



## The Holy Spirit and Spirituality 1Q 2017 Lesson 9

### The Holy Spirit and the Church

#### SABBATH

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Read memory text: “Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:3-5, NASB).

What does it mean “unity of the Spirit”?

In the second paragraph below the lesson states, “The Spirit-inspired Bible is the foundation for the theological unity of the church.”

What does this mean? Is there a difference in “unity of the Spirit” and “theological unity?”

Is the Bible speaking of unity whereas the lesson is speaking of uniformity?

Are unity and uniformity the same?

What is unity in the Spirit? Is it not unity of character, methods, motives, i.e. we love God and others more than self, we practice the principles of being lovers of truth who present the truth in love and leave others free? Yet, we may have different ideas about some points of theology because we are coming from different backgrounds, different perspectives, different levels of maturity? Can persons be united in in the Spirit who:

- Were baptized in different ways?
- Attend church on different days?
- Wear and do not wear jewelry?
- Partake of communion in different ways?
- Who have different number of wives?
  - Consider this scenario, which the SDA church grappled with in the 1980s. SDA missionary converts a man with multiple wives to Christ and the man wants to be baptized, but the church leaders tell him he must get rid of all but one wife. But the man says if he does all the women will be outcasts in society, shunned, and perhaps end up as prostitutes. He doesn't want to treat them in such a way. Who is acting in love and who is not?
  - What if the man says okay, he will keep number two, but the church leaders say no, he must keep number one. But he says, number one was arranged by his parents when he was three and he never chose her nor loved her. He chose number two, but the church leaders say the law is clear, he must only keep his first wife.



- What does unity of love mean? That the men keep all their wives. It is unity of love, doing that which is in harmony with God's principles, not uniformity, not conformity.

Is division—what breaks down unity in Christ—from believing differently about such practices (baptism, communion, day of worship) or from believing differently about God and His law—i.e. believing God's law is arbitrary and that we are righteous when we get our doctrines to harmonize with Scripture, with proper definitions and practice the right behaviors?

Is unity found in agreement on the right definitions of words and rituals or in coming to unity of heart motive that we all love others more than self and grant others freedom to see it differently?

It is immaturity, functioning at level 4 and below, still operating on imposed law constructs that bring disunity—this leads to religions in which the primary issue is one of proclamations, behavior, ritual, attestations to creeds and belief systems, and not about love in the heart. When we have love in the heart then it is primarily about how we treat others, living in harmony with God and His principles and revealing God in our behavior. In other words, it is about how reality functions, not about arbitrary definitions.

Here is a section out of my new book *The God-Shaped Heart* which will be available August 1, 2017 that demonstrates this point:

*It is love and love only that unites, that overcomes rules, that transcends arbitrary laws, that supersedes doctrinal differences. It is love that heals the heart!*

*January 23, 1943 the SS Dorchester sailed from New York on its way to Greenland transporting over 900 soldiers for the allied war effort in WWII. Aboard were four chaplains: Methodist pastor George L. Fox, Roman Catholic priest John P. Washington, Reform Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, and Reformed*

*During the early morning hours of February 3, 1943 the Dorchester was torpedoed by the German U-boat U-223. As the men were desperate to escape the sinking ship, the chaplains calmed the men and helped organize the evacuation. When the supply of life jackets ran out before each man had one, the chaplains removed their own life jackets and gave them to others. They helped as many as they could into the lifeboats, and then, as the ship went down, the chaplains linked arms and began to sing hymns and pray for the safety of the men.*

*One survivor's report:*

*As I swam away from the ship, I looked back. The flares had lighted everything. The bow came up high and she slid under. The last thing I saw, the Four Chaplains were up there praying for the safety of the men. They had done*



*everything they could. I did not see them again. They themselves did not have a chance without their life jackets. — Grady Clark, survivor<sup>1</sup>*

*The freezing waters didn't differentiate between Protestant, Jew, or Catholic. When Rabbi Goode offered his life jacket to a desperate soldier, it didn't matter what beliefs that soldier held—design law doesn't make distinctions between people. Doctrine didn't matter, liturgy didn't matter, Bible version didn't matter, denomination didn't matter, method of baptism didn't matter—what mattered? Love! Selfless love, love that gives, love that seeks to help others. It is love that heals, love that unites—love that transforms the heart!*

## SUNDAY

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Read first paragraph, “The Holy Spirit...” What does it mean to be “effectually” united with Christ?

