

W269_Unity_Of_The_Spirit_1.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book. And we are dealing particularly this evening with the practical section of the Epistle to the Ephesians. And we are calling this series by the title The Unity of the Spirit. And this is number one of the series. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of scripture around together. And those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, we are going to read chapters one and two of the second Epistle to Timothy. This evening we are going to commence a series which will give patient and serious attention to the second half of Paul's great epistle to the Ephesians. That, of course, assumes on the part of us all and those who are listening to this recording that they have in their minds and in their hearts. The first three chapters. Because one of the most essential things to remember with regard to the relationship of doctrine and practice is that practice is the fruit, and doctrine is the root. If you have not the root of the matter. The fruit will never appear. But if the root is there, then it's a matter of consistency and a matter of logical or reasonable service that the fruit that the apostle speaks of should be evident. We cannot read his epistles without realizing that not only was he a man who stressed the doctrine that was entrusted to him.

[00:01:47] And impressed upon his hearers. The necessity to keep close to what had been committed. You remember we were reading in the second Timothy something had been committed to the Apostle Paul. Something had been committed to Timothy, and Timothy himself was to commit to faithful men, those who shall be able to teach others also. Three times you see something committed that is a trust, something entrusted. And as faithful stewards, we must loyally abide by that trust. Therefore, it is not possible for us to go on and say, as I've heard some alas, say, Well, we are concerned with the first three chapters of Ephesians, but then we will waste any time beloved friends in pondering chapters four, five and six. Perhaps I've exaggerated that aspect of it, but there is a tendency on the part of most of us to be so taken up with spiritual blessings in heavenly places and before the foundation of the world and all that, and forget that it should have a correspondence in our manner of life in this very epistle. Paul wrote to his son in the Faith Timothy. He says there is fully known, but the margin puts you wise. There has been a follower of my doctrine, purpose, manner of life. That's what this man linked together. And he has put himself in the scriptures by the will of God as a pattern that we should follow. In two Timothy Chapter one, we read Hold fast the form of sound

words which Thou hast heard of me? And the last thing the apostle would think that anyone would extract from that, that we would have a form of godliness and deny the power thereof.

[00:03:39] For there are two distinct words used. The word form. Is a word that means in its ordinary, everyday usage, a quick sketch before the finished design. I'm not an engineer, and if I attempted to design an engine, there's one certainty about it. It wouldn't go. But I do know this. That whenever anybody attempts to design anything of that character, he doesn't just rule one line across the blackboard and then divide it into so many parts and works. No, he makes a sort of a rough sketch first as to what is out to do. Then he begins to plot it bit by bit, space by space, piece by piece. Well, in a sense, the Apostle Paul has been set forth in the scriptures as a pattern. That is the very self-same word in one Timothy. A pattern which is translated from in two Timothy. So we have the words that he has been instructed to give us as the pattern for our material. And we have the way in which he witnessed as the pattern for our example. The two must go together if we are attempting to follow in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul and then deny the distinctive character of the witness that was given to him, which will make a failure because coming back again to our original thought practice flows out of doctrine.

[00:05:12] I remember many years ago one person I won't give any hint as to who it was. So don't give me a lot of doctrine. Just give me the practice. And this person was a married woman who was at cross purposes with her husband. And I say to her, now, if I started straight off with Ephesians five about husbands and wives, you'd go up in the air. Because Ephesians five assumes that you have endorsed chapters one, two, three and four, and you hadn't. You see, it's all very well to challenge and say we don't want this cut and dried doctrine. We want manner of life and purpose. We do. But manner of life and purpose flow out of doctrine. So in this series, we are assuming that those who listen to it have believed that they were chosen before the foundation of the world. They have believed the marvelous revelation that they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. They have believed that they are accepted in the beloved, that they're reckoned to be seated together where Christ sits at the right hand of God and are expecting to be manifested with Him in glory. Well, now, assuming that. What is the outcome? Peter addressing those to whom he was responsible after having sketched out the nature of things and the things that were yet to come upon the earth.

