

## SPIRITUAL UNITY: GOD'S PLAN—PLANK SEVEN, ONE GOD

The seventh and final plank listed by Paul in God's platform for spiritual unity is the fact of there being but "...one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:6).

It may seem strange to 21<sup>st</sup> century people who allege faith in Christ that Paul would save the declaration of but one God for last. Why not list this fact first? After all, everyone believes there is only one God, don't they? No, especially not when Paul wrote to Christians nearly 2,000 years ago. Rather, the world of Paul's day was replete with "so-called gods" (I Corinthians 8:5). This required him to build to the conclusion of but one God by means of his preceding six facts. In our time, however, this is reversed with people professing to believe in "one God and Father" but badly confused on the six facts (planks in God's plan for spiritual unity) essential for our honoring God. Notice...

**ONE BODY: UNITY OF RELATIONSHIP.** All who are God's children are members of the one body of Jesus Christ, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:14-16).

**ONE SPIRIT: UNITY OF REVELATION.** Jesus sent but one Holy Spirit to his apostles to reveal to them the one truth that can free mankind from the burden of sin (John 8:32-36; 16:12-13).

**ONE HOPE: UNITY OF GOAL.** Every Christian lives with the same ultimate expectation, an eternal home with God in the glory of heaven (Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:1-4).

**ONE LORD: UNITY OF AUTHORITY.** All authority in heaven and earth has been delegated to Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18). Every spiritual matter as well as the totality of a Christian's life is defined by and rests upon his authority (Matthew 17:5; Colossians 3:16).

**ONE FAITH: UNITY OF MESSAGE.** The word of the cross—the death, burial and resurrection of Christ—is the power of God to save us (I Corinthians 1:18). This alone was the message preached by the apostles of Christ (I Corinthians 2:1-2).

**ONE BAPTISM: UNITY OF OBEDIENCE.** All who would put on Christ must be baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27). The authority of the gospel of Christ authorizes no other way.

**ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL: UNITY OF WORSHIP** (Matthew 4:10). Generally, this is a point of agreement. But how must we worship him? By observing the foregoing six facts inherent in submission to God's will. The Bible calls for nothing less. —Jerry F. Bassett