

I. Introduction

- A. The people of God need focus. We need to focus on the goal.
- B. What is the goal?
 - 1. The goal is the completion of the church, the body of Christ. That means that every person who will get saved, gets saved. And that every person who is saved, gets mature. That is the goal. That is the great commission Jesus left His followers. Get people saved. And get people grown up—and then get them involved in the mission of getting people saved and all grown up.
 - 2. Get ‘em saved. Get ‘em growing. Get ‘em involved in the mission. All for the glory of God.
- C. That is our goal.
- D. And that needs to be our focus.
- E. In history, whenever the church has focused, God has moved in powerful ways. He has sent genuine revival. He has reignited the spiritual passion of saved people, and He has drawn lost people into His kingdom in massive numbers.
- F. Without focus, we drift along, carried along in directionless currents.
- G. But with focus, we display the awesome power of God. When we concentrate our energy, when we work together as a team, and when we turn our minds toward Jesus Christ and Him crucified; the Holy Spirit is unleashed in us and through us and He empowers us to be what we haven’t been before: growing, mature image-bearers of the indwelling Savior, Jesus Christ.

II. Unfocused

- A. We all have busy lives. We’re rushing around. We chauffeur our kids to events and sports. We rush to work and school, to classes, activities, ministries, church, and business—a million and one things. And that’s fine. That’s part of life. These are the golden years.
- B. But somewhere in the hectic arena of a million and one things, we need to find a focused core. Paul wrote in the New Testament, “This one thing I do...” He didn’t say, “These thousand things I dabble in.”
- C. Every follower of Jesus Christ needs a singular, definable, clarified focus. Because only that kind of focus helps us clear away the clutter, and get stuff done that is meaningful, and satisfying, and lasting, and glorifying to God.
- D. Our Bible passage today helps us define our focus. I’m going to do something a little unusual. I want to take our Bible verses out of order. I want to do that second paragraph first, and I think it will make sense why in a minute.

III. Ephesians 4

- A. *4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:4-6, NKJV).*
- B. This place in the Bible lists seven “ones.”
 - 1. One Body
 - 2. One Spirit
 - 3. One Hope
 - 4. One Lord
 - 5. One Faith
 - 6. One Baptism
 - 7. One God and Father of all
- C. I want you to notice number 2, number 4, and number 7, because there you have the TRINITY: the Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Father. The Trinity.
- D. We believe in one God, who exists eternally in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We do not believe in three Gods.
- E. Nor do we believe in one God who switches hats—the Father for a while, the Son for a while, and the Spirit for a while. No, He is simultaneously and always Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- F. We do not jumble up the persons of the Trinity. The Father is not the Son who is not the Spirit in respect to their persons.
- G. Nor do we divide the essence of God, as if there were three gods.
- H. We believe the three are one, inseparable, co-equal, and co-eternal, with respect to the essence and nature and being of God, yet distinct with respect to their persons.
- I. Since the very beginning, the apostles and teachers who followed Jesus were super-careful to proclaim a God unlike any other God, the blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- J. We believe in this God. This one God.

IV. What does this mean? It means two important things:

- A. That God can be love in a way that no other god can be love.
 - 1. Why? Because the Father loves the Son, who loves the Spirit, who loves the Father. There is love in the heart of God long before there was anyone else to love. God loves God. The Father blesses the Son. The Son glorifies the Father. The Spirit recedes into the background to honor the Father and the Son. God IS love.
 - 2. Sometimes you hear that God created us because He needed somebody to love. No, He didn’t. He had somebody to love. God is love. Within the mystery of the trinity, there is an infinite affection, a profound mutual respect, and a deep love among the members of the Godhead.
 - a) There is perfect harmony, perfect unity, and perfect community in God from before the dawn of creation.
 - 3. No other god can claim this. No religion of the world offers anything like this. True love flows into the very core of existence from the heart of a God whose boundless love radiates eternally within His own immense heart.
 - 4. The Trinity means that God can be love in a way that no other god can be love.
- B. The Trinity also suggests a way of life for those who follow Jesus: God is our model.
 - 1. That means that we, the people of God, are to show on earth the same harmony, the same unity, and the same community that exists within the heart of God. We are to show that same love on earth as it is in heaven.
 - 2. Let me make this really simple: we can’t do our mission if we’re always sniping at each other. We can’t stay focused if we’re distracted by squabbles and arguments and fights.
 - 3. In the continuing saga of the UPrep Junior Pee Wee Panther’s Football team, and our march toward football glory for third and fourth graders, I want you to know that we lost our game this week against the Orland Aztecs.
 - 4. During practice this week, Coach Gary told the boys, “Boys, there’s no I in team.”

5. One of the kids spoke up. He said, "But there's an M-E."
6. When our team treats each other as the enemy, and wants one of their team mates to drop the ball or to miss the tackle, we're in trouble.
7. Isn't it exactly the same way in the church, the body of Christ. When the people of God treat each other as the enemy, we're in trouble.

