

Editorial Note: "The Unity of the Spirit"

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WHILE the great object of the gift, and the gifts, of the Holy Spirit is the *perfection* of the believers, yet this cannot be attained without the *unity* of the believers.

For it is written of the gifts of the Spirit that they are “for the equipping of the saints . . . till we all come to the *unity* of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *to a perfect man*, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:12, 13).

This unity of the believers is the great longing of Christ, the one great thing for which He prayed. “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; *that they all may be one*,” “*that they may be one*,” “*that they may be made perfect in one*.” (John 17:20–23).

He also indicates what is the character of this unity: “As You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us,” “*that they may be one, just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one*.” This unity of the believers is the divine unity itself; for it is just “*as*” is the unity between the divine Father and the divine Son.

But without the divine nature, how can divine unity ever be found among men? As they are naturally, men have not the Spirit of unity, but the spirit of enmity. “The carnal mind is enmity against God.” And being enmity against God, it results in putting men at enmity with one another. And so men always and everywhere have drawn lines, and built up walls of separation between themselves,—national lines, tribal lines, aristocratic lines, society lines, color lines, sectarian lines, etc., etc., etc.

But Jesus Christ “is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, . . . so as to create *in Himself* one *new man* from the two, *thus making peace*, and that He might reconcile them both to God *in one body* through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father” (Eph. 2:13–18).

The cross of Christ destroys the enmity against God, and also breaks down all the lines of separation and walls of partition which, by the working of this enmity, men have made between themselves; and the “one Spirit” takes all these in whom the enmity has been destroyed by beholding the cross of Christ, and binds them all in “one body” in divine unity.

So unless men are partakers of the divine nature, they can never enter into this divine unity which is the characteristic of the church of Christ, and for which the Lord so earnestly prayed; and without the Holy Spirit of God, men cannot be partakers of the divine nature. For God being Spirit, and the Holy Spirit being the Spirit of God, He is of the divine nature; and whoever is partaker of the Holy Spirit, is thereby partaker of the divine nature.

Thus it is alone the baptism of the Holy Spirit that can bring the disciples of Christ into that unity for which He prayed: "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are *in Me*, and *I in You*; that they also may be one in Us" (John 17:21). Therefore it is written: "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth. . . . I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. . . . At *that day* you will know that *I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you*" (John 14:16–20).

He who is partaker of the Holy Spirit, he who is baptized with the Holy Spirit, by that very fact is made acquainted with the divine unity of the Father and the Son; and is himself bound into that divine unity. And this unity of the Spirit with the Father and the Son is so precious that he would rather die than to be separated from it. And all who know this unity of the Spirit *are one*, wherever or whoever they may be: they are one as *the Father and the Son are one*; because their fellowship of the Spirit is the fellowship of the Father and the Son. By one Spirit are they all baptized into one body; and that body is the body of Christ, in whom God—yes, all the fullness of the Godhead bodily—dwells.

This is the unity of the true believers in Jesus. Not, the unity that *ought to be*; no, this is the unity that there *is* everywhere among the true believers in Jesus. It is divine unity. It is the unity of the Spirit, in the Spirit, with the Father and the Son.

"Ask, and it will be given to you." "Receive the Holy Spirit." "Be filled with" "the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

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