Is this like the United States of America—different states, different people, making a legal bond of unity? Or is our unity with Christ something much more significant than the legal unity of states?

What is the unity we have with Christ?

What do you think of this from the devotional book *Our High Calling*:

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. John 17:21. {OHC 170.1}

The solemn, earnest prayer of Christ . . . reaches down along the line to our time. What a position is this for fallen man to attain through obedience [how do you hear this word, through what law lens? do you hear conformity, obey or else, or in the Biblical sense hypoacua a humble willingness to listen, trust and following instructions to the best of your ability?]-oneness with God through Jesus Christ! To what heights we are permitted to rise if we will have respect unto the recompense of the reward! **We are to receive power from God that human nature, under the divine working,** may not always be perverted and not always be under the depraving, corrupting influence of sin. **Human nature, through Jesus Christ, becomes allied to angels--yes, even to the great God.** {OHC 170.2}

Those who are truly connected with God **will not be at variance** with one another. . . . **His Spirit ruling in their hearts will create harmony, love, and unity. The opposite of this works in the children of Satan; there is with them a continual contradiction. Strife and envy and jealousy are the ruling elements. The characteristic of the Christian is the meekness of Christ. Benevolence, kindness, mercy, and love originate from Infinite Wisdom, while the opposite is the unholy fruit of a heart that is not in harmony with**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four\\_Chaplains](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Chaplains)



**Jesus Christ. . . In union there is strength.** In division there is weakness and defeat. {OHC 170.3}

**The most convincing argument we can give to the world of Christ's mission is to be found in perfect unity. . . In proportion to our unity with Christ will be our power to save souls.** {OHC 170.4}

What is the unity? Is it a unity of thought? A unity of doctrine? A unity of worship practice? Or a unity of heart, love for each other and practicing God's methods?

Read second paragraph, "Through the Spirit, we have access..." What building? Is this the same as the heavenly sanctuary which is to be cleansed before the second coming?

The bottom paragraph states, "In every way possible, without compromising what cannot be compromised, we need to seek for unity in the fellowship of believers."

What cannot be compromised?

- The dress code?
- Sabbath behavior—eating out on Sabbath?
- Day of worship?
- Method of baptism?
- Communion?
- Ordination of women?
- Accepting homosexuals into the church?

What cannot be compromised? God's law—which is what? Do we see it as level four and below or level 5 and above?

God's design law cannot be compromised—because it is impossible to compromise it, we can only violate it which always damages us!

But, rituals, metaphors, religious rules, doctrinal definitions—all of those can be compromised as long as the person doesn't compromise God's design for life—which is love!

Consider the story of the Good Samaritan:

- Who was the one person right with God in the story, the priest, Levite or Samaritan?
- Did the Samaritan ever, as far as we know:
  - sacrifice at temple?
  - keep the Sabbath?
  - eat a kosher diet?
  - get circumcised?
- What did the Samaritan do?



- He had a heart renewed in love and sacrificed self for other!

What were all the other observances supposed to teach? God's design of love and His plan to restore us to love, so keeping the rituals without a change of heart is pointless.

## MONDAY

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First paragraph states, "It is the Holy Spirit who unites us into one body of believers. The public entrance into Christ's spiritual kingdom is through baptism. We are baptized into a specific church body."

What does this mean? It seems a little confusing as the one sentence says we are baptized into Christ's spiritual kingdom, but the next states into a specific church body. Are they saying we are baptized into the church invisible or into a denomination?

Are denominations a part of God's plan, or are denominations evidence of the infection of sin and the disunity in God's church?

Is it God's plan we baptize into thousands of denominations, or that we baptize into Christ?

I think we all agree that we are baptized into Christ, the church invisible when we are baptized—and some organizations merge this with joining their denomination—but not all. So one can be baptized into Christ without being baptized into a specific denomination.

Read next paragraph, "The act of being buried..." Is it a requirement of eternal life to be baptized my immersion in water? Or is this a public ceremony, which has a purpose different than the actual saving of the person?