[00:06:38] He says what manner of persons ought we to be who have this truth at heart and hold this doctrine? So there is no apology coming from this pulpit of taking up a fair amount of time in seeking to understand what sort of persons we should be and what conduct should characterize us if we profess to believe this wondrous truth. Well, now there are many ways in which it could be approached, but I think the first approach of all must be to look at the epistle itself. There is no other way in which we can grasp, as it were, the mind and will of God. Merely to pick out a verse and start straight off with the unity of the Spirit. We can extract those words from Ephesians four. Keep the unity of the spirit. I've heard it said. I heard it said like this, although this is only an imaginary example. But like this, an evangelical Church of England men and an evangelical Baptist are going both of them, to speak at a conference. That's often taking place, and we're glad of it. But before they go on to the platform, they agree that they won't touch upon the controversial subject of baptism. Therefore, they are going to keep the unity of the spirit. Is that right? That means to say that they're going to compromise over a truth.

[00:08:07] Well, that may be keeping the unity of some sort of agreement, but the unity of the spirit in Ephesians four puts right bang into it. One baptism upsets the whole thing. Now, can you keep the unity of the spirit in Ephesians four and say we will agree not to talk about this controversial subject? You cannot do it. We have been entrusted with the truth and we dare not like the steward in Luke's gospel. Say, how much owest thou, my lord? All right, Down 50. We must not, as the apostle said, water down the truth of God, for any sakes. However unpopular it may make us, however, limited our ministry may be, it is required in stewards that a man not be found popular, but he may be found faithful. So you see, never use this expression, friends. Let us keep the unity of the spirit. When you mean let's have a nice little, easy, friendly time, that's very good. But that's not keeping the unity of the spirit. For the unity of the Spirit is something that's already made and sealed by the blood of Christ and is entrusted to us. And it's the first obligation put upon the believer in this truth that he keep. But he watch over that. He safeguard this as a trust and a deposit. So we've got now before us the epistle to the Ephesians. And you know as well as I do, because we've done it all before, but we must do it again for the sake of everybody, that this very epistle is so constructed that by its construction it is drawing your attention to this need for perfect balance.

[00:09:47] In the first case, the operative word. I think I've extracted that from leaders in newspapers. The operative word is the word worthy. Will you look at chapter four of if Egypt's I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called? The word is Axios, and the derivation of the word goes back to the beam of the ballots and it indicates some sort of comparison, putting a thing into a balance. And the writers, the translators of the authorised version, were conscious of that need of extending the meaning of the word to include the word comparison. Because in Romans of the eighth chapter, they added in italics that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared, but in those words, they're to be, to be compared, to be translated. But they're necessary, not worthy. He couldn't stop there. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory that's coming. It doesn't quite finish it, does it? Not worthy to be thought of, Not worthy to be put in the balance, Not worthy to be compared. Or as the apostle uses the same figure elsewhere, the light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory.

[00:11:14] He says you'll never get those balances horizontal for the glory is so tremendous and the suffering is, after all, he says, light affliction. Now, if I were to say that there are some of you say, well, you've been let off pretty lightly, but the apostle who said that have been beaten with rods and whipped and starved and shipwrecked and he was left for dead and he said, the life I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith of the son of God. And he said it's a light affliction in comparison with the glory that's coming. So you see, there is this element in the scriptures of putting things into the balance. It wouldn't do us any harm if we did it many times. When we think of some of the things we have to endure or go through, then think of some of the things we've received. The next man or the next woman to us knows nothing about it would help us, perhaps, to keep on an even keel. So we have this word worthy, and this word worthy has given rise to a term that you may come across if you have some sort of deeper reading Axiology. I don't know whether you've ever come across it. It has nothing to do with motors and axes except in a very, very far removed sense. But axiology is the philosophy of values.

