



NHCO Vision 2021

THE ONE FAMILY

Feb 6-7

WEEK SIX

Study Notes and Questions for Discussion and Personal Reflection.

Before you begin, by faith ask the Lord to remind you of what He's been teaching you so far. Summarize here.

Hey everyone, welcome to WEEK 6 of our original series, we've entitled ONE. So tell the person next to you what we've been saying to each other throughout our entire series. That's right:

"I love you and there's nothing you can do about it."

Could you summarize a personal testimony on what this phrase has meant to you since our ONE series began?

"And I love YOU guys, and there's nothing you can do about it." Funny story, my son, Mark, goes up to his daughter, Evangeline (she's 4), and tells her, "Evangeline, I love you and nothing is ever going to change that." And Evangeline says, "No, daddy, you didn't say that right." Then Mark said, "I love you and there's nothing you can do about it." And Evangeline said, "Yeaaaah!" Isn't it wonderful and encouraging to see the next generation go in the right direction? That's why being ONE FAMILY is so important. This week let's talk about being ONE FAMILY. So right about now, I typically take a moment to recap the previous lessons from week to week. But today, it might be more effective if I just summarize it for us a different way. Our passage for today, Ephesians 5 starts like this:

“Therefore, be imitators of God” (Ephesians 5:1 ESV).

Remember, in Scripture whenever we see a “therefore” we should always ask what it’s “there for.” How would you summarize what Paul has been saying up to this point (which leads to this “therefore” or application)?

Remember, whenever you see a “therefore” you need to know what it’s “there for.” So, in other words, we need to remember what Paul said before, because NOW he’s going to give you the application. How can we summarize what Paul said earlier? He described for us the new position and the new location we have with God in Heaven. Bottom line, our spirit is in Heaven with Jesus right now! Our body is on Earth, but our spirit is ALREADY in Heaven. This may be the biggest SHIFT we make in the way we think about our relationship with God and others.

What does the Bible mean that our “spirit” is in Heaven right now?

On Open Mic a few weeks ago, one person asked, “Can you explain what it means that our spirit is in Heaven right now? Because I always thought our spirit was here on Earth in our bodies, and after we die, our spirit goes to Heaven.” I know that’s what we’ve always thought, but when the Bible teaches us different, **we don’t change the Bible to what we think. We adjust what we think to what the Bible says.** Amen? I realize it’s really hard to wrap our heads around this, so let me try and explain. Because this is actually going to be crucial for your family to become ONE.

Let’s read the key verses that explain this reality once more [ready go]: **“¹⁹ I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms... ⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:19-20; 2:6 NLT).**

Circle the phrase “heavenly realms” there.

In this passage, when Paul says “heavenly realms,” does he mean “heaven?” Explain what Paul is trying to say.

When Paul talks about the “heavenly realms,” he doesn’t mean “Heaven” specifically. He’s talking about the “spiritual dimension.” Everybody say “spiritual dimension.” Jesus said, “The

Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21 KJV). He's talking about the spiritual dimension parallel to this one.

If "heavenly realms" actually means "spiritual dimension," can demons also exist there? Explain.

Now check this out:

"¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the [where?] heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12 NLT).

There it is again. "Heavenly places, or heavenly realms." But this time it says that EVIL SPIRITS live in "heavenly places." Next week we're going to talk about the warfare going on in the spiritual dimension. But for now can you see that "heavenly realms" or "heavenly places" is Paul's way of saying the "spiritual dimension?"

As beings made in the image of God, explain what you think this means: "We are not bodies with spirit, we are SPIRITS with bodies."

You and I were made in the image of God. Is God physical or spiritual? 100% spirit. God doesn't have a body. So we were made in the image of God who is 100% spirit. So that means you and I are actually spirits. Turn to the person next to you and say, "You're a spirit." We are not bodies with spirits, we are spirits with bodies! (Talk about THAT around the dinner table tonight!) We are all actually SPIRITS in the spiritual dimension. Now imagine the spiritual dimension is like a HUGE mountain. Remember "Mount Ephesus" from last week. Like Moses on Mount Sinai. You know how Moses goes up the mountain to speak with God?

