you need to apply it to Paul says that's wrong because you need to live out the doctrine that you're learning. For others, it's just the opposite of this. They swing things to the other extreme, and it's just feelings, feelings, feelings with them. It's just emotion, emotion, emotion to the point that they say, “Don't bother me with doctrine. All I want is Jesus. Don't bother me with the truth. All I want is God.” Paul says you can't do that either. You get to God through the truth. You've got to be balanced in both sides of this. You need to learn the truth, and then you apply it. You need to learn the Bible, learn sound doctrine, and then you put it into practice.

And Paul says, you do it in the following way. He says, you apply the truth like this. If you notice in verse two, he says you do it with all humility, which means you have a low view of yourself. You do it by seeing yourself down here and God up here. You can't learn doctrine the way you're supposed to and be proud; it's just not possible. You have to be humble. You also need to be gentle and patient with people, which means you should have a soft approach with them. You should show tolerance, and then he says you do it by "being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," which means this is your motivation for doing this. This is your goal, you preserve the peace; and to explain that he says in verse four,

There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

In other words, you preserve the peace because Paul says you are one, one, one. God has made you one. You see that word repeated over and over again. And here it's repeated seven times in this passage to say that this is what God has done for you in the church. This is what God has done for you in Christ. He has made you one. You were many people, came from all over the place, and He brought you together; so you need to you need to preserve that now. You need to maintain that. Jesus prayed in John 17:21 that his disciples may be one, "even as You Father, are in Me and I in You," and God has answered that prayer. He fulfilled that; He made us one, and we need to live it out today.

So many times we can forget this because the church is so divided. We can forget that God has made us one because the church is so split up, but the true church, the spiritual church, the universal church is one. It always has been, always will be. And Paul says, you preserve that by focusing on the truth. That's the interesting thing about this passage. He says you maintain it by focusing on doctrine, because if you notice, all these words in this passage are doctrinal, aren't they? All these words refer to truth; one body, one spirit, one hope of your calling. That's all doctrinal stuff. That's all truth terms. He started off talking about application but now he's into doctrine. In other words, Paul doesn't say if you want to get along with others, it needs to be feelings, feelings, feelings all the time. He doesn't say if you want to make peace, it needs to be emotions, emotions, emotions. He says you need doctrine as well because that's where your unity comes from. It comes from believing certain ideas. And they're found in here they're found in this passage.

Now, obviously these aren't all the doctrines in the Bible. But this is a summary of them. These aren't all the things that Scripture talks about; all the things you need to be unified over, but these are some of the main things. This is just a sweeping survey of it. After all, this is how the church works, this is how it stays together in the first place because we all believe this no matter what. We all trust these things, no matter what goes on in the world around us. One of our elders

prayed before the sermon today that God would preserve the church in the midst of these crazy times. It is crazy out there. This world is a very strange place. But we can always go back to this because it never changes. We can always go back to what's written in here because it stays the same no matter how nuts it gets out there. So many Christians are worried today and they're panicked and afraid because they're saying, "What's going on? What's going to happen to the world?" And I don't I don't know the answer to all of that. I don't know what's going to happen to the world in the immediate sense, but I know what's going to happen to the church. The church is going to stand. I know what's gonna happen to the church, the church is going to still be here because it's going to rest on these things. It's going to rest on the Bible.

This is important to mention, we really do need to talk about this today because so many churches are uniting over other things. A lot of Christians are uniting and coming together over other things like race and nationality. They're coming together over their ancestry and common tradition. So that you have a Dutch church and a Mennonite Church. You have a Russian church and a Chinese church. You have a Canadian church and an American church. But the problem with that is what do you do when that's gone? What do you do when Canada or the US disappears? I pray it never happens. We love our countries, but nations don't last forever. I mean, governments and rulers come and go, and what do you do when they go? Paul says you need to be united over something greater than that if you want to last. You need to stand on something that's bigger than all of these things. He says you need to be united over doctrine, over the truth.

You know to say this another way and you get real personal for a moment. Let's get real practical here. Let me ask you a question. What do you do when you have nothing in common with someone in the church? What do you do when you have nothing to talk about? Have you ever experienced that before? We all have. Paul says you need to talk about this because it transcends all that. You need to go back to these things go back to your Bible, because that's what unites you. That's what brought you together in the first place.

