

“One Baptism, One God & Father of All”

“Ephesians 4:5-6”

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

July 3, 2024 p.m.

Introduction: We continue our study in Ephesians 4 under to theme of “The Church under orders.” Previously we considered the aim of the church under orders (4:1) & the appearance of the church under orders (4:2-3). That has taken us to the articles of faith (our anchor) of the church under orders, where we have noted the articles: “*There is one body, & one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism...*” This evening’s study continues our look at “*one baptism.*” What do we believe is meant by this “*baptism*”? Our emphasis tonight is upon “*Spirit baptism.*” We will conclude with verse 6, “*One God & Father of all, who is above all, & through all, & in you all.*”

I. Spirit baptism?

Note: “This is a definitive verse on one of the great themes of the Bible” (H. Morris, Jr.).

Interpretations: “‘*One baptism*’ is usually explained as water baptism, the initiatory rite by which the convert gives testimony to his faith. However, it could also refer to Spirit baptism, whereby the believer is made a part of the body of Christ. An interesting parallel is found in I Cor. 12:12-13, in which 4 expressions of Eph. 4:4-6 (*one body, one Spirit, one Lord, & one baptism*) appear as *one body, one Spirit, Christ, & baptized*. In the I Cor. Parallel, the baptism referred to is clearly Spirit baptism, & this would support such an identification in Eph. 5:5” (Kent).

“Whether this ‘one baptism’ refers to Spirit baptism or water baptism has been extensively argued. Both aspects of baptism are taught in the Bible, with water baptism being the visible sign & testimony to the Spirit’s baptism, & no modifying words or phrases are attached to the word here to identify it as one or the other. It is probably, therefore, that both aspects are in view, since both go together in one unifying reality” (H. Morris).

A. We are *placed* in the body of Christ - I Corinthians 12:13.

1. “The baptism in one Spirit is the theme of this passage (I Cor. 12), teaching us that every one of the ‘*brethren*’ (:1) – those who ‘*speaking by the Spirit of God*’ have acknowledged Jesus to be their Lord (:3) – has been ‘*baptized into one body,*’ the body of Christ Himself” (Morris).
2. “There are only 7 explicit references in the Bible to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. All except our text (12:13) are referring to the initial baptizing work of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1)...
3. “...It deals with the ongoing work of the Spirit in all future instances of true conversion to Christ. Since His first baptism of Jewish believers (Acts 2) & then of Gentiles (Acts 11), *all* – both Jews & Gentiles – are baptized in the Spirit into the body of Christ.”
4. “This baptism does not take place repeatedly in one’s life, as may be true of the ‘filling’ of the Spirit, but once, at the time of true conversion.”

B. We are *pictured* as the body of Christ - I Corinthians 12:14-27.

1. “The church, the spiritual body of Christ, is formed as believers, are immersed by Christ with the Holy Spirit. Christ is the baptizer (Mat. 3:11) who immerses each believer with the Spirit into unity with all other believers” (MacArthur).
2. “*And that He might reconcile both (Jew & Gentile) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby*” (Ephesians 2:16).

Summary: “Since Paul is here discussing the One Body, this ‘one baptism’ is probably the baptism of the Spirit, that act of the Spirit when He places the believing sinner into the Body of Christ at conversion (I Cor. 12:13). This is not an experience after conversion, nor is it an experience the believer should pray for or seek after. We are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), but we are never commanded to be baptized with the Spirit, for we have already been baptized by the Spirit at conversion. As far as the One Body is concerned, there is one baptism – the baptism of the Spirit. But as far as local bodies of believers are concerned, there are 2 baptisms: the baptism of the Spirit, & water baptism” (Wiersbe).

II. “*One God & Father of all, who is above all, & through all, & in you all*” (4:6).

A. He is “*above all*” - He is our Sovereign.

1. Defined: the supreme rulership of God > see Psalm 66:7 & Psalm 93:1.
2. Demonstrated: to believers, Romans 8:28; to unbelievers, Revelation 11:17.

B. He is “*through all*” - He is our Sustainer

1. Philippians 1:6, He commenced the work, He continues it, & He will complete it.
2. Ephesians 2:10, He has ordained us unto good works.

C. He is “*in you all*” - He is our Security.

1. Romans 8:9-11, His indwelling presence.
2. Philippians 2:13, His unfailing power.

Summary: “The marvelous oneness of believers in the family of God is evident here, for God is over all, & working through all, & in all. We are children in the same family, loving & serving the same Father, so we ought to be able to walk together in unity” (Wiersbe).

“The capstone in this list of seven is the one God & Father. The fatherhood stated here refers to God’s relation to all believers. The three prepositions designate God as sovereign & transcendent (‘*above all*’), as operating ‘*through*’ His children in accomplishing His will, & as residing ‘*in*’ them: (Kent).

Conclusion: Are you part of the Body of Christ? Consider again the entrance, enjoyment, & enlistment in His body. Are you conscious of the Spirit's indwelling presence? Do you have the blessed hope - as you look for, long for, & love His appearing? Is Christ your Lord, your Savior & Sovereign? Are you part of the faith, believing in this body of truth? Have you been baptized into the body of Christ, placed there by the Spirit of God? And do you know for sure that God is your Father? Is He your Sovereign, your Sustainer, your Security? If these things are not true of you, why not make them true today? Come to Jesus, by way of the cross, & make Him your Lord & Savior.

If you are saved, could you give a Biblical definition for each of these articles of faith? Are you able to give “...a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness & fear.” (I Peter 3:15)