

Secrets to the Unity of the Seven Ones

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | October 26, 2023



In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes the unity that believers are to have in seven “ones.”

There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (Ephesians 4:4-6 NIV84).

The seven “ones” are:

1. One body
2. One Spirit
3. One hope
4. One Lord
5. One faith
6. One baptism
7. One God and Father of all

Let's examine each of these in detail:

1. **One body** refers to the body of true believers. This group is also described in Scripture using other symbols, such as the Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27), the heavenly sanctuary/temple built out of living stones with Christ, the Chief cornerstone (1 Peter 2:4-8), the holy city (Revelation 21:9-14). We describe this in detail in our magazine [The Wedding of Christ to His Bride: Preparing the Church for the Second Coming](#).

The point Paul is making is that the one body of believers is composed of those who have been reborn to have new hearts and right spirits, who have the character of Christ reproduced within. These people are not defined by denomination, attestation to a certain creed or fundamental list of beliefs, or by ritual or ceremony. They are defined by Christlike character and unity with God in heart, mind, soul, and spirit. These individuals are connected via the Holy Spirit to Jesus and receive from Jesus His life so that it is no longer their old fear-based sinful selves living, but Christ living in them (Galatians 2:20). We only become part of the one body by surrendering our hearts/minds/selves to Jesus, dying to the old me-first way, and being recreated to love God and others more than self by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

2. **One Spirit** refers to God the Holy Spirit, the one and only Spirit that Jesus promised would come and apply into our hearts and minds His victory, His righteousness, His perfection, making effectual His victory in us individually (John 16:5-15).

And once this happens, once our spirits have been cleansed, renewed, recreated by the Holy Spirit, we then come into the unity for which Jesus prayed:

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, **that they may be one as we are one**: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17:20-23 NIV84, emphasis mine).

When we receive the one Holy Spirit, our fear, selfishness, me-first drives are replaced with love for God and others and we experience a unity that is inherent in our faith. Our spirits are cleansed to have “one” “team spirit,” one spiritual attitude of love and trust and, thus, we can say with Paul,

Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in **spirit** (1 Corinthians 5:3 NIV84, emphasis mine).

We, by the one indwelling Holy Spirit, experience one united spirit of love for God and others.

3. **One hope** refers to our only hope of salvation—Jesus Christ our Savior.

We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield (Psalm 33:20 NIV84).

Why is there only one hope? Because Jesus is the only remedy to our sin condition:

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken (Psalm 62:5, 6 NIV84).

The Bible describes our one hope in other metaphors:

- Narrow path versus wide path (Matthew 7:13)
- One gate into the sheep pen (John 10:1-42)
- One mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5)

And what do we hope to receive through/from Jesus? Healing, renewal, cleansing, removal of all guilt, shame, sin, and death:

We know that when he appears, **we shall be like him**, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this **hope** in him **purifies himself, just as he is pure**" (1 John 3:2, 3 NIV84, emphasis mine).

4. **One Lord**, of course, refers to God, to having no other God before our Creator God, to loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength (Exodus 20:3; Luke 10:27). But I believe it has special reference to we humans recognizing God the Son, Jesus Christ, as *our* Lord and Savior—that while we worship [God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in their triune perfection](#), we recognize Jesus as our Lord in a special, functional, objectively distinct way that the Father and Spirit are not. Specifically, we recognize that Jesus is not only fully God, but He is God who became fully human and is our new head of humanity, our second Adam, our Liege and Lord, the representative head of our species in the courts of heaven, reigning on the divine throne (Hebrews 2:14; 4:15; 5:8, 9; 1 Timothy 1:9, 10; 1 Corinthians 15:47). Thus, Jesus is our Lord, Liege, Champion, and King who sits on David's throne (Luke 1:32, 33; Romans 1:3). Jesus reclaims Earth and all its domain from the infection of sin and restores this creation back into unity with the unfallen sinless universe and forever stands as our Sovereign leader and governor of not only all of heaven, but specifically of Earth. He is Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords! Jesus is not only our Creator, our God, our Savior—He is our human Champion, Liege, and Lord—the representative of humanity in God's presence reigning upon God's throne!
5. **One faith** means more than our personal saving faith in Jesus; it means a common understanding, belief, trust, and confidence in God and His designs for life that leads to common motives, goals, and similar practices. When we are "one body" indwelt by the "one Spirit" and have a unified spiritual attitude focused on our "one hope" and honor our "one Lord," we experience the transformation of our hearts and minds and become more like Jesus. We love what Jesus loves and hate what Jesus hates, and we gain wisdom, discernment, and understanding of the operations, principles, and methods of God. We come to understand God's character and His design laws for life, and we choose to align ourselves with Him. We mature into a common faith because life as God created it is built on common principles—God's design laws for life. People who understand and appreciate the laws of health and want to have healthy bodies do common things and have a common shared appreciation for life, health, and the principles of healthy living. They build community exercise facilities and come together to support each other in their common goal of living healthier lives. Likewise, when we have God's love and truth operating in our hearts, we have a common faith with everyone who knows God for themselves (John 17:3) and worships God as Creator, and we build worship facilities and come together to exercise our faith to live