To ask it another way, what do you do when you can't get along with someone in the church? That's happened before, hasn't it? It's happened to everybody. What do you do when you can't see eye to eye with them? Paul says you go back to this. This is greater than that; this is bigger than the things you fight about. I remember talking to a man several years ago who couldn't get along with someone in the church, and they got into a fight and it was an ugly fight. It was nasty. Angry words were exchanged, family members stop talking to each other; but then all of the sudden it stopped. All of the sudden the fighting ended, and everything was at peace. Everybody was happy again. And it was bizarre, so I called the man up. I said, "Hey, what happened? Why did you stop fighting?" And he said, "Well, it was simple, really. We met for coffee and I told him that he was a Christian and I was a Christian, so we shouldn't fight like that." And then he hung up the phone. That was it. They found a way to work it out.

That's what you see here. So what Paul is saying, he says you need to find a way to work it out with other Christians. You need to find a way to stop fighting, because you're one. You're at peace with God, and therefore you should be at peace with each other. This is the, by the way, this is where you see the balance of the Christian life. This is where you see it all come together because your doctrine says you're a Christian. Your doctrine says you believe in Christ and you are one, and you apply that by getting along. You apply that by making peace with each other. When you fight, you make peace; when you disagree, you make peace because you are one in Christ.

Romans 12:18 says "If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" You see the word "all" there. That means *all* men, not just the ones you have things in common with but the ones you don't; not just the ones you like but the ones you don't. You make peace with everybody.

I quoted him to you last week, but I want to give you another John Stott quote this week. In his book *God's New Society*, John Stott says that "There can be only one Christian family, and only one Christian faith, hope and baptism because there's only one Christian God." He says, "You can no more multiply churches than you can multiply Gods. Is there only one God? Then there should only be one church. Is there only one Spirit? Then there should only be one body. The body can't be divided any more than the Spirit can be. It is no more possible to split the church, the true church, than it is possible to split the Godhead."

If we believe that, if we trust that, then we need to live like it and be at peace, which is what we're going to talk about this morning. If you're taking notes this morning in Ephesians, 4 we're going to look at four reasons why the church is one. That's our outline for today. That's what we're talking about. If you're taking notes, in Ephesians 4:4-6 we're going to look at four reasons why the church is one because as Paul goes on in this letter, as he continues writing the book of Ephesians, he tells us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. He tells us to live a balanced life on both sides of the scale, and he says here that you do it by remembering your doctrine. You do it by remembering the things that brought you together in the first place.

This is important because the world is a war. The world is a crazy place. You see people fighting everywhere. Matter of fact, we saw protests in Chilliwack this week. In Chilliwack, of all places. The craziness has come here, but Paul says it doesn't need to be that way in the church. The church needs to be one and here's four reasons why. The first one is this. There's one body and one spirit.

The first reason why the church is one is because there is one body and one Spirit, which means there's only one church, there's only one body. There aren't hundreds of them or millions of

them. There are millions of local churches, but the universal church, the spiritual church, is one. And you see this in chapter four starting in verse one. Paul says,

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit.

Just to say a little about this here, if you notice, the beginning of the verse is italicized in some of your Bibles. The word “there is” is italicized, and that's because it doesn't appear in the original manuscript. The translators added it to make sense out of the English, but the Greek literally reads “Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, one body and one Spirit.” It doesn't change the meaning and the meaning is the same. But it shows you Paul's progression of thought here, it shows you how close these ideas are to one another. Paul says you preserve the unity of the Spirit because you have one Spirit. You preserve the bond of peace because you have one peace. You don't create peace; you already have peace. You don't manufacture this bond, the bond is already there, you just need to maintain it. You just need to do all you can to keep it going.

The word “Spirit” here is a reference to the Holy Spirit. This is the third member of the Trinity because that's what God is. He's a Trinity. He is one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and this is referring to the third person here. This is the Spirit because He's the one who puts you into the church. He's the one who puts you into the body. It's one of the Spirit's ministries, one of His roles; comes into our hearts, regenerates our spirits and brings us into the church. This is a helpful thing to mention because the demons had many spirits. From what we can tell in the Bible, they had they had millions of spirits all over the place. We only have one. God is one Spirit because that's all you need. As we'll find out in a moment, He can be everywhere at once, so you don't need any other spirits; you just have one Spirit. And as a result of that, He puts you into one body, doesn't put you into 1000 bodies or a million bodies, He puts you into one.