[00:12:29] Philosophy of values, its comparisons, its weighing over things. And here he says. I want you to weigh over. I want you to weigh over seriously. What I've told you in these three chapters and what I'm telling you in these three, so that even though you

may never get the scale to a horizontal position in this life, at least you'll seek to walk worthy of such a calling, even though you feel it's like crying for the moon. And in order to show you that this word worthy was one that the Apostle had very much in mind, you will discover that when he wrote to the Philippians, he used it again. And I want every one of us who are listening to this to be sure of this. So we look at Philippians chapter one. Chapter one, verse 27. Only that your conversation and that includes a good deal more than speaking. Conversation here means your manner of life and derives from the idea of being a citizen. That. Only in that manner of life. Only let your conversation or manner of life be as it be, cometh the gospel. Now, that word as it becomes is this very word worthy. So he said it the second time. It's disguised in our translation, but there it is. Let your manner of life, your conversation, be worthy to be compared with the Gospel of Christ. Or will you think of the Gospel of Christ and all that Christ means in that gospel? And we echo the words of guide.

[00:14:10] Peter what manner of persons ought we to be, if that is true of us? And then for the third time in Colossians. We have the word worthy. Verse nine. For this cause. We also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding that ye might walk worthy of the Lord. So we now have worthy of your calling, worthy of the Lord and let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Very high standard, isn't it? I finish the verse that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing being fruitful. To see a walk is comparable with the fruit. The doctrine is comparable with the root. And increasing. In the knowledge of God. There is a possibility. Although this is outside of our subject, that the true rendering of this passage should be an increasing by the acknowledgment of God. If you don't acknowledge what God tells you, you'll be stunted in your growth. You'll cease. But that's another story. So here we have this keyword worthy and this chart which has been used before I brought forward just to keep it in our mind for the time being. Now that we have three chapters roughly of doctrine balanced by three chapters of practice, and if we went patiently through every one of them, we should find that each feature in the doctrine has its companion waiting for it in the practice.

[00:16:00] Some are obvious and some are not. So take, for instance the very first. We have all spiritual blessings. When you get over to chapter six, we have spiritual wickedness waiting for us. Where your blessings are, you'll find your foes. And so even

in the Old Testament, the people of Israel on their way to the Land of Promise, they asked permission to go through the land of Edom and Moab, and they said, We'll walk on our feet. We'll keep to the highway. We'll pay for our water. We'll only ask him to go through. And the Lord said to them, Meddle. Not with them. Meddle not with them, Meddle, not with them. And then when it came to the actual land itself and the occupants who barred the way, now our version doesn't say meddle with them. It changes it and says contend with them, say word, contend with them. Oh, yes, they're the legitimate foes. So Paul says in Ephesians six, we wrestle not. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness. And so you go on. But there's a more obvious one. A pair of balances. Will you look at chapter two? Where he likens the believer. Two parts of a temple. Verse 20.

[00:17:20] And you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. A friend once objected to that. He said, I don't see that you can have a temple growing. No, I said, Because in the ordinary building trade they use stones and sticks and bricks. But God using living stones. What about that growth? And if you get the balance of that in chapter four, verse 16 here, he doesn't speak of the temple. He speaks of the body from whom the whole body fitly joined together. Now, in chapter two, it says Fitly framed. In chapter four, it says fitly joined. But exactly the same words, but fitly framed fits the temple idea and fitly joined fits the articulation of the joints. And so we have from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supply according to the effectual working in the measure of every part or each one part, make it increase. So there's your growth. Again, you see make it increase of the body unto the building of itself in love. So there we have indeed the doctrine, the fitly frame together and in the practice fitly joined together. Another example which is obvious is found in chapter two, verse 12. That at that time ye were without Christ being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel.

[00:19:08] Well, they were aliens not because they were sinful, they were aliens because they were Gentiles. If they'd been the most righteous gentile on earth, they'd still be aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel. But when you come to Chapter four, there's another alienation. Verse 17. This I say therefore and testify in the Lord that ye heads forth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that

is in them. Well, that's an alienation which is moral. So we have an alienation which is dispensational in the doctrinal side and an alienation which is moral in the practical side. Then one more characteristic in chapter two of Ephesians, there are two walks. Two walks only. And walk. You see, doesn't belong to doctrine. You only face the fact in doctrine that there is a walk of that character. A walk of that character. You wait till you get to the practice to have the walk subdivided and explained. But we'll look at these two. Chapter two. And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world. And there was a statement that they awoke. It was, according to the course of this world dominated by the prince of the power of the air. Then further down. He says in verse nine, Our salvation is not of works, lest any man should boast.

