

# Unity

## *Ephesians 4:1-6*

**Introduction:** Many, many centuries ago the Psalmist wrote, **“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Psa. 133:1).**

Unity requires a lot of effort to even exist. It does not just happen. It is something that is deliberate and is developed over time. This development is from the “inside out.” When this is done, the unity will be well grounded. It will not be like a mask worn on the surface, but will be part and parcel of the whole body. It will permeate the entire group as each contributes their part. The best plan for unity is useless if it remains in theory or on paper. It must be executed and practiced uniformly among the believers in order to accomplish what God has in mind.

We may come from different backgrounds and possess varying dispositions. These are not deterrents to unity. Rather they are parts of unity that make it so richly unique. So many who have every reason to be separated find themselves bound together in a common cause.

Unity is something that is simply amazing and, really, could only be possible when arranged by a divine engineer.

### **I. The Pursuit Of Unity Is A Worthy Thing.**

#### **A. Notice some of the words in verse 1.**

- 1. “Walk”** is used in the sense of maintaining a certain manner or conduct, to order one’s behavior, to establish one’s manner of living.
- 2. This “walk”** is to be **“worthy.”**
  - a.** This means suitable or acceptable.
  - b.** It refers to acceptable behavior in the eyes of the Lord.
    - 1)** When is this to be? At all times.
      - a)** At home.
      - b)** At work.
      - c)** At play.
    - 2)** To be by faith (**2 Cor. 5:7**).
    - 3)** Under God’s direction (**Jer. 10:23**).
    - 4)** A walk different than before a Christian (**Rom. 6:4**).
    - 5)** By the same rule (**Phil. 3:16**).
    - 6)** To please God (**1 Thess. 4:1**).
  - 3. “Calling” (“vocation”** in KJV) is the idea of the job a Christian is called to do (not enforced labor, but that which is voluntary and is ordained by God (**2 Thess. 2:14**). We might also remember that this vocation is full time, not part time.

## II. Attitudes Necessary For Unity To Exist.

### A. ***“With all lowliness and meekness...”***

1. ***“Lowliness”*** is the idea of humility. Not pretentious, but genuine. It is seeing oneself as not the greatest (which is arrogance), but seeing Christ as the greatest. This is best explained in ***Philippians 2:3***.
2. ***“Gentleness”*** is the idea of mildness, meekness (KJV), harmlessness. This is not weakness. This is unique in that it calls upon one to exhibit the spirit of Christ (***Matt. 11:28-30***) in our dealings with each other and this is especially important in promoting unity.

### B. ***“...with longsuffering...”***

1. This is a word usually associated with patience (***see 2 Peter 3:9***).
2. We should be longsuffering with one another. None of us proceed at the same rate. Nor do we all reside at the same level. Dee Bowman once said, *“While it is true that we sometimes have a tendency to not be longsuffering with one another, it is also true that we often times are not even shortsuffering with one another!”*

### C. ***“...forbearing one another in love...”***

1. *“To forbear is to endure patiently, to suffer tolerantly, to hold back reaction, to evidence self-restraint”* (Caldwell, p. 158).
2. Commonly, this means to “put up with each other.” (***see Col. 3:13***).

- D. Surely we can see how all of these qualities are necessary and must be present or any attempt toward will never bear any fruit.

## III. Source Of Unity.

### A. In order for there to be unity, there must be a common source of unity.

1. This is mentioned in ***Titus 1:4; Jude 3***.
2. This has in sight the word of God (***Rom. 10:17***).

### B. We are all exhorted to speak the same thing (***1 Cor. 1:10***).

1. This implies having read the same words.
2. It also implies having the same mind (***Rom. 15:5-6***).

### C. God always expects and speaks of unity, not union.

1. Nowhere is there an appeal for compromise.
2. Neither is there opportunity to rely on one’s opinions.
3. If there is going to be any unity at all, it will be based on the word of God.

**IV. Foundations Of Unity.**

- A. **“One body”** (organization).
- B. **“One Spirit”** (life).
- C. **“One hope of your calling”** (aspiration).
- D. **“One Lord”** (authority).
- E. **“One faith”** (message).
- F. **“One baptism”** (practice).
- G. **“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”** (worship).

**Conclusion:** Are you doing all you can to promote and maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?