And the word “body,” it's an interesting one here because if you think about it, Paul used a lot of words to describe the church in the book of Ephesians. He used a lot of images for the church. So for example, he calls the church a kingdom and a family and a bride in this book. In chapter 2 he calls it a temple and a household and a building. You see all that at the end of chapter 2, so all that's in one chapter, but he calls the church a body because it's alive. It's a point of the analogy here. He calls the church a body because it's a living breathing thing. A building is not alive but a body is. A temple is not alive, but we are. the church is. We all know what it's like to go into a church and say, “That place is dead.” You guys know what that's like. And we all know what it's like to go into a church and say, “That one is alive.” And the thing that makes it alive is the

Spirit. The thing that gives it life is the Holy Spirit of God. One commentator said, "It would be monstrous to see one body with two hearts or two spirits. And it would be monstrous to see two bodies with one heart because that's unnatural; that goes against the laws of science, so you don't have that. God has given you one body, and one Spirit."

Let me tell you what this means practically. Let me tell you how this applies to our lives. For one thing, this means that we shouldn't fight all the time. I think that's a rebuke for any church. We all struggle with that. One way this applies to our lives is we shouldn't fight with each other in the church because our body isn't fighting, our spirit isn't fighting. They're one, they get along and so should we. We should imitate what they do. It's an insult to the Spirit of God for His church to be fighting all the time. It's a slap in His face because He didn't create us that way. He created us in peace, and we need to be at peace now.

Another thing this means, and we'll say a few words about this, but another thing this means is that we shouldn't fight like the world does. If we're saved to be different from the world, then we should not imitate them in their fighting. Because we have more in common than they do. We have a closer bond, and so we should learn how to get along.

This is a personal one for me this week. This one really hits home because as you've seen in the news, the United States is a mess right now. I mean, it's a nation, in some ways, at war because cities like New York and Los Angeles have gone up in flames. They've gone up in protests over the subject of race. The issue of a white police officer killing a black man and abusing his power that way. It's gotten so bad that I've talked to friends who said that they have to keep a curfew right now for their own protection in the United States. The police are asking them to stay inside from six o'clock at night till six o'clock in the morning for their own protection because it's not safe to go outside anymore. And the saddest thing about this is, is a lot of Christians are getting involved in this type of behavior. A lot of churches are contributing to the problem because they're saying things like, "We don't trust white people anymore," or "We don't trust black people anymore." They may not be saying it in those terms, but that's the gist of what they're saying. "We don't like them, and they don't like us. Just look at what they do, just look at how they treat people." And as you see that happening, you wonder, what's the solution to that? As you watch it going on, on television and on the news and all the chaos, you ask yourself, how do we stop it? What's the answer? Well, Paul says the answer is right here. Paul says the solution is found right here. There is one body and one Spirit. Not two bodies, one body. Not two churches, a white church and a black church. One Church. It has always been one church.

Paul was a Jew, writing to people of other races in the Ephesian church and saying there's one church. I told our church before you can no more be a racist Christian than you can be a murdering Christian. Racism is a sin; murdering is a sin. There's no place for it in the church. We need to go back to this. Listen, the world may not get this today, but we should. The world may

not know what this is like, they may not understand it, they may not be able to get their mind around it; but we should be able to do that in the church because we're different from the world.

I remember when I first moved to Chilliwack, I asked a friend of mine who was Canadian, I said, "What would it be like to raise an adopted child here?" I said, "What would it be like to raise a child of a different race?" And I'll never forget what he said. He said, "It would be easier for you to do it in Canada than it would be to do it in the States." He said, "It would be easier for you to raise him and Chilliwack than in a small town in the South like you grew up in." And I think that's true. I think he's right, but I think people should be able to do that anywhere. Amen? I think people should accept your race no matter where you are, especially in the church, especially among Christians. We should be the most accepting people on the planet.

After all, if you remember your Bible history for a moment, you'll know the church started out this way. The church began with people from different races. The whole reason that the disciples spoke in tongues was so they could talk to the other peoples. Acts 2 says,

When the Spirit came down the day of Pentecost...there were Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judah and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes.

That phrase, "Jews and proselytes" means Jews and Gentiles, people from other races. And when they were saved, he didn't put them in different churches. When they were saved initially, he didn't start a Jewish church and a Gentile church. He didn't begin a black church and a white church. He put them in a church. We need to go back to that today. We need to see the church as one. Everything abolishes in Christ, race abolishes, economy goes away. None of that matters but Him. Jesus was from another race, amen? You worship a Jewish Messiah. So if you have a problem with other races, you're gonna have a problem of Christianity.