[00:20:44] So we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Now that's all it says in chapter two. Two walks. There's a walk according to this world. And there's a walk according to the new creation, he's created something new. And you walk in harmony with that. But when we get to the practice, then Paul Subdivides and emphasizes this walk. Chapter five, verse one and two. Be ye. Therefore, followers of God as dear children and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us. But that's not sufficient. Although it's vast enough, he says presently in verse eight, for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord Walk as children of light. And that's not sufficient. He adds one more. Verse 14. Wherefore he saith awake, thou that sleepest and arise from the dead in Christ shall give thee light. See then that you walk circumspectly not as fools, but as wise. Circumspectly. Someone has said if you could tolerate the translation, which you mustn't do, but I'm going to put it in this tape recording and it'll be used in evidence against me. You could possibly say, at least to some common people walk gingerly. Have you ever seen a catwalk? That's it. Have you ever been up a height? Well, some of us in our holidays, we up some fights and you just glimpse down.

[00:22:18] You didn't like to hang over and look too much, you see? That's it. There is a statement made and here I come with a story I've told you before. Be ready for it, friends. There is a statement made that one of these adventurous people who'd never been to Switzerland before, he goes right away up, you know, walking as bold as brass. And a guy yelled out to him as he got near on your knees. Oh, it is the truth, dear friend. You dare not stand erect up. There you go. On your knees as you'll be dead. So we

have a calling and we walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us. We walk as children of light and we walk circumspectly because we have such a high calling. There's such a chance of an awful fault, you see. So we come back now to Ephesians chapter four. And we observe that, he says, I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. And He doesn't tell you what the walk involves in its matter. He is very concerned about its manner. With all lowliness and meekness. We've got to examine each one of these terms as time goes on. I'm just surveying it this evening. But you see, Philippians says we've got a tremendously high calling. And instead of that need, we've got a very high headed, high handed sort of attitude.

[00:23:48] He says, Oh, no, the corresponding walk is with all loneliness. With all lowliness and meekness and long suffering and forbearance. Within. Another feature which is rather important to notice is the change or the use of the word Lord. If you look back at chapter three of Ephesians, he says, for this cause I. Paul the prisoner of Christ Jesus. I don't know whether you noticed that our brother Scott, when he was reading, was reading from another version, and it didn't say Jesus Christ, but he said, Christ Jesus, I commend to you the revised version in this particular. So they have been careful to put the titles in their right order. And when you go to the revised version, you'll discover that no other writer in the New Testament ever uses the title Christ Jesus. Except Paul. It's the same person. But it's emphasizing another aspect, like we read just now in two Timothy, he says, I want you to understand this, Timothy, that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. According to my gospel. He said, Jesus Christ is the seed of David. Now, some people have gone off and said, There you are. It's he's a seed of David and you're trying to make out he's the head of a body and nothing to do with the kingdom but friends. Our savior is one person. The Christ who I acknowledge is the head of the body of Christ, was born at Bethlehem in the seed of David.

[00:25:23] He couldn't help himself and he never changes. But what Paul did say was, Timothy, I want you to remember this, that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel, not merely according to Peter's gospel to Peter's gospel. He was raised from the dead to sit upon the throne of David. But he said, for my gospel, he the same seed of David that raised from the dead to sit upon the universal throne at the right hand. So the person remains the same, but the titles may be changed. So here we have Christ Jesus. So when we come to chapter three, he says,

For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you, Gentiles. He's the prisoner of Christ Jesus. But when he repeats himself in Chapter four, he says, I, therefore the prisoner of the Lord. He's the same person, but he's changed the title. Now the word Lord only comes once in the three chapters, but it comes 15 times over in chapters four, five and six, and I hope some of you are going to count them and come back to me next time and say you made a little exaggeration there. He only comes 13 times because then I shall come back at you and say, Oh, you didn't include the two references that were master.