healthier, Christlike lives.

6. **One baptism** refers to the one and only baptism that is required for the salvation of every single person—the baptism—immersion—of the heart, mind, and soul into the Holy Spirit, where we die to the old sinful, fear-based, selfish self and arise with a new heart and right spirit cleansed and reborn to love God and others more than self.

He saved us through the **washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit** (Titus 3:5 NIV84, emphasis mine).

Every person saved through history—Enoch, Elijah, Moses, Daniel, the apostles, the martyrs, you, and me—are saved only as we experience the cleansing and renewal of heart and mind by the working of the Holy Spirit. We must die to sin and be reborn to love God and others more than self. This is only possible because of Jesus Christ, who provides the new heart and right spirit—who as a human overcame and developed a perfect, sinless, righteous, **human** character, heart, and mind and offers these to us as a free gift. It is the Holy Spirit that takes the victory of Christ and reproduces it in us, such that, as Paul said, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20 NET).

The water baptism is a public ceremony that acts out the submersion of our hearts and minds into the cleansing waters of the Holy Spirit, where we leave behind the old sinful person and arise to a new and righteous life. But H₂O doesn’t cleanse from sin, nor do ceremonies—the only baptism that saves is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The thief on the cross who accepted Jesus as Savior and whom Jesus confirmed is saved did not participate in the water ceremony, but he did experience his heart and mind cleansed by the Holy Spirit. This is the one true baptism.

But does this mean that the water ceremony is unimportant and we don’t need to do it? No—the ceremony is important. It is part of the process of solidifying into our being the rebirth that we have already experienced from the Holy Spirit. How it actually works is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit causes the heart to be cleansed and the person to be reborn into a new life in Christ—this occurs first. Then, with their new heart, the new believer wants to take a stand for God and follow His healing instructions and directions. And to mature and grow in godliness requires more than mere verbal declarations; we must also choose to live out and apply God’s truths to our lives. So in order to heal, grow, and be transformed, the new convert must choose to live out God’s principles. By choosing to align ourselves with God in behavior and practice, we solidify into our beings the new motives and commitments. Thus, the public act of being baptized in water is not only a witness to others, but it reacts upon us and solidifies our commitment and resolve to stay faithful.

7. **One God and Father of all** confirms that our God is love. For love cannot exist in a singularity but requires an other. We have in this text our one Lord Jesus Christ, our one Holy Spirit, and the reality of who God is as our God of love would be incomplete without the confirmation of our One Father of all. Thus, we have our united faith in our one triune God of love. And each member of the Godhead has chosen amongst themselves to take on different roles and responsibilities in carrying out different functions in how they relate to each other. You can read more about this here: [Trinity—More Questions](#).

When we experience Jesus, recognizing Him as our “one” Lord—the Word made flesh, the truth and the life of God given to us—we accept His testimony that if we have seen Him, we have seen the “one” Father, the lies of Satan are cast out, and we are won to trust. We open our hearts in the “one” faith

and experience the “one” baptism, the immersion of our entire being in the cleansing power of the “one” Spirit, and we are reborn to be “one” in spirit with all others who have been reborn, and we are part of the “one” body of believers whose “one” hope is in Jesus Christ. And our one hope will not be disappointed, because...

“we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.
Everyone who has this **hope** in him purifies himself, just as he is pure” (1 John 3:2, 3 NIV84, emphasis mine).