Which leads to another point to consider this morning to leads to another reason why the church is one. And I'm going to speed up with some of these next points so we can get through them. The first one is that the church is one because there is one body and one Spirit. That means that there's only there's one church, only one group of believers. Secondly, the church is one because there is one hope of our calling.

The second reason why the church is one is because there is one hope of our calling, which means there's one hope of salvation. There's one hope of eternal life. It's not a bunch of different hopes. You got your hope, and I got my hope; one hope. One way to be saved and if you read on in verse four, Paul writes,

There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling.

As Paul continues on in this passage, as you can tell, he meant for these things to be taken together. He meant for this to all to be part of the same package. In other words, you can't have the first two things in this list without having this. You can't have one body and one Spirit without having one hope of your calling because they're all interconnected. They're all pieces of the same puzzle. Some people today say that the church should be made up of people from other religions. It should be made up of people from other callings, like Buddhists and Muslims and Hindus just as long as they're sincere, as long as they're good people. But that's not what Paul says here. Paul says you can't do that, because there's only one hope; and if you miss that hope, you miss everything. You can't join the body without it.

You know, just to explain this phrase a little bit, "one hope." The word "hope" is often used as a synonym for salvation in the Bible, especially if you see the definite article in front of it. So, this is not *a* hope, it's *the* hope; that's often a metaphor for salvation. Some passages that mention that, Titus 2:11 and 13 says,

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires... and to be... looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of Jesus.

There you see the phrase, "blessed hope" mentioned there alongside the appearing of Jesus because that's where our hope is. That's what we're looking forward to, the day when Jesus will return. Colossians 1:27 also refers to "Christ in you, the hope of glory," and that's the same idea; we could say the hope of heaven. That's what we're looking forward to as well. And all that ties into this phrase in verse four, "the hope of your calling" because this is what you are called to, you're called to enjoy heaven. And the way this ties into our unity is that we've all been called together, every one of us. The way this ties into our being one is that this is a calling for every Christian in the church, so that you're not saved one way and I'm saved another way. You don't get in with this hope, and I get in with another hope. It's all the same hope. Christianity is a very simple religion. One way, one truth, one life.

And another way this ties into the issue of unity is that we're all headed to the same place, so we'd better learn to get along, amen? We're all going toward the same hope, we're all going towards the same heaven; so we better learn to act like it now. Otherwise, heaven is going to be a miserable place. You had better learn to like the people sitting next to you in the pew because you're going to spend forever with them. They'll be sinless, so that'll solve a lot of problems; but it's gonna be the same people. And some folks say that you're gonna be surprised by the people you see in heaven. I don't think you will. I don't think you will. I think they're sitting next to you,

and you better learn to get along with them. The way some Christians act, they think they're going to heaven alone, don't they? The way some act, they think they're going all by themselves because they live by themselves and they worship God by themselves. It's just them and their Bible in the basement. That's it. Paul says you can't do that because you all have the same hope, so you're one.

This is why it's the job of a pastor and elders to keep preaching the gospel every week because you have to keep going back to this. This is what unites you, and it leads to another point to talk about here. Another reason why the church is one, and that is because it has one Lord, one faith, one baptism. So, a third reason why the church is one is because it has one Lord, one faith, one baptism. We're putting these together for the sake of time, but that's all another way of saying it has one doctrine. We talked about doctrine a moment ago, but it has one body of doctrine that we all believe. One system of truth and salvation that's laid out in the Bible. And if you read on the passage, Paul writes,

There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

If you notice, as you as you read this passage, it picks up pace a little bit as it goes on. As Paul continues riding, he builds momentum to the point that one commentator says he gives us a crescendo of nouns. In this passage, he gives us a crescendo of words that kind of gush out like a waterfall; he just starts popping them off in short, simple phrases. And Paul does that because these things really go together. These three things are really, really tied together and they say that you have one body of doctrine. He says, "There is one Lord," which is another way of saying there's one Ruler, or King overall, and "One faith" which means one objective faith, one objective truth that we all hold to. Jude three refers to this as the "faith once for all handed down to the saints," and that's what this is. It's a faith that has been handed down to you. And then "One baptism," it means one baptismal faith, or one baptismal testimony. Because when you're baptized, this is what you do. You testify to the faith that you have; you confess it to others. When you're baptized, we have our people stand up and read their profession of faith. We do that because what they're saying is, "I believe what you believe." When they're reading their testimony and talking about how they came to faith in Christ, they're saying that they hold to the same faith that we hold to.

