

Sustaining Revival: A Study on Ephesians
Lesson 11 “The Holy Spirit Brings Unity”

I. Introduction - We are studying the book of the *Ephesians* focusing on how to sustain revival.

A. The revival in Ephesus was the largest new testament revival recorded in *Acts*. Over 100,000 people were saved in a city the size of Greensboro within two years. Ephesus became a revival center in the first century. Multiple churches were planted out of this church including all 7 churches in the book of *Revelation*.

B. Paul wrote this letter to the church in Ephesus in A.D. 60 about five years later to establish them in truth after the goosebumps had worn off so they could have a sustained experience with God and continue to increase in person revival.

C. We just finished *Ephesians 3* last time we met. The first three chapters of *Ephesians* focus on positional truth (who we are in Christ, seated in heavenly places, how much God loves us, etc). The last three chapters of focus *Ephesians* on practical application or how we should live based out of who we are. **They also describe what God’s kingdom looks like when it comes to the earth.**

II. The Holy Spirit Brings Unity

A. If I asked most Christians to describe the primary manifestation of the Holy Spirit, I would get a variety of answers: Tongues, healing, prophecy, people giving their lives to Jesus. Almost no one, would answer unity and yet *Ephesians 4:3* says the Holy Spirit brings unity.

1. And the Holy Spirit doesn’t just bring unity amongst those who are alike; He brings it amongst those who are different.

2. This church in Ephesus was pretty diverse. It had Jews, Gentiles, new covenant and mixed covenant believer, diversities of ministry types and personality types and yet Paul tells them to walk in the unity of the spirit. **It takes the Holy Spirit to unify us. This cannot be a work of the flesh anymore than bringing about healing can be a work of the flesh.**

B. Examples:

1. Day of Pentecost - The Holy Spirit pours out and 3,000 people were saved. All of these people were Jews who had been dispersed all around the world and spoke different languages. They were unified by the Spirit around Jesus. **Acts 2:5-11**

2. Asuza Street - Revival that started through prayer where black people, white people, Hispanics, Asians worshipped Jesus together under the leadership of a black pastor, William Seymour.

3. Moravians

- a. Moravian Testimony of 1727
- b. Great outpouring of the Holy Spirit that created such a sense of His presence and love that people left the meeting not knowing whether they were in heaven or still on the earth.
- c. Results
 - i. In the 25 years following the outpouring, over 100 from this community carried the gospel to nearly every country in Europe, and to many indigenous tribes in North and South America, Asia, and Africa. (came out of a church of 300).
 - ii. God's Kingdom on earth grows when the church walks in love and unity. ***Ephesians 4:14-16 NLT*** **14** *Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15* *Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16* *He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.*

C. Ephesians 4:1-6

1. **Verses 1-2** Therefore, what's it there for? It's there because of all God has done for us. We should respond by humbling ourselves and walk in humility and unity. **This is our calling!**
 - a. **Matthew 11:29-30** The one thing Jesus to learn of him.
 - b. Meek - power under control, humility - dependence on God.
2. **Verse 3-5** - Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. **Keep it means we already have it.** Theme of unity through the rest of the verse which is talking about being one in purpose even though the Father, Son, and spirit aren't alike in function.
3. **Verse 6** The Holy Spirit operates through us all. He's unified with Himself! We need to unify in spite of our differences. **How?** Quote by St. Augustine:
 - ““In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”
 - a. Essential: Jesus is returning
 - b. Non-essential - when and how? pre, mid, post-trip rapture??? Who knows? **No matter what, we should walk in love.**

III. Conclusion

A. Pray for Unity

B. Goodbye to Online Audience

Appendix A - Moravian Testimony

EARLY DAY

The Moravians were the spiritual descendents of the fifteenth century Hussite movement who had settled on the estate of Count Nicholas Zinzendorf. They began a community dedicated to following the teaching of Christ in simplicity, holiness and truth. Soon, others from various church traditions (Lutherans, Reformed, Baptists) joined Herrnhut, which grew into a small town. Understandably, major religious disagreements emerged and by the mid 1720's the disgruntled community was deeply divided and highly critical of one another.

Zinzendorf was appalled at this blatant display of ungodliness and pleaded for unity, love and repentance. He visited all the adult members of the community and drew up a covenant calling them 'to seek out and emphasize the points in which they agreed,' rather than stressing their differences. On 12th May 1727, they all signed an agreement to dedicate their lives, as he dedicated his, to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. They gave themselves afresh to God and promised to bury their disputes for ever. Many of them decided to set aside certain times for continued earnest prayer.

THE BEGINNINGS OF REVIVAL

On 16 July, Zinzendorf poured out his soul in a public prayer accompanied with a flood of tears. His prayer produced an extraordinary effect. The whole community began praying as never before.

During those days they were deeply affected by the Word of God and the power of the Blood of Christ. Their hearts were set on fire with new faith and love towards the Saviour and a similar pure and burning love towards one another. They began to grow together into a holy union among themselves, banding themselves together into small groups of two or three to discuss their spiritual state, to exhort, reprove and pray for each other.

One historian records, 'On the Lord's day, the 10th of August, the minister Rothe was seized, in the midst of the assembly, with an unusual impulse. He threw himself upon his knees before God, and the whole assembly prostrated themselves with him under the same emotions. An uninterrupted course of singing and prayer, weeping and supplication, continued till midnight. All hearts were united in love.'

On Wednesday, 13th August, the Holy Spirit was poured out on whole assembly. During the communion service, loud weeping drowned out the singing. An electric anointing flowed through all those present with inexpressible joy and love as they all shared the bread and wine, knowing they were baptised into one Spirit. The scene was so moving that the pastor could hardly tell what he saw or heard.

THE REVIVAL CONTINUES

A few days after the 13th of August, a remarkable revival took place among the children at Herrnhut and Bertholdsdorf. On the 18th of August, all the children at the boarding school were seized with an extraordinary impulse of the Spirit, and spent the whole night in prayer. From this time, a constant work of God was going on in the minds of the children, in both places. No words can express the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit upon these children, whose lives were so transformed.

On the 25th of August the brethren began the ministry of 24 hour-a-day prayer which continued for over a hundred years. They considered that, as in the ancient Temple the fire on the altar never ceased to burn, so in the Church, which is now the Temple of God, the prayers of the saints ought always to ascend to the Lord.

IV. Discussion Questions

1. What are your biggest takeaways or aha moments from this teaching?
2. What can you take from this teaching and apply to your everyday life?
3. Can you give an example of a time where the Holy Spirit gave you love for and an ability to unify for someone who was very different than you?
4. How do we balance walking in love and unity while also speaking truth and not compromising?