Pastor Mike said the "spiritual dimension" is like a mountain. What did he mean by that? Where is "heaven" and where is "hell" on this mountain?

Ephesians is saying that the spiritual dimension is like a mountain. At the top of this mountain there's a place where God and his angels exist. It's beautiful! Everything is bathed in glorious light. There's nothing but perfect love and unity here. Let's call this part of the spiritual dimension "Heaven." But as you descend down the mountain, it gets dark. This is a place of shadow, hatred, and despair. Nothing but fear and division here. This is where Satan and the demons exist. Let's call this part of the spiritual dimension "Hell." So that's all clear enough.

When we decide to follow Christ, where does Paul say our spirit immediately goes? Where was our spirit BEFORE we decided to follow Jesus? Explain.

But what we don't realize is that when we come to Christ, our spirit is *immediately* placed in Heaven! Where was our spirit before? Well, since you asked... Before we came to Christ, Ephesians says we were "sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2) seated with the "children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3). Our spirit was in H-E double hockey sticks, hanging out with the Prince of the Power of the Air--the Devil. Living separate from Jesus is Hell. This is why we lived with so much fear, anger, and division. But when you decided to follow Jesus, He pulled your spirit UP the mountain, out of the land of shadows and into His light. And He gave you a seat in Heaven right next to Him and the Father. Picture a huge banquet hall in Heaven with lots of seating, at the top of the mountain, where all the saints from every time period gather with God face to face. This is our new position before God and our new location in the spiritual dimension.

Describe our spiritual life seated with Christ in Heaven. What does it mean that we can choose to turn to Christ before we think, say, or do anything?

So now that we're spiritually sitting next to Jesus in our new place in Heaven, He can speak to us, lead us, and guide us. We can, if we choose, think like Him. That's called the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). We can, if we choose, speak like Christ. (We call that God-speak.) We can, if we choose, love with the love of Christ. But the thing is, our spirit is the ONLY thing about us that is perfect. How many of us would agree that our bodies, our flesh, are NOT perfect? Uh-huh. Most of us are like functioning addicts--one decision away from going off the deep end again. How many of us still have emotional wounds, emotional issues? That's why Paul says, "Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18b NLT).

What then does it mean to be "filled with the Holy Spirit?" Explain.

Don't live like you did when you were at the bottom of the mountain, far away from God. CHOOSE to live from the mountaintop! And Jesus will show you how to be FREE! That's what we mean by filled with the Spirit. We're sitting in Heaven right next to Jesus now. So before we say or do anything, we turn to Him and ask, "What do you think, Lord? How should I respond to this?" When we make decisions without asking Him first, that's called "living from the flesh." But when we choose to keep turning to Him, and we KEEP ON CHOOSING to listen to Him, our spirit becomes stronger and stronger. We learn to hear Him more clearly. Our spiritual senses become sharper. Our lives are transformed.

What happens when we allow ourselves to “slide back” down the mountain?

But if we don't turn to Him, and all we do is keep living from our own thoughts, our own feelings, our flesh, then we “slide back” down the mountain. In the Church we call that “back slide.” But why would we want to do that when Jesus is sitting right here?

What did Pastor Mike mean by the “wireless network” we have in the Spirit? What's the password to get in? 😊

Years ago I was on Lana`i doing a youth mission with Youth For Christ. Back then I had one of those flip phones. Remember those? Well, I was trying to call Mona at home, but there was no signal. Yes, yes, just like ET, I was trying to “phone home.” Well, one of the guys on the mission, Herb, noticed what I was trying to do. He said, “Mike, go outside to the middle of the field and you should be able to get a signal.” He just came back from talking to his wife. Outside our lodging was an open field, so I walked out to the middle of it. It was a beautiful night on Lana`i. The heavens were filled with stars. And sure enough, I got a signal and I could talk with my wife. Our spirit is in Heaven, but our bodies are on Earth. But because of the Spirit we have a wireless network so we can check in with the Father anytime. What's the password? JESUS.