Some scholars think this refers to the baptism of the Spirit here, and that could be the case. I don't want to deny that, but Paul's already mentioned the Spirit in this passage. He mentioned Him up in verse four, so he probably is not talking about Him again here. This is a reference to the testimony you give at baptism. We love hearing baptismal testimonies, don't we? I mean, it's like a hallelujah service every time, and that's because they're reminding us of these things. This is what unites us. This is what brings us together with others. We have one Lord, one faith, one

baptism. It's so sad that churches today have given bad doctrine a bad rap. It's so sad that they've kind of marginalized it because they've said doctrine divides and it just leads to a fight. Paul says it's not supposed to divide, it's supposed to bring you together. It's not supposed to tear you apart. That's not the intention of it, it's to unite you. That's why God gave it to us.

The New Testament commentator, H.A. Ironside tells a story about the time he was on a train. And he was heading for his next stop and he took out his Bible and he began to read it and as he did that, a German lady walked by. He said he could tell she was German by her accent and she said, "Is that a Bible? Do you mind if I sit down and read my Bible with you?" He said, "Of course, absolutely." And so, the two of them sat down and started reading their Bible. And it wasn't long before a Swedish man walked by. He said he could tell he was Swedish by his accent. And he said, "Is that a Bible? Do you mind if I read my Bible with you?" He said, "Absolutely." So, they started doing that. The three of them started doing that. Then a Chinese man came by and he said, "Do you mind if I read my Bible with you?" And Ironside said, "It wasn't long before we had an international meeting taking place on board that train. It wasn't long before we had a worldwide gathering." And it was it was gathered around one thing, one book, the Bible. He said politics couldn't do that, they don't have the power. Not able. He said money couldn't do that. All the money in the world couldn't get three strangers together to sit down and talk about something like that. World leaders couldn't do that, threats of violence, all that kind of stuff. Only the Bible, the Bible is enough.

And that's what this is saying here. That's what this text is telling us that the Bible unites us. It brings us together when nothing else ever could. I think this is so important for our world today, but this is really important for a church like ours because we have people from so many different backgrounds. We have people from everywhere, but the one thing we have in common is our faith in the Scriptures. Amen? And the one reason our people come back week after week after week is to study the Bible. There's no other reason. I remember talking to someone who was visiting our church, years ago, a relative of mine, they said, "Wow, you have a really diverse group of people here. You have older people and younger people in your church. You have married people and single people, you have people from this place and people from that place." And I said, "Yeah, and they all get along because they love to study the Bible." The Scripture is enough.

The Puritan, Richard Baxter, once said. "The differences among Christians are nothing in comparison to the differences among heathens. He said we have so much more in common than lost people do. We have a common Savior, a common cross, and a common empty tomb. We have a common past, a common present, and a common future in Christ. Most importantly, we have a common Bible. We have a common book of doctrine that we believe, which brings us to one more point to consider.

One more reason why the church is one, just to review these other ones. First the church is one because there's one body and one Spirit, which means there's only one true church. There's only one true group of believers, not 100 of them or a million of them, but one. Second, there's only one hope of our calling, which means there's only one hope of salvation, one hope of eternal life. Don't have many of those either; we just have one. And you can believe it and be saved. And third, there's one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Another way of saying that is there's one doctrine, or one body or book of doctrine that we all believe. One system of truth laid out in the Scriptures that we hold to. It leads to one more point. And that is this one more reason why the church is one, and that is that we have one God and Father.

The fourth reason why the church is one, and this really sums it up and kind of puts it all together. The fourth reason is we have one God and Father which means we have one God who's responsible for all of this. We have one God who made it happen, so He's the one who gets the credit for it. I don't get the credit for this and neither do you. God does. If you read in verse 4 Paul writes, and he says,

There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is overall and through all and in all.

As you come to the end of all that, you can tell Paul is switching gears here. As you come to the end of verse six, you can tell he's changing from a rapid-fire approach to a slower method. Because after quickly saying that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, he slows down to say that we have one God and Father of all who is overall and through all and in all. In other words, Paul thought this was important enough to give an explanation. He thought this was important enough to elaborate on.