If we say that immersion in water is a requirement to salvation, what about all the people who lived before the time of Christ? Is there any evidence Enoch or Elijah were baptized by immersion in water? What about the thief on the cross?

What about those heathens who never have the gospel brought, who as Paul says in Romans 2:12 have never heard the law, but are a law unto themselves showing the law is written on the heart—are they baptized by immersion in water?

So, do we have evidence that people, many millions likely, will be saved without ever having been baptized by immersion in water—or sprinkling with water?

But the Bible says there is one faith and one baptism—what does this mean?



Baptism is the transliteration of the Greek word *baptizmo*, and it simply means to immerse—so is their an immersion with which all who are saved must and do experience? Yes! It is the immersion of the heart and mind into the living water of Jesus Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, where the old motives, fears, selfishness are washed away and we are renewed in heart, mind, character to be like Christ—loving others more than self. This is the true baptism, not the water ritual.

Then what is the purpose of the water ritual? Something other than salvation; salvation is achieved in the true immersion of the heart and mind into Christ. Water baptism is the public *ceremony* to **assist the community** in achieving unity by **accepting into fellowship** those who have been living in sin.

What is the point of a public wedding ceremony? In all cultures of the world one of the important functions of the ceremony is community acknowledgement, acceptance, and support of the new status of the couple.

What is the point of various initiation ceremonies whether in tribes, gangs, fraternities, military units? It is to change the status of the person in the community, in the minds of all in that group, such as a bar mitzvah, graduation, or pinning ceremony.

Likewise, the ceremony of baptism is not for the cleansing of the heart of the one being baptized, that cleansing happened when the person's mind and heart was immersed into the living water by the indwelling Spirit. The purpose of the public ceremony is to assist the community of believer, the church, in accepting the new convert and achieving unity in the group.

And of course, the public ceremony also has a solidifying, validating, impact upon the mind and heart of the one being baptized.

The lesson states in the bottom paragraph, "Baptism is a positive step with which all who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit must comply. In other words, baptism marks true repentance, the crucifixion of the old life, and it signals the new birth or conversion."

What do you hear them saying? Why must they comply? In order to be saved, or in order for them to be accepted by the group? The lesson is saying that in order to "be acknowledged" by the group, the church, and be accepted into community, one has to make a public stand and mark themselves and give the public signal that they have already been converted or reborn.

Can there be false signals? In other words can a person go through the public ceremony to achieve acceptance into the group without ever having their hearts renewed by the Spirit? Yes, but is such a person saved? Why not? Because salvation is not legal, it is an actual healing of the inner person and water baptism doesn't heal, it only publicly testifies to what is supposed to have happened in the heart. But man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart.



## TUESDAY

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Read first paragraph, “The primary means...” Do we ever want to undermine confidence in the Bible? Absolutely not! So be sure that in our view the Bible is God’s inspired word to reveal Himself to us. Yet, having accepted the truth about the Bible and trusting the reliability of the Bible, are there ways that the Bible can be used that cause division rather than bring unity?

How? By interpreting the Bible through level four lenses—a codebook of deeds to be done and sins to be shunned; and refusing to harmonize the Bible with nature and experience. For the Bible itself states explicitly that God’s divine nature is seen in what he has made (Rom 1:20) and that we are to taste and see that the Lord is good.

Jesus expounded the truth of God’s kingdom over and over again, and what was Jesus’ primary method of teaching the truth? It was not by primarily quoting Scripture to the people, even though at times He did quote Scripture. No! The majority of the time Jesus taught from nature and in parables of life experiences to reveal the **functional reality** of God’s design law for life, which is the plan of healing!

Quoting Scripture, divorced from design law, i.e. nature and reality, causes arbitrary rules, confusion and inconsistencies that lead people away from God and His kingdom of love. This is why Jesus criticized the religious teachers in His day for searching the Scriptures thinking they would find eternal life, but in reality they were not finding it because they were searching for the wrong thing. They were not searching for reality, but for rules to obey.

Read bottom paragraph, “The Word of God...” Is having confidence in the Bible the same thing as agreeing with what other people say the Bible means—even if those other people are church leaders?