C. We need something to glue us together. That's why we have our seven ones. Let's take them one by one.

V. The Seven Ones

A. One Body

1. I think He puts this first, because this is His big deal. All true believers in Jesus Christ of all ages, past, present, and future, make up the body of Christ. No matter what denomination or church or culture, the church is a heavenly gathering—there are members of the body of Christ, today, in heaven, which has gone on before us, around the throne of God, celebrating eternal life.
 - a) *22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect (Hebrews 12:22, 23, NKJV).*
2. We together are the body of Christ. Different parts, but one body. Different looks, languages, styles, gifts, passions, histories, destinies, strengths, and weaknesses—but one body together on one mission to move the ball down the field for the touchdown. We are members of one another, says the Bible.
3. This is the great mystery—have you ever met somebody for the first time and known instantly they were a fellow believer? We are one body—to represent the one Trinity on earth.

B. One Spirit

1. When you got saved, the Holy Spirit went to work on you in a new way.
 - a) The Holy Spirit regenerated you: that means He gave you new life that you never had before, you were spiritually dead and He made you spiritually alive.
 - b) The Holy Spirit baptized you into the body of Christ. That doesn't mean you got wet—though water baptism is an important symbol of Holy Spirit baptism. Through Spiritual baptism, the Holy Spirit joined you to Christ and by joining you to Christ; He joined you to every other person who is joined to Christ too.
 - c) The Holy Spirit also indwelt you: that means He came to live inside you and will never leave you or forsake you.
 - d) The Holy Spirit also sanctified you: that means He began to make you a better person, more and more like your leader, Jesus.
2. There is only one Holy Spirit, and there is only one way He operates in believers. He does for you what He did for me, and what He did for Peter and Paul and James and John and Lydia and Chloe and every saved person who ever lived.
3. This might be a crude analogy, but God has only one assembly line, it is energized and masterminded by the Holy Spirit, and we're ALL on the same line. No exceptions. No different assembly line for different kinds of Christians.
4. One body. One Spirit.

C. One Hope

1. Our hope is final salvation through the shed blood and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
2. And in the Bible, hope doesn't mean "maybe." It doesn't mean I hope so, it means I know so. Hope means absolute confidence in a future good based on a present fact.
3. Our present fact is that Jesus is our Savior and our salvation is in Him. Jesus is our only hope. There is no other.
4. And because He is our hope, we are sure and certain of a future good. Heaven is an absolute guarantee for you if you have stepped into this package of ones.
5. Everybody who has Jesus has the same incredible testimony: saved by the blood of the lamb—our confidence of salvation.
6. Everybody who has Jesus has the same incredible destiny: heaven and streets of gold, with no more sorrows, and no more tears.
7. That is our one hope.

D. One Lord

1. Lord was used as a title of Jesus by early believers. It was the favorite title for Jesus in the letters of the New Testament.
2. There's only one Jesus. Not many Jesuses. Just one. My Jesus is the Jesus of the Bible, and if your Jesus is the Jesus of the Bible, we worship the same Jesus. If you imagine a different Jesus, then we have some talking to do.
3. We all follow one Lord.
4. And to call Him Lord is to call Him Supreme.
5. He is the Master and Commander of the Cosmos. And everything that exists, exists for His glory.
6. There are not many lords; just one. And every bit of truth and knowledge and goodness and light is simply another one of God's arrows, pointing to the glory and goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

E. One Faith

1. Here, faith refers to the things we believe. The doctrine, the theology, the set of truths we find written down once for all in the perfect, inerrant Bible, the Word of God. It is called "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).
2. There's not one faith for Christians in North America and another faith for Christians in Europe or Asia or anywhere else.
3. We share a core doctrine, a core truth.
4. And that core doctrine is super-important.

5. When our boys are practicing football, the girls are practicing cheerleading. The older girls make pyramids (not sure if that's the right word). It is a whole lot of kids on the base supporting just one kid on the top. That's a great picture of one faith. A cluster of interrelated, interconnected truths called the gospel...
 - a) These truths are clearly taught in the Bible.
 - b) They make sense.
 - c) They don't contradict each other.
 - d) They preserve the mission and teachings of Jesus.
 - e) And we do not splinter away from our one faith.
6. That doesn't mean every bit of teaching is worth fighting over. I found this story on the Internet, so it must be true:
 - a) I was walking across a bridge one day, and saw a man standing on the edge, about to jump off; so I ran over and said, "Stop! Don't do it!"
 "Why shouldn't I?" he said.
 I said, "Well, there's so much to live for!"
 "Like what?"
 I said, "Well... are you religious or atheist?"
 "Religious."
 I said, "Me too! Are you Christian or Buddhist?"
 "Christian."
 I said, "Me too! Are you Catholic or Protestant?"
 "Protestant."
 I said, "Me too! Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?"
 "Baptist."
 I said, "Wow! Me too! Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?"
 "Baptist Church of God."
 I said, "Me too! Are you Original Baptist Church of God, or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?"
 "Reformed Baptist Church of God."
 I said, "Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915?"
 "Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915!"
 I said, "DIE HERETIC SCUM!" and pushed him off the bridge.
7. That's not what we mean by one faith.
8. One faith refers to the core things, the main things of our faith. And where you bow the knee to the Trinity, and believe the Bible, and preach Jesus Christ crucified for our sins and risen again, and salvation by faith alone in Christ alone; we are of one faith—even if we show diversity on a lot of other things.