What he says here actually takes us back to chapter 3. It takes us back to what we read in verse 20 of chapter three where he says,

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church.

There, Paul says that all of this can happen because God is able. The church can happen, the unity can happen, your salvation can happen because God has the power to do it. He can do abundantly beyond all that we ask. And here, Paul refers to that same idea again to say there is one God and Father who is overall and through all and in all. You see the word "all" repeated several times here to say that God is everywhere; He is omnipresent. Which means He's all places at once, so that He can save people from all places at once. That's the point. He can bring people from all places at once into the church. Because He's there. He's everywhere. He can save

people from white communities and black communities. He can save people from Germany and Sweden and China, because He's in all those countries. In the ancient world with the ancient gods, you know, if you wanted to worship that people's god, you had to go to their country because that's where the god was. The god couldn't leave unless you take a statue or something. By contrast, Paul says, the true God is everywhere, and this also means nothing can stop Him from doing this because He's overall. Verse six actually says He sits above everything so that nothing can stop Him. Nothing can stop Him from building the church and uniting us and drawing us together because He is all powerful.

You can't be at all places without being all-powerful. God is that, which leads us to ask a simple question and that is do you believe this today? Do you believe that you serve this type of God? Do you believe He's everywhere and He can do whatever He wants? Do you believe He's able to unite us when nothing else ever could? You know, as you're watching the news, as you're watching whatever stuff on Facebook or the internet, and you're getting angry or you're getting scared, do those thoughts take you back in the direction of heaven, and make you think that you have a God who's bigger than all of that. All of it. The news may scare you. It doesn't scare God. The violence may frighten you doesn't frighten Him. Nothing frightens Him. This needs to remind you that.

To ask this another way. What do you do when you have nothing in common with someone in the church? What do you do when you can't get along with them or you don't even know what to talk to about? We've all had that experience before. What do you say, what do you do? Paul says you need to go back to this. Paul says if you have nothing in common with them, you need to remember that you do have something in common with them. You have a common Savior and a common salvation and all of these things in common; so you need to let it take you back to that. Friends, these are simple things here, but they're powerful things. They're things we all need to remember. This can unite us when nothing else ever could.

The story is told of the time the author of a famous tract called "Come to Jesus" was involved in a theological dispute with someone. The guy had some bad ideas. He was teaching some rotten things, and so this author wanted to confront him. And he did it in another tract that he wrote, he put it into print; but before he gave it to his opponent, he gave it to a friend and he said, "Hey, what do you think?" He said, "I haven't given it a title yet. What should I call it?" And the friend read it and he said, "You know, you were pretty harsh in this thing. You were pretty mean, so why don't you call it "Go to Hell by the Author of Come to Jesus." And he said, "I think I need to go back and rewrite it."

Friends, we need to learn a lesson from that today. We need to take a cue from that. You don't want to tell people to go to hell when you're trying to get them to come to Jesus. You don't want to tell them to take a hike when you disagree with them. We need to make peace any way that we

can. We need to be united to them if we can, any way we can. Because that is what God would want, so will you do that today? Will you work hard to be united to others?

Let me pray for you in this and pray for God's grace in our lives.

Father, we do pray, Lord, this morning for Your help in this area. Peace is hard to come by. It's hard fought, it's hard won; and in some areas, it seems impossible. And Lord, we know You're a God of peace. You sent us a Prince of Peace and a Spirit of peace, and You can bring peace to the church. You can bring peace to our hearts in these crazy times. You can bring peace to our souls, and You can bring peace to one another. Lord, we pray for Your help in this. We pray You would help us to be united with others in the church; and we pray You'd help us to go out into the world and tell them there's a solution to all these problems. There's a power that can stop the fighting. Give us wisdom in this Lord. We want to apply these things in the right way.

Thank you for Paul and his boldness. Thank you for a Jew writing to Gentiles and saying this. It reminds us that it can be said in our world today as well. Lord may Your word go out and be powerful in our lives today. Thank you for Christ. Thank you for His salvation. For those who are listening this morning if they don't know Him, I pray that their eyes will be open to a wonderful Savior. For those who are saved, may they be reminded of all the good things they have in Christ. We pray this in His name. Amen.

Well, thank you for joining us this morning. If you would like to see more resources from us, you can go to our YouTube channel at Grace Fellowship Chilliwack or you can catch us online at gracefellowshipchilliwack.com

The Lord bless you and have a wonderful day.