

# The Anchor of the Church under Orders (Our Articles of Faith)

*Ephesians 4:4-6*

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Introduction: We have considered previously the aim of the church under orders (to **desire** God's holiness, to **declare** God's greatness, & to **demonstrate** God's likeness) as well as the appearance of the church under orders (its attributes). We noted 5 attitudes that should be in evidence in the lives of those who are part of the church. There is the need for **lowliness**, **meekness**, **longsuffering**, **forbearance** & **zealousness**. Each of these characteristics is to be exercised in love (agape), that is, a love that seeks the highest good of others. Notice with me tonight & next Wednesday night the articles of faith for the church under orders, or that which is to be our anchor. Paul speaks of 7 unities: One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, & one God. The unity of the Spirit (:3) is based on these truths; without these truths there is no unity.

- I. There is one **body** (:4) - see Ephesians 3:3-6  
The Body of Christ (His Church), cf. Romans 12:5 >
  - A. Entrance (into the body).
    1. We enter by belief in Christ - Romans 10:9-13.
    2. We enter by the blood of Christ - Ephesians 2:12-16.
  - B. Enjoyment (with the body).
    1. There is opportunity for fellowship - part of the family.
    2. There is opportunity for faithfulness - place of service.
  - C. Enlistment (for the body).
    1. We have responsibility: in sharing & serving.
    2. We have accountability: to sustain the unity & to support the testimony.
- II. There is one **Spirit** (:4)
  - A. The Person of the Holy Spirit.
    1. His personality - John 16:14 > "He" & Acts 15:28.
    2. His Deity - II Corinthians 13:14 & Matthew 28:19.
  - B. The promise of the Holy Spirit.
    1. The promise of His *coming* - John 14:16-18.
    2. The promise of His *convicting* - John 16:7-11.
  - C. The purpose of the Holy Spirit.
    1. He comes to *save* - I Peter 1:2 (cf. John 6:44).
    2. He comes to *seal* - Ephesians 1:13-14 (speaks of possession, protection, & purpose).
- III. There is one **hope** of your calling (:4)
  - A. We are to be looking for His coming (we wait).
    1. Luke 12:36, "...like unto men that wait for their lord..."
    2. Titus 2:13, "Looking for that blessed hope, & the glorious appearing of the great God & our Savior Jesus Christ."
  - B. We are to be longing for His coming (we watch).
    1. Luke 12:37, "...when he cometh shall find doing."
    2. Revelation 22:20, "...Even so, come, Lord Jesus."
  - C. We are to be loving of His coming (we work).
    1. Luke 12:43, "...when he cometh shall find so doing."
    2. II Timothy 4:8, "...& not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

IV. There is one **Lord** (:5)

A. Our Savior.

1. Matthew 1:21, "...& thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins."
2. Luke 2:12, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

B. Our Sovereign.

1. Romans 10:12, "...for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him."
2. Colossians 1:15-19, "For by Him were all things created.... & by Him all things consist."

V. There is one **faith** (:5)

A. The body of truth.

1. John 17:17, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth."
2. Jude :3, "...that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered..."

B. The belief in truth.

1. II Thessalonians 2:13, "...God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit & belief of the truth."
2. John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, & the truth shall make you free."

VI. There is one **baptism** (:5)

A. Water baptism??

1. A step of *obedience* - Matthew 28:19-20 & Acts 2:38.
2. A step of *identification* - Romans 6:3-5.

B. Spirit baptism.

1. We are *placed* in the body of Christ - I Corinthians 12:13.
2. We are *pictured* as the body of Christ - I Corinthians 12:14-27.

VII. There is one **God** & Father of all (: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.

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)