

Unity of the Spirit And The Bond of Peace

Pastor George Stahnke, 01/16/2005 Part 2

Last week we talked about the importance of unity. All Christians are personally responsible to earnestly promote and preserve the unity of the Spirit. The visible manifestation “oneness” must not be lost!

Ephesians 4:1 - 6 (NASB) ¹Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, ³being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴*There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Psalms 133:1 - 3 (NASB) ¹Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity! ²It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, *Even* Aaron’s beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes. ³It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing—life forever.

Unity is God’s will

John 17:21 (NASB) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

The emblem of the state of Kentucky shows two men facing each other shaking hands. The motto beneath reads: "United we stand, divided we fall." That could well be the motto of a nation, a congregation, or a family.

—Robert C. Shannon, 1000 Windows

Matthew 12:25 (NIV) Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.

1 Corinthians 3:1 - 4 (NIV) ¹Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. ²I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? ⁴For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere men?

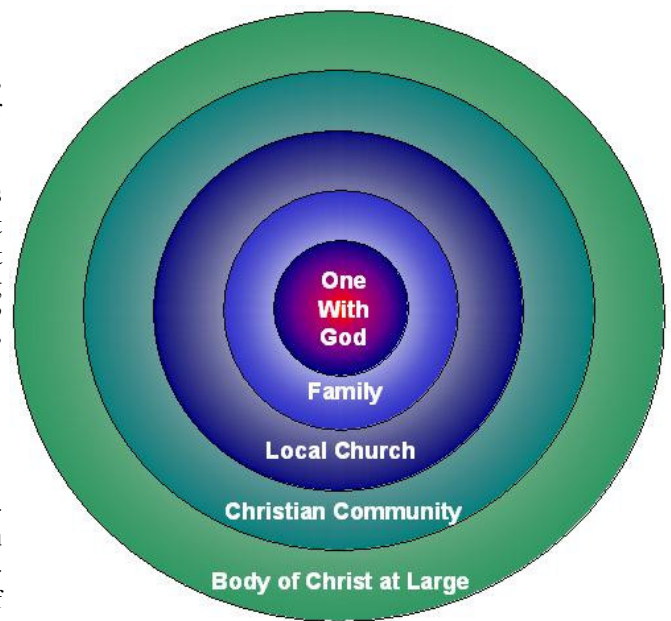
The bond of peace

Ephesians 4:1 - 3 (NIV) ¹Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

The unity of the Spirit is only achieved *through* the bond of peace. Humility, gentleness, patience and bearing with one another is the soil from which it springs forth and is nourished.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a supreme example. To live as Christ we must pick up our cross and follow in His steps.

Matthew 16:24 - 25 (NLT) ²⁴Then Jesus said to the disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must put aside your



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selfish ambition, shoulder your cross, and follow me. ²⁵If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life.

Completely humble:

*Marked by meekness or modesty in behavior, attitude, or spirit; not arrogant or prideful. Showing deferential or submissive respect. **

John 13:12 - 15 (NASB) ¹²So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined *at the table* again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³“You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for *so* I am. ¹⁴“If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵“For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.

Philippians 2:3 - 8 (NASB) ³Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Romans 12:16 (NLT) Live in harmony with each other. Don’t try to act important, but enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don’t think you know it all!

Micah 6:8 (NASB) ⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

The opposite of humility is pride. It is a continual source of conflict and if left to itself will robe us of peace.

James 4:1 (TMNT) Where do you think all these appalling wars and quarrels come from? Do you think they just happen? Think again. They come about because you want your own way, and fight for it deep inside yourselves.

Gentleness:

*Considerate or kindly in disposition; amiable and tender. Not harsh or severe; mild and soft. **

By meekness, that excellent disposition of soul which makes men unwilling to provoke others, and not easily to be provoked or offended with their infirmities; and it is opposed to angry resentments and peevishness.

—Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the New Testament

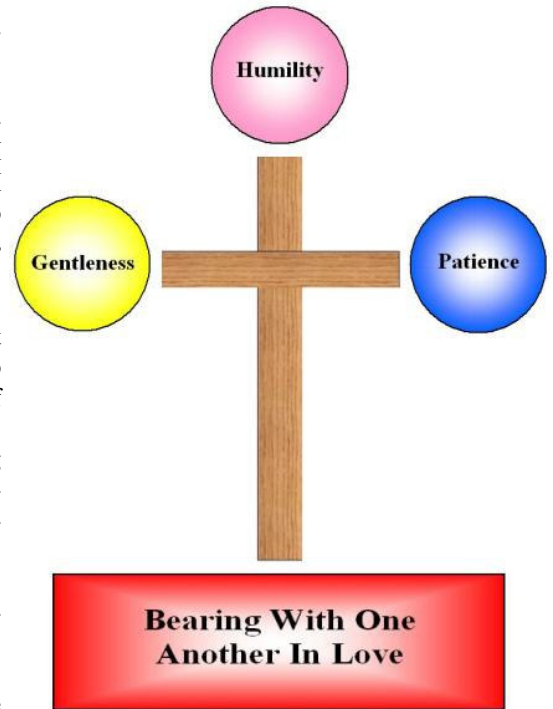
Matthew 11:29 (NIV) Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Patience:

The capacity, quality, or fact of being patient.

Synonyms: *patience, long-suffering, resignation, forbearance*

These nouns denote the capacity to endure hardship, difficulty, or inconvenience without complaint. Patience emphasizes calmness, self-control, and the willingness or ability to tolerate delay: Our patience will achieve



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*more than our force (Edmund Burke). . . Resignation implies acceptance of or submission to something trying, as out of despair or necessity Forbearance denotes restraint, as in retaliating, demanding what is due, or voicing disapproval: "It is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other" (Patrick Henry). **

1 Corinthians 13:4 - 7 (NASB) ⁴Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, ⁵does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, ⁶does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Thessalonians 5:13 - 14 (NASB) ¹⁴We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

Bearing with one another

Sustaining one another—helping to support each other in all the miseries and trials of life: or, if the word be taken in the sense of bearing with each other, it may mean that, through the love of God working in our hearts, we should bear with each other's infirmities, ignorance, etc., knowing how much others have been or are still obliged to bear with us.

—Adam Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament

Colossians 3:12 - 13 (NASB) ¹²So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

* The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language