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# Sermon Notes

April 10, 2016

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## A United Church Ephesians 4:1-5

<sup>1</sup> I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain 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 to the one hope that belongs to your call--

<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism...

### *E Pluribus Unum*

- ❖ Out of many, Jesus is making one church
  - out of every tribe, language, people, nation
  - out of every era of human history
- ❖ God's priority for His people is that they be one (*cf.* John 17:20-21)
  - our oneness highlights the reality and validity of Jesus' rescue mission
  - our oneness is meant to reflect the same quality of relationship as the one that exists within the Trinity
- ❖ Jesus' church is a living, breathing, divinely created, divinely empowered organism

## One

- ❖ There are 7 "ones" in vv. 4-6
  - 7 essential characteristics that make a church a church
  - all churches that are rightly related to God through the truth He reveals about Himself in His Word, hold these seven things in common
- ❖ **One body**
  - the question is not how many denominations, how many congregations, or how many countries
  - all true believers belong to the same body
- ❖ **One Spirit**
  - everyone who belongs to Jesus possesses the exact same Spirit (*cf.* Ephesians 2:22)
  - we are called to listen to the Spirit and respond to Him with obedience
- ❖ **One hope**
  - the Holy Spirit unites us with a common hope
  - we have a shared destiny, we are all going to the same place
- ❖ **One Lord**
  - are there different Lords for different people? (*cf.* Acts 4:12)
  - there is only one way to God and that is through the one Lord, Jesus Christ

❖ **One faith**

- the content of our faith is revealed in God's Word
- Jude 1:3, *the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.*

❖ **One baptism**

- baptism doesn't confer salvation
- it is an indication and a public testimony that Jesus has moved in on a life

❖ **One God and Father of all**

- *The LORD our God, the LORD is one.* (Deut. 6:4)
- everyone who belongs to God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit by faith in Jesus Christ is God created, God loved, and God fathered

**Maintain the Unity**

❖ We do not create/manufacture unity

- unity is a given
- we are called to maintain the unity by "staying in tune" with Jesus who then keeps us "in tune" with one another

❖ To stay "in tune" with Jesus we must *walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called*

❖ We must walk with

- **total humility**
  - this is a command, not a suggestion

- understand the vast difference that exists between a sovereign, infinite, eternal, holy, omnipotent God and we who are finite, fragile, and stained by sin

■ **gentleness** (or meekness)

- a quiet, willing submission to God and to others
- power under control (horse and bridle)

■ **patience**

- not blowing up or having a "short fuse"
- John Bunyan, "He is lying down need fear no fall."

■ **bearing with one another in love**

- Philippians 2:3-4
- a love that has room for failure in it

❖ "Walking worthy" lies at the heart of our witness

- evangelism is not a program or a method, it is a lifestyle
- when others see these qualities on display in our lives, they **will** start asking questions

**Personal Application**

1. The "7 ones" in vv. 4-6 of this text are essential characteristics of all true believers in Jesus. Are there any of these that you have doubts or questions about? If so, plan to share your thoughts or questions with a fellow believer or church leader to help clarify your understanding.
2. How are you doing at living out the four action items Jesus commands us to perform in order to maintain the unity of His people. Are you staying "in tune" with Jesus? with others?