[00:26:42] You see, it's all right. The one word is translated, Lord and master. So 15 times in the practice. Lord, you see. So we change. If you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, walk in him, says the Apostle. Recognizing His Lordship. We do rejoice when we read Philippians two that a day is coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. But should we not rejoice in the privilege of doing it now? Just a little. To honor him now in the day of his rejection. All that's a privilege, isn't it? To say yes. I'm going to anticipate that universal acknowledgement. He is my Lord. And do we want someone to round on us and say, Is that so, brother? If he hadn't told me, I wouldn't have believed it because of our slipshod manner of life. And believe me, friends, I'm preaching at myself, not merely at you, because I know how easy it is for us to sit down and endorse a doctrine which is written in Scripture and how difficult it is to rise up and walk in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit without the many blemishes that so often characterize the best intentions in the world. So we are embarking in this study on a course that will search us, I hope. And illuminate the will of God for us. Put first things first will teach us that we must never consult with others as to what God's will for us should be.

[00:28:22] We got to consult this. Now I'm going to stop for a moment. I did intend, first of all, to inflict upon you the reading of an article. Uh, but I've had second thoughts, and they're supposed to be sometimes good and sometimes bad. But the reason why I had this in mind is it was my first born. The first article I ever wrote in the. As it were, to put over the idea of the truth of dispensational truth and the church of the one body at the invitation of Dr. Bullinger in 1909, and it was printed in things to come in the March number. And there is one little bit that I would like to mention here is the bound volume of things to come. There are some folks still who possess the complete number. I like a very generous full, gave my knight away to somebody and wish I hadn't. So I don't

possess them. But. Here we have this article and I came across this first Let it be marked that the Holy Spirit has differentiated between the unity which we are to keep and the unity which we are to seek. Now, I'm rather interested in reading this for that's 51 years ago when I wrote it. 51 years is a long time for a. And now this doesn't make what I've written true, but this is what I feel.

[00:29:55] I should have to say the same thing today, as I've said then. So we'll go on. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. Till we all come unto the unity of the faith we keep wanting, we arrive at the other. This order is divine. But man has thought it fit to attempt to revise God's order and says, When you agree with me as to fundamentals brackets as if all truth were not fundamental. Then we can have fellowship and keep the unity of the spirit. This is practically the position of a majority of believers who have ended any concern about the subject. The others, alas, seem to care nothing about the unity of the Spirit at all and go to the other extreme, making a wholesale jumble of creed and practice, agreeing to differ and raising above their rubbish heap of traditions and mangled scriptures. The words all one in Christ. Of course. That's a bit ruthless, isn't it? That's because I was young. But the truth is there. And so he goes on to speak about this unity. And then I was rather interested to see there's this thing which is so characteristic. You see it, the little structure. Can you see the black patch in the middle? You know what that is? That's the one, Lord. It starts with one body. It ends with one God and father. There's one Lord in the middle and there's one peace.

[00:31:24] I'm going to read to you now, which I didn't know at the time. It brought to me a friend and a fellowship that exists to this very day. There is one friend in the legal profession that has voluntarily undertaken to satisfy the income tax inspector. I couldn't do it to save your life. I should have to say. Here, take the lot and if there's any left over, I'll have it. But that man wrote to me some years after and said this little sentence made me feel he is a man. I want to know now. This is all I've said and this is what I put. It will be seen that the great center is Christ as Lord. That is Christ, not the Man of Galilee or the Nazarene or any of the blasphemous titles whereby socialists and would be world improvers, Universal Brotherhood advocates and peace and safety preachers dishonor him. No, not Christ as the son of man or even Jesus, but Christ in resurrection, glory. Not Christ after the flesh. Christ Head of the new creation. This one is the center. The pivot around whose glorious person the other elements of true unity are grouped. Well, I

don't think I would say quite things quite so uncouthly as that. But I would emphasise still that the very centre of all our unity is the risen ascended seated Christ as the One Lord. You will observe that the one God and Father comes at the very end.