F. One Baptism

1. We all enter the family of God through the exact same door: not water baptism, but spiritual baptism. The Holy Spirit unites you to the one Lord Jesus Christ, and into His body, which includes all the people of God.
2. Now water baptism is important, and we're going to offer you that opportunity in four weekends—get baptized. But only if you have already been saved. Because if you are saved, you were baptized into Christ, in an invisible baptism of the Holy Spirit (Gal 3:27, Rom 8:9, Rom 6:3).
3. I am not more joined to Christ than you. Your ten year old daughter and your ninety year old mother are equally joined to Christ; there is only one baptism that flows from the heart of God.

G. One God and Father of all

1. One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. If we all rally around this one God, and if we all bow the knee to this one God, and if we're all busy carrying out the marching orders of this one God—then how can we hate each other? How can we even find time to bicker and snipe at each other? How can we take sides in other people's fight?
2. Aren't we serving the same Master?
3. Aren't we receiving from the same hand of the same Father?
4. Aren't we born again into the same family?
5. Aren't we guilty of the same offenses?
6. Aren't we forgiven by the same Savior?
7. Aren't we indwelt by the same Spirit?
8. Aren't we following the same example?
9. Aren't we joined to the same church?
10. Aren't we partners in the same mission?
11. Aren't we upheld by the same promises?
12. Aren't we fighting the same enemy?
13. Aren't we on the same team?
14. Aren't we sons and daughter of the same Heavenly Father?
 - a) Then why all the bickering? Why all the selfishness? Why all the slanders and criticisms and judgments against one another? Why all the agendas? Why the unwillingness to submit? Why all the half-hearted devotion to Jesus and church and your own spiritual growth?
 - b) Why the apathy toward a lost and dying neighborhood?
 - c) The church too often seems more like a squabbling pack of baboons than the mystically united body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

H. Which brings us backwards to the first three verses: If God is one, and we are one, then what?

VI. *1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3, NKJV).*

- A. We, the people of God, are to show on earth the same harmony, the same unity, and the same community that exists within the heart of our Triune God. We are to show that same love on earth as it is in heaven.
1. That is the background music to all our efforts to get people saved.
 2. And that is the foreground music to all our efforts to get people growing up in their faith.
- B. Let me make this really simple: we can't do our mission if we're always sniping at each other.
1. We can't stay focused if we're distracted by squabbles and arguments and fights over petty things that don't really matter.
- C. A true story, from a really conservative church. One of those churches where everybody sits in pews and wears suits and ties and the ladies were dresses.
- D. One day, church was going on in this very conservative church, and some young hippie surfer dudes showed up at the back door. They weren't dressed very nicely. They wore tie-dyed tank tops. Long, scraggly hair. And—oh, my Good God—bare feet. They wore ragged shorts and unshaven faces.
- E. The respectable church made a bit of a stir as the pair of hippies stood in back during the worship time. When it was time for the preacher to speak, the hippies walked up the aisle to the front of the church and sat down on the floor. They wanted a front row seat, and they wanted to hear about Jesus.
- F. But that's not how respectable people do church, right?
- G. People whispered and hissed, and shifted uncomfortably in their padded seats. They couldn't focus. The preacher entered his pulpit and began his message.
- H. From the back of the church, an old man with a cane rose up from his seat. Everybody knew him. He was a fixture in the church. A pillar.
- I. The old man began a long painful journey toward the front.
- J. The church members saw him coming. They grew quite satisfied, realizing that the old man would put the young hippies in their place.
- K. The preacher watched, and the church watched, and time seemed to stand still as the old man tottered up the aisle with his cane to the front of the church.
- L. All eyes were on him, but he didn't care.
- M. He had a singular focus.
- N. The old man was on a mission.
- O. At long last, he reached the pair of hippies.
- P. He stood over them for a moment—and the church and even the pastor held their breath.
- Q. Then the old man set aside his cane, held onto a nearby pew, bent his knees, lowered his body, and sat down.
- R. On the floor.
- S. Next to the unclean hippies.
- T. He slid alongside them.
- U. And smiled at them.
- V. And motioned the preacher to continue.
1. *Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to [the standard set by] Christ Jesus, 6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 15:5, 6, NKJV).*
- W. That's a believer who's focused on the right things.