How does being in the “God Network” with “Holy Spirit 5G” help us to become ONE in Church and at home? Why is it impossible WITHOUT this?

Here's what we absolutely MUST catch. EVERYTHING we learned last week about the ONE CHURCH is made possible because we're connected to the God network. EVERYTHING we're about to learn THIS WEEK about the ONE FAMILY happens because we've got Holy Spirit 5G. Unless we live from our seat in Heaven, what we are attempting will be impossible. But because we are up HERE (motion above) with Jesus and the Father, now we are going to see people very differently and treat people very differently. You will see YOURSELF in a different way, and treat yourself with a new dignity and sacredness than before. Because now we are the carriers of His Spirit on the Earth, who live, not from our own ideas, but whose? That's right.

Finally, we can talk about the “therefore!” How does living from our new seat in Heaven with Jesus affect our relationships at home? With your spouse if you're married? Between parents and kids? Explain.

Ok, so let's put all this into practice now, starting with husbands and wives. Some families put the kids at the center, but in reality, the center of the family is the relationship between husband and wife. If mom and dad can become ONE then the whole family stands a better chance of becoming ONE FAMILY. So remember: The husband is a carrier of God's Spirit on the Earth and is seated with Jesus at the right hand of our Father in Heaven. He's in God's wireless network. The wife is a carrier of God's Spirit on the Earth and she is ALSO seated in Heaven in God's wireless network. So where are my Christian husbands and wives at? Raise your hands in the air, raise 'em like you really do care!

How does being a "carrier of God's presence" change the way you think about YOURSELF?

Before we get to how we relate to our spouses, the first question is, "Do you realize the sacred call on your life to temple the Spirit of God within you? How does knowing that you RE-PRESENT God on the Earth affect how you see yourself?"

Paul begins chapter 5 by saying, "Therefore, be imitators of God" (Ephesians 5:1 ESV).

Why does Paul say "be imitators of God?" How is this connected with being a "carrier of His presence?"

Remember the Book of Spidey chapter 1 verse 1: "With great power, comes great (what?) responsibility." So first, receive the revelation for YOURSELF of who YOU are now, a RE-PRESENTER, or representative of Heaven to your spouse. Don't say or do ANYTHING from your own thoughts. Only do what the Father says.

If you're married, how should you treat your spouse (since he/she is also a "carrier of His presence")?

Second, your spouse is a carrier of His Presence. What if Jesus Himself were in the room? How would you address Him? How would you treat Him? Well, your spouse carries the Presence of YOUR LORD. So when Paul is writing to husbands, he is saying, "Husbands, here's how you imitate God: Live from your seat in Heaven next to Jesus and love your wives as Christ loved the Church."

Describe what husbands are like when they are NOT living from their seat in Heaven. What are husbands like when that ARE seated with Christ in Heaven?

Have you noticed when husbands slide back down the mountain and live from their flesh, what are they like? Incredibly selfish, right? But a husband who is living from the mountaintop, seated in Heaven with Jesus, looks at Jesus who is there next to him, sees how Jesus laid HIS life down for the Church, then does the same thing for his wife.

Describe what wives are like when they are NOT living from their seat in Heaven. What are wives like when that ARE seated with Christ in Heaven?

What is a wife like when she slides back down the mountain and lives from the flesh? Insecure. Fearful. Controlling. She thinks to herself, "I can't trust my husband to know what to do, so I need to constantly remind him. Who cares if I sound like a nag." But when she takes her seat in Heaven next to Jesus, she looks to Jesus, who is there with her, for peace and security. She releases control to Jesus, and says, "Lord, I release my husband to You. You speak to Him, Lord. Lead him and guide him. I have no desire to control him. And when I see that my husband is fully submitted to You, I can be fully submitted to him." I know this is really easy to understand, but super hard to do!

