

The Unified Church is a Powerful Witness

Ephesians 4:1-6

Ephesians 4:1-6 – Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live worthy of the calling you have received, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope at your calling— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (CSB)

I. The unified church has **irresistible power**.

A. Power comes from **God**.

Romans 15:5-6 – ⁵Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, according to Christ Jesus, ⁶so that you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and one voice. (CSB)

B. Power requires unity in **purpose**.

Philippians 2:2 – make my joy complete by thinking the same way, having the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. (CSB)

II. The unified church requires **unwavering commitment**.

Romans 12:3-5 – ³For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one. ⁴Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, ⁵in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. (CSB)

Bethel Core Commitments:

1. Unity in the **essentials**.
2. Liberty in the **non-essentials**.
3. Charity in **all things**.

III. The unified church bears witness the fruit of **maturity**.

Ephesians 4:13-16 – ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. ¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part. (CSB)

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Prayers for a unified church:

- Pray that God will help us to embrace & be directed by our identity in Christ, aware that He has called us to be His & calls us to follow Him
- Pray that God will remove the pride that lurks in our hearts and work in us a spirit of humility, a broken & contrite heart that defers to Him and seeks His will and glory above our own
- Pray that God will help us to love one another from the heart, with the love He has demonstrated for us and has described to us
- Pray that God will help us to be peacemakers and to pursue His heart for unity among the brethren

Thought For The Week:

Christian unity provides the most **powerful**
and **appealing** witness to the world.

Todd Hitchcock - Bethel Baptist Church October 8, 2017 Message Notes
