

THE VISION, EXPERIENCE, AND PRACTICE OF THE ALL-INCLUSIVE ONENESS

(Lord's Day—First Morning Session)

Message Seven

Keeping the Oneness of Reality and Arriving at the Oneness of Practicality

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:2-3, 12-15

I. The oneness of the Lord's aspiration and prayer is accomplished in the oneness of reality and is fulfilled in the oneness of practicality—John 17:21-23; Eph. 4:3, 13.

II. We need to keep the oneness of reality—the oneness of the Spirit—v. 3:

- A. The oneness of the Spirit is actually the Spirit Himself; thus, to keep the oneness is to keep the Spirit—Gal. 5:16, 25:
 - 1. The Spirit is the essence and the reality of the Body of Christ; the Spirit is the reality of the essence as well as the essence to which the reality belongs—Eph. 4:4.
 - 2. Because the Spirit is the reality of the genuine oneness, the oneness of the Spirit is the oneness of reality—John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13.
 - 3. As long as we love the Lord Jesus and embrace Him, we keep the oneness of the Spirit, for oneness is the person of Christ as the life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 1:9, 23-24, 30; 2:2; 6:17; 12:12-13; 15:45b.
 - 4. Any action apart from the Spirit is divisive; whenever we act apart from the Spirit, we are divisive and do not keep the oneness—2:12-15; 3:1-3.
- B. If we would keep the oneness of the Spirit, we must have a proper humanity—a humanity with lowliness, meekness, and long-suffering and a humanity that bears others in love—Eph. 4:2:
 - 1. The fact that the transformed human virtues in verse 2 are mentioned before the oneness of the Spirit in verse 3 indicates that we must have these virtues in order to keep the oneness of the Spirit.
 - 2. The more we are transformed, the more of the humanity of Jesus we have; by having the humanity of the resurrected Christ, we spontaneously have the virtues required to keep the oneness of the Spirit—2 Cor. 10:1; 11:10.
- C. The genuine oneness—the oneness of reality—is seen in the picture of the tabernacle with its boards of acacia wood overlaid with gold—Exo. 26:15-30:
 - 1. The bars of acacia wood overlaid with gold signify the uniting Spirit—the Holy Spirit of God mingled with our spirit, the mingled spirit—vv. 26-29.
 - 2. In the mingled spirit is the transformed humanity with the virtues of lowliness, meekness, and long-suffering—Rom. 8:4; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- D. Whereas Ephesians 4:2 indicates the need of transformation, verse 3 indicates the need of the cross:
 - 1. On the cross Christ made peace for His Body; this peace should bind us together and thus become the uniting bond—2:15-17.

2. The uniting bond of peace is actually the working of the cross; in order to have the uniting bond of peace, we need to be crossed out—Gal. 5:24.
- E. The best way to keep the oneness of reality is to go on, to proceed, toward the oneness of practicality—Eph. 4:13.

III. We need to arrive at the oneness of practicality—the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God—v. 13:

- A. As believers in Christ, we were born into the oneness of reality; now we need to go on until we arrive at the oneness of practicality, the oneness of our living in practicality—John 3:6.
- B. The oneness of the Spirit in Ephesians 4:3 is the oneness of the divine life in reality, and the oneness in verse 13 is the oneness of our living in practicality.
- C. The oneness of reality needs to be practiced; that is, it must become the oneness in practice; thus, verse 13 speaks of the oneness of practicality.
- D. The word *arrive* in verse 13 indicates that a process is required for us to arrive at the oneness of practicality; the oneness of reality is the beginning, and the oneness of practicality is the destination.
- E. The oneness of practicality is the oneness of the faith—v. 13:
 1. *The faith* does not refer to our act of believing but to the things in which we believe, such as the divine person of Christ and His redemptive work accomplished for our salvation—1 Tim. 1:19; 6:10, 12, 21; Jude 3.
 2. The speciality of the church is *the faith*; in the church life we have only one thing that is special—*the faith*, which is composed of our beliefs concerning the Bible, God, Christ, the work of Christ, salvation, and the church—v. 20.
 3. To insist upon anything besides the faith as the basis for receiving the believers is to be divisive—Rom. 14:1; 15:7.
- F. The oneness of practicality is also the oneness of the full knowledge of the Son of God—Eph. 4:13:
 1. The full knowledge of the Son of God is the apprehension of the revelation concerning the Son of God for our experience—Matt. 16:16.
 2. The oneness of the faith altogether depends on the full knowledge of the Son of God—John 20:31; Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:4, 6:
 - a. Only when we take Christ as the center and we focus on Him can we arrive at the oneness of the faith, for only in the Son of God can our faith be one—1 Cor. 2:2.
 - b. Whenever we are short of Christ, we are short of oneness, and whenever we lack the element of Christ, we are in disharmony.
 - c. Everyone who has truly seen the Son of God will not hold on to his opinion or insist on anything—Col. 1:12-20; 2:2-3, 9-10, 16-17.
- G. In order to arrive at the oneness of practicality, we need to be perfected by the gifts unto the work of the New Testament ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ; the gifts perfect the saints until they arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God—Eph. 4:12.
- H. If we would arrive at the oneness of practicality, we need to hold to truth in love so that we may grow up in all things into the Head, Christ—v. 15.

- I. The oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God is both the full-grown man and the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ—v. 13.
- J. To arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God is to no longer be little children carried about by every wind of teaching but to arrive at a full-grown man and at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; for this we need to grow in the divine life—vv. 13-15.