

OUTLINE

LESSON = EPHESIANS 4:1-16

TEXT = EPHESIANS 4:4

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling . . . ”

Behavioral purpose: This passage is moving God’s hearers to be become one in unity in the community of Christ, the church.

Genre: Multiple (Metaphor/Group Study/Stream of Consciousness)

Intro: In college I had took a number of math classes. Since I was a science major I took Algebra, Calculus, and Finite Mathematics classes. However, I never knew the meaning and purpose of an individual number. For example, there are some interesting facts about the number one. Did you know “one” is the 35th most commonly used word in the English language, right behind the word “all?” Any whole number multiplied or divided by one remains the same (I’m sure you probably knew this!). It is not composed of any other numbers and has no internal structure. But the one fact that caught my attention is that the number 1 is generally treated as a symbol of unity. Therefore, in monotheistic religions, it often symbolizes God or the universe. And if we know that God is one, we try as Christians both individually and collectively to become one. But that is a difficult task . . .

Setting: The apostle Paul is writing a general letter to the church, not only in Ephesus but in Asia Minor. There are no problems mentioned with the churches but he does have an emphasis on speaking to this mostly Gentile church, reminding them that they are no longer “aliens and strangers to the covenants of promise.” Through Jesus, God has broken down the walls between Jews and Gentiles, offering a new covenant to all people. Because of their response to the gospel, they are experiencing a transformation of the personal and social identity. They are called to leave their old ways behind and live a new life. . .

Move I: One in body

- A. We are called to be one body**
- B. The body has many parts**
- C. Sometimes the parts don't all work together like they should.**
- D. We are only the body through the guidance of Jesus Christ**

Move II: One in Spirit

- A. We are united by the Holy Spirit**
- B. The Spirit guides us**
 - a. Mission Study Team**
 - b. Mission in the community/world**
- C. The Spirit empowers us**
 - a. We cannot do this by our own beliefs**
 - b. We can only do this with God's help**

Move III: The One Hope of our Calling (Celebration)

- A. The hope comes in the person of Christ**
 - a. Resurrection and new life**
 - b. Gift of Jesus Christ**
 - c. The gift of being in community**
 - d. The gift of unity**
- B. There may be times when living as one is hard**
 - a. Strife in our country**
 - b. Disagreements in our churches**
- C. We are still called to be One!**
 - a. Story in the movie *Drumline***