The last sentence says, “Were we to lessen or weaken our implicit belief in the Bible as God’s Word of truth to us, the unity of the church would be destroyed.”

What does this imply? Does it mean that the key to unity is believing implicitly in the Bible? Is our belief, which means trust, to be in the Bible or in Christ?

Did the Pharisees constantly argue for the supremacy of the Bible? How many Christian groups today argue for the supremacy of the Bible yet argue amongst each other and show very little love?

The problem is not resolved by agreeing to the supremacy of the Bible, for many children, those operating at level four and below, what Hebrews says are infants still on milk and therefore “not acquainted with righteousness” attest to the supremacy of the Bible. The problem is they view it through imposed law lenses and therefore divide people through their rules and interpretations. This is what lawyers do, become thought police and focus on proper definitions rather than mature Christlike character.



## WEDNESDAY

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Read the memory text at the top and then the first paragraph: “One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Eph 4:5,6

“Unity in the faith and doctrine is...” Do you have any concerns about the paragraph after reading the Bible verse?

Does the Bible say unity of doctrine?

Why does the Bible **not** say this? When Jesus comes, do you believe when He appears in the clouds there will be one person, amongst the saved on earth, who will know every text of the Bible with 100% accuracy? No! Not, one, which means what? We are not saved by the right comprehension of Bible facts, by right definitions of doctrines, but by right relationship with God, who through the Spirit takes what Christ achieved and forms right character within.

When Christ returns will ALL the saved have overcome selfishness in a trust relationship with God? Will ALL the saved love God and others more than self? Will ALL the saved present truth in love and leave others free, i.e. refuse to coerce people?

Our unity is not a unity of doctrines, but a unity of character, of God’s methods and principles, and eventually, as we mature, but I don’t think it will happen this side of eternity, we will one day have unity of understanding, of doctrines.

What is the unity of faith? It is a unity of confidence, or trust in God, in His goodness, trustworthiness, love, to always do what is good for His creation.

Why do you think the Bible did NOT say one doctrine? Because the doctrine is the teachings, the rituals, the interpretations, the expression, and people who love and trust God are at different levels of maturity. In a large family, in which all the children love and trust their parents, is there one doctrine for brushing teeth? Or, is there many doctrines—don’t brush get punished, or don’t get a bedtime story, or kids at school will tease, or teeth will decay? The explanation changes, the reason, the purpose is different depending on the maturity of the person. This is exactly like many Christian doctrines, people explain things differently at different levels of maturity—yet there is still only one reality.

Consider parents and love—in God’s design there is one love—but there is not one doctrine, i.e. one expression of love. Love always seeks what is best and therefore will express itself in many diverse ways depending on the child’s need.





In love a parent will:

- hug, kiss and give presents
- dunk in an ice bath if the child is feverish
- stick needles in their legs and inject vaccines
- put in time out
- refuse to give something the child wants if it is not good for the child
- yell and threaten if the child is running toward oncoming traffic

One cannot write a system of rules to account for every situation, there is unity of love, but not uniformity in parenting, likewise there is unity in faith, but there is not uniformity.

Remember the question of the woman at the well when she sought to have Jesus answer a doctrinal question, where is the right place to worship—and what did Jesus say? That doesn't matter, it is about the heart and mind, worshipping God in spirit and truth!

Read third paragraph, “The theological foundation of this unity...”

What is the purpose of our doctrines? Rightly understood all our doctrines are only valuable as they lead us to understand, comprehend, and participate in God and His design for His universe. This means that all doctrines should be viewed as spokes on a wheel that all have their center in God leading us back to unity, or oneness with God and His kingdom of love.

The problem in most organized religions is that the doctrines become divorced from God and instead become stand alone tests of faith or orthodoxy that are in order to protect the organization not heal people. This type of teaching causes people to build their faith on a system of beliefs and loyalty to an institution rather than having faith and loyalty in God.

Read last paragraph, “We have one Lord...” What was the focus of this paragraph? Character building, healing and transforming the person!

## THURSDAY

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What is the primary purpose and mission of the church? How would you describe it?

**Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies.** From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. **To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name.** {Ed 154.3}

**It was to give in His own life an illustration of unselfishness that Jesus came in the form of humanity. And all who accept this principle are to be workers together with Him in demonstrating it in practical life.** To choose the right because it is right; to stand for truth at



the cost of suffering and sacrifice--"this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17. {Ed 154.4}

**All sin is selfishness.** Satan's first sin was a manifestation of selfishness. He sought to grasp power, to exalt self. A species of insanity led him to seek to supersede God. And the temptation that led Adam to sin was Satan's declaration that it was possible for man to attain to something more than he already enjoyed, possible for him to be as God Himself. **The sowing of seeds of selfishness in the human heart was the first result of the entrance of sin into the world.** God desires every one to understand the evil of selfishness, and to co operate with Him in guarding the human family against its terrible, deceptive powers. **The design of the gospel is to confront this evil by means of remedial missionary work, and to destroy its destructive power by establishing enterprises of benevolence.** {WB, September 9, 1902 par. 3}

Is the primary work of the church to get people to adhere to the right creeds, doctrines or fundamental beliefs, to practice the right rituals or worship on the right day? No! The primary purpose is to be conveyers of God's love, His character of love in the setting of the Great Controversy so people can understand reality and be freed from fear and selfishness.

## **FRIDAY**

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Read and discuss questions 2-4



## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**We need HELP! With what?** Well, after 10 years of ministry, this website has collected a huge number of articles, blogs, videos, podcasts, and notes that need to be categorized and indexed, so YOU can easily find all that's been said on a particular topic. The problem is, we don't have hundreds of eyes and ears on staff to search, read, listen, and find all these nuggets of truth. So, Come And Reason is calling on you, our faithful supporters, to help us with this task.

What do we need from you? Easy. Whenever you come across an article, blog, video, audio, or note that talks about a specific topic (like wrath, punishment, sanctuary, temple, mind, character, sin, death, etc., etc.), simply go to About > Contact Us and send us a note telling us where you found the information (page # in a document/note, time index in a video or audio file, the exact web address where you found the material, and the TOPIC the citation is talking about). We'll take those TOPICS and arrange them into categories and build a new menu entry to index all these resources.

Thank you, all, ahead of time for your participation and help in this rather significant endeavor!

**Calendar:** Come and Reason now has a Calendar of Events on our Website. If you would like to know what is coming up or where Dr. J is speaking or who is teaching a particular week, check out the calendar.

**April 27-29:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Event The Struggle Is Real at the Thomas Road Baptist Church at Liberty University at Lynchburg, VA. For more info visit <http://lynchburg.cmhcsummit.com/>

**May 6, 2017:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Summit Northwest Ministries, Post Falls, Idaho: for more info visit: <http://www.summitnorthwest.org/>

**June 8-10, 2017:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Event The Struggle is Real in Naperville, IL.

**AUGUST 1, 2017:** Dr. Jennings' new book *The God-Shaped Heart* will be released by Baker Books. Here is a brief description:

Love is more than emotion, more than compassion, more than positive regard for another; love is power—the power to live, heal and be free. Love is functional, operational, with specific design parameters built into the fabric of reality. Love is intelligent and as we intelligently choose to harmonize with how love functions we not only experience greater health, fulfillment and wellbeing, we are transformed to become forces for good in the world. In *The God-Shaped Heart* Christian psychiatrist Dr. Tim Jennings explores the healing power of love, exposes a belief system infecting Christianity that obstructs love, and identifies eternal truths that open the heart to God's transforming power of love.

**September 15,16 2017:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Church in the Valley, Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada.

**October 12-16, 2017:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Garden Grove SDA church in Garden Grove, CA. This will be a multi-speaker event focusing on the atonement. For more information contact:

**Garden Grove Seventh-day Adventist Church**

12702 9th Street

Garden Grove, CA 92840

Church office hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

**Phone:** (714) 534-1987

**Fax:** (714) 534-3877

**Email:** [office@gardengrovesda.com](mailto:office@gardengrovesda.com)

**October 27, 28, 2017:** Dr. Jennings will speaking at the Arlington SDA church in Arlington, TX. For more information contact: <http://www.arlingtonadventist.com/>