[00:33:02] It's the one Lord that stands in the middle. And if you conceive of this unity, very much like the miscalled seven branch candlestick. You say, why do you call it this branch, this cord? Well, you try to make a seven branch candlestick. You can't because you'd have four branches, one side and three the other. That's a strange looking construction, wouldn't it? Now it's a it's a six branch candlestick or a three branch candlestick with a center stem. Now, the central stem stands alone, whether it's got branches or not. And then on either side, you have there is one body, one God and father and one spirit and one baptism and one hope or one faith. And they are all held together by the One Lord. He can stand alone. But if he's taken away all, even the God and Father aspect of teaching force, for we now know God as Father. If we do not know the son. No man knoweth our father say the son. So it's in its right place. There's the one body and the one father and the one Lord in the center. So we have this unity of the spirit which has been entrusted to us to keep. And then after that, only after that has been kept are we urge them to go on to the second unity, which I'm going to refer to. The apostles and prophets and evangelists and teachers are given.

[00:34:32] What for? Shut the book. Well, you would say to preach the gospel. And that is true. Open the book. Not a reference to the gospel in the passage. Not because we are wrong to preach the gospel, but we are right to observe God's order. It says here for the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry. So the building up of the body of Christ till we all come in. The unity of the faith. Now that's God's order. Those who are called to this calling dare not turn their back on their great responsibility because somebody says you ought to be conducting an evangelical campaign. But you say, I've got a rude way of speaking to some people, friends. I don't know whether you ever come up against it, but I say ought ought stands for nothing when it's a matter of what God says. When I see the apostle's use of the word ought, I'm humbled. For he practically never tells anybody what they ought to do. But he's written more than once, as we ought to do. As I ought to. Oh, yes. And so we have here in the marching orders of the believers of the one body. You put first things first and see to it that you stand firm, solid, unmoved with regard to the trust. Then seek by every possible means that God will entrust to you to arrive at a unity of the faith.

[00:35:59] And He won't let one poor soul perish. Because you happen to have gone straight out and preached the gospel unprepared. As I've drawn attention before, this word that we have in verse 12 perfecting. Is a word that is found in an ordinary context, but a very illuminating one in the gospel, according to Matthew. In the gospel, according to Matthew, our savior called to men and they were fishing. And he said, I will make you fishers of men. They were fishing. And then he called to more men and they were mending their nets. That's this very word perfectly. Nevermind gonna turn around and say, but Lord, I want it to be a fisher. He said, Did you. Well I happen to be your Lord. And I say, You get on with mending the nets. Oh, but that's such a humdrum business. But look, friend, I'll condescend to speak to you, said the Lord. How much? How many fish would the fisher catch if nobody mended his nets? Don't you see? Only to be fishing all the time is failure. Only to be mending nets all the time is failure. But the two must work together. So don't quarrel with your destiny. Friends, don't allow somebody else to tell you what you ought to do. You look up to the faith of your Lord and say, With Paul, Lord, what will they have me to do? And if he says, Well, I want you to become a pastor and look after the other sheep of wandering about outside and preach.

[00:37:32] John 3:16 for all your worth. Do it unto his glory. But if, on the other hand, he says, I want you to stand as so few of you in this world, there there's so few of you, I want you to stand solid for that truth which I've entrusted and go on and build up the body of Christ. For there's a purpose of the ages yet to be fulfilled for this church, which is the body of Christ is called the fulness of him that filleth all in all. And that's no light task to be engaged in any work to do with bringing members into touch with their living Lord and uniting them with him and seeing they grow in grace and so on. So let us be watchful and not allow ourselves to be, as it were, hurried. Let's ponder this Ephesians four and say that's what God has said comes first. And I'm sure if I put that first, the other will come as naturally as fruit grows upon a bough. When the unity of the faith is not something that we have to keep. The unity of the spirit has been made and sealed by the blood of Christ. And we shall discover in Chapter two that it's there already waiting for us something done. But the unity of the faith is something in front of us that we to arrive at and seek to know.

[00:38:46] And so that says till we all come or arrive in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature and

the fullness of the Christ. And then there's one further unity. Although the word unity isn't used, it's obviously there. And that is in verse 16, which we've already read, for whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies according to the effectual, working in the measure of every part, make it increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. That's the third unity. I remember many years ago being asked to speak at a meeting in Edinburgh. I wasn't quite prepared and I don't know as a tram in Edinburgh. Those years was a quietest place on earth, but it made an awful rattle and a bang. Have you ever been there? But as I stepped out of the tram and walked to the mission. I've got it. I've got it. And what I got was this. I said, I've got to talk about weights and measures as they come in Ephesians four. Well, I'll give you that little bit as a finish for this evening. Weights and measures weights. Oh, yes, of course I know what you're going to do. You're going to refer to the balances and the word worthy.

