

(Clip) The Mystery of Becoming One in Christ

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into the profound mystery of the church as highlighted in Ephesians and Matthew, emphasizing the unity of believers from diverse backgrounds and the challenges in building a unified body in Christ. It explores the significance of breaking down barriers and enmity through the cross of Jesus Christ to achieve oneness, drawing parallels between the unity of believers and the complexities of relationships like marriage. The message underscores the importance of unity within the local body of Christ, a concept often overlooked in favor of easier tasks like evangelism and social work.

Scripture: Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 2:14, Ephesians 3:6, Acts 10:34, Ephesians 4:3, Colossians 3:14, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Galatians 3:28, John 17:20

Topics: "Unity in the Body of Christ", "Overcoming Barriers through the Cross"

Description

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Transcript

The first time that Jesus spoke about the church, the first time the word church is mentioned in the Bible, is in Matthew 16 and verse 18. Now in our last study we saw that this great mystery, which is hidden from ages, what is it? It's about the church. And I want to turn to Ephesians first before going to Matthew.

In Ephesians 2, you read there that this mystery is something where we saw in Ephesians 3 that the Gentiles, Ephesians 3, 6, should become fellow members of the body. As I said, that doesn't look like a great mystery that Jews and non-Jews should become one in Christ. But