

ONE – THE POWER OF AGREEMENT
-PART 3-

(For parts 1 & 2 see the January & February Celebrators)

Ephesians 4:1-6

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The purpose for which God gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers was to prepare the Church for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. This building up of the body takes place in various environments. While environments vary (the Church building, homes, work places, car pools, schools...), the one constant are the people who fill the spaces and are committed to serving one another.

The first four verses of Ephesians 4 describe the type of environment that is crucial for the equipping of the saints. It is not so much a program that is needed but an environment or atmosphere. What does this mean? R. Paul Stevens, in his book *Liberating the Laity*, describes an environment as “the total of the social, spiritual, and relational attitudes and factors in a group that influences what the individuals think of themselves or others and what he or she does.” The required atmosphere for discipleship according to Ephesians 4 is UNITY.

We are challenged in these verses to make every effort to embrace, establish and maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Unity is not a general spirit of friendliness or camaraderie. Nor is unity some common aim or series of aims. Instead, we should understand unity to be a natural by-product of our oneness in Christ that we possess in all of its perfection. Our life calling as the body of Christ then becomes to daily express this oneness in the trenches of life. We are ONE and we are becoming ONE.

Hebrews 10:14 says of holiness what is also true of Christian unity. **“For by one sacrifice he has made perfect (ONE) forever those who are being made holy (ONE).”** We are ONE.

WIN!
Robbie