[00:40:05] But what about the measures? Well, we have in verse seven, but unto every one of us, or better still, unto each one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And then he goes through the gifts, some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, some teachers and whatnot. That's one measure. And the second measure is verse 13, Till we all come in, the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature, of the fullness of the Christ. That's the second measure. And then the third measure is a holy one. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies according to the effectual, working in the measure of each one part. Not merely every part. Each one part. And speaking about these joints and bands, you know, we use that term with regard to our little publication, would you like to turn to the parallel passage in Colossians and see the emphasis upon this articulation? Colossians Chapter two, verse 19. And not holding the head for which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together increases with the increase of God. The joints and the bands, I suppose we would call them ligaments today or tendons and the knit together. Each one working in harmony, fitly framed and fitly joined gives us our English word harmony.

[00:41:49] And here we have harmonious articulation. And it's rather surprising to discover that one of the words here in this verse 19 has a double meaning together. It means to knit together, as we understand, a joint in the body, but it also means to

articulate speech. And the very word articulate has got a double meaning in our language, hasn't it? We can articulate in speech. And the doctor may say the articulation of your shoulder joint is a little bit out and you can hear it creaking. You see. Well is a good deal of creaking friends among the members of the Body of Christ. And although I wouldn't like to advocate any form of medical treatment from this pulpit, there is a form of treatment which is called osteopathy. Whether it's good or bad, I'm not going to say, but it looks as though the church are the one body could do with a bit of it sometimes. So I'll leave it with you this evening. This introductory talk bringing before you the subject, which we are yet to consider, that we are going to give our attention to the four, the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians in this series with special emphasis upon the unity of the Spirit and the unity of the faith. And I trust that as this goes on its mission, as we believe it will to the very ends of the Earth, that there will be many who will realize that great privilege that we have in chapters 1 to 3 bring a corresponding responsibility which is there given us to guide us in chapters four, five and six.

[00:43:37] And if any of you would like to read that first attempt of mine, just as a matter of historic interest, I'll give you the volume. It is volume 15, the year 1909, and it's in the large number. But don't all make a rush for it because you won't find it very thrilling. But I did look back at it and I thought, well. 51 years ago. That was the burden that was on my mind. I'm 51 years afterwards. I'm going to start on the same subject here. Well, you say, what will you be talking about in 51 years time or will friends? When that day comes, we shall be able to talk about the glorious realities of which these are faint shadows. Will you pray those of you who are listening as well as listen, will you pray that these words may not fall on deaf ears? Because we can only commend this truth in the eyes of others, not for the doctrines we are supposed to teach and stand for, but the way in which it influences our life, our attitude, the one to the other. When you go through the practical walk of Ephesians, you will discover that the whole of human society is involved.

[00:44:52] There are some odd people I know, but I'm speaking to a little company in the chapel and I'm speaking to the wider company that live in different parts of the Earth. Are you neither a wife nor a husband, nor a child, Nor a parent, Nor a servant? Nor a master? Well, I think you'd have to apply somewhere else. But I don't know what to do with you, but I'm positive there's nobody listening to me who says, Oh, I'm outside

that category altogether. And the walk which is stretched in Ephesians, is addressed to the wife and the husband, to the child and the parent to the servant and the master. So it does come down to what some people are always talking about brass tacks. It does come down to everyday realities. And if our doctrine cannot help us in that direction, there's something either radically wrong with the doctrine which God forbid, or there's something radically, radically wrong with our appreciation of it. So remember to pray. And I commend this first opening study to you, and I trust we shall have an enjoyable series before we reach the end of Chapter five. I'm extending it already, you see, And I wouldn't be at all surprised when we get to the end of Chapter five and say, Oh, what about the whole armor of God? We're not done with the practice yet. We should have to go to Chapter six, but we'll wait and see.