

## THE UNITY OF THE LORD GOD WE SERVE

Ephesians 4:1-10. *Prisoner Cred.* Since I am imprisoned<sup>10</sup> for the Lord God, I urge you to live a worthy life, a life worthy of the calling you have received. The nature of a worthy life—a life that is completely humble, gentle, patient. So? Devote your entire effort to keep unity of the Spirit through the bond created by reconciliation.

- Q What unique elements of credibility<sup>11</sup> did Paul possess as a function of being “a prisoner for the Lord?”
- Q What is this “calling” which Paul says we have received?
- Q How must this calling be manifested? What does it take to be—
- ✓ Humble
  - ✓ Gentle
  - ✓ Patient
  - ✓ Forbearing in love
- Q Why is it difficult to be unified within the Spirit? Just what is this “bond of peace” (reconciliation)?

*Unity Manifested.* Remember, there is one body. There is one Spirit. There is one hope, the very hope to which you were called. There is one Lord God. One Faith. One baptism. There is one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, and in all.

- Q Why was/is unity so important within the body?
- Q How does recognizing the singularity of hope, God, Spirit, faith, baptism assist us in starting, maintaining, and seeking unity within the body of Christ?

*Gifts of Ascent & Descent.* Each of us has been given a gift as Christ has apportioned same. This why Holy Spirit wrote in Psalm 68:18 “When he ascended on high, captives were led and gifts populated his victory procession.” And, thus, if He ascended, He descended. By His descent to earth, He ascended higher than all the heavens, and thus completed all things.

- Q Why was the Christ’s descent as Yeshua of Nazareth to earth so critical?
- Q How can the Christ “ascend higher than all the heavens?” What’s Holy Spirit saying here?

### EPHESIANS 4:1-10

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup>Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup>Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

<sup>4</sup>There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—<sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

<sup>7</sup>But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. <sup>8</sup>This is why Holy Spirit wrote: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” [Psalm 68:18]

<sup>9</sup>(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions [or *the depths of the earth*]?) <sup>10</sup>He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

<sup>10</sup>What do Paul of Tarsus, Adolf Hitler, Henry David Thoreau, Martin Luther King, Jr., John Bunyan have in common? Some of their most famous writing was done while imprisoned. Paul (*Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians & Philemon*); Hitler (*Mein Kampf*); Thoreau (*Civil Disobedience*); King (*Letter from a Birmingham Jail*); and Bunyan (*Pilgrim’s Progress*). Prison does indeed afford time to reflect, to meditate, and to write.

<sup>11</sup>“Credibility,” also called “ethos” by the Greeks (ἠθος) is that attribute of people who we not only trust to be well-intentioned, but also authoritative. In other words, a credible person is a person intends to do well **and** is capable. We all know people who are capable, but we would not trust them to open a door for us without tripping us. And, we know people who are well-intentioned, but can’t even find the doorknob. Both factors of credibility are fundamental; if both are not possessed, then there is no credibility.