What is the key to successfully living in the Spirit as husband and wife?

The key is before you start talking to each other, make sure you walk out to the middle of the field, get in that sweet spot where you have a beautiful view of Heaven and connect with that Holy Spirit 5G! Phone home. And talk with Papa first before you talk to each other.

If you are married, what is God saying to you right now about the way you relate to your spouse? Explain.

Do you remember in week 3 the Hebrew word for ONE? The one that means "perfect unity in diversity?" ECHAD. The Lord is our God, the Lord is ONE--ECHAD. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (diverse) but perfectly ONE. Now watch this. This is SO COOL! After God creates Adam and Eve, here's what the Bible says: ²⁴ This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one" (Genesis 2:24 NLT).

Underline "the two are united into one."

What is the Hebrew word in this passage for "one?"

Guess what the Hebrew word for one is there. You got it. ECHAD. The same word that describes the nature of GOD! Marriage is a supernatural union of husband and wife where the two become one, just like God is one.

Explain WHY being an “imitator of God” is not just an individual thing, but something that happens in RELATIONSHIP with others?

Remember our key verse today: “Therefore, be imitators of God” (Ephesians 5:1 ESV). Well, he wasn’t saying that just to individuals! He was talking about the way we relate to each other. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are an eternal, loving relationship. So, husband and wife, imitate God. This can ONLY happen at the top of the mountain in Heaven WITH GOD, where no division exists. You will never become one without God, down in the shadow lands with the Devil where only division exists. Instead, take your seats in the Heavenly Realms.

Why is the ONE FAMILY the KEY to the ONE CHURCH? Explain.

I know last week we said that Church is the key to winning the world. But what is the key to a united Church? FAMILY. THE ONE FAMILY. If mom and dad can stay seated on the mountaintop next to Jesus, receiving instruction from Him, supernatural wisdom and power from Him, faith, hope, and love from Him, then the children will turn out just fine.

What does Paul say is “JOB ONE” for kids? Why?

Did you notice what Paul says to the kids? “Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord...honor your father and mother” (Ephesians 6:1, 3 NLT). Kids are still growing in maturity, still trying to figure out right from wrong, and how to make wise decisions. So Paul simply says, “Listen, kids, you are seated in Heaven too, but job one for you? Listen to your parents.” That’s it. If a child can learn to obey his parents, then he will eventually learn to obey God.

Why does Paul talk about the relationship between master and slave? Does the Bible condone slavery?

There’s a whole section on masters and slaves, but if you want to know what that’s about, join me on Open Mic today at 11 AM.

How does becoming ONE FAMILY tie in with God's overall plan to make all things ONE under His reign?

Jesus' earnest prayer before He died was that His disciples be ONE. His death and resurrection made Him THE ONE, empowering us to be the ONE GENERATION. His plan is to make the planet ONE WORLD under His rule. Becoming ONE WORLD will happen through THE ONE CHURCH. The key to being ONE CHURCH is THE ONE FAMILY.

Take a moment right now to write your own prayer in response to God on everything you learned this week. How will you step out in obedience to what He said to you?

If you're ready to setup your 5G wireless network so you can phone home to Papa, pray with me: "Father in Heaven, thank you for Jesus. Jesus, I repent from living from my flesh and my selfishness and insecurity. As I follow You up the mountain, I take my seat in Heaven next to You and the Father and all the saints. I am blessed and honored to sit by Your side. Help me to stay in touch. Please nudge me before I do my own thing again. I commit my family to You, Lord. Teach us to live as carriers of Your Presence and how to treat others as carriers of Your Presence. Make us ONE FAMILY under your love and authority. In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we pray. Amen. Now tell the person next to you, "I love you and there's nothing you can do about it."

Well, that's our study for today. Join us next week for the last message of our ONE series, as we talk about Spiritual Warfare, in THE WAR FOR ONE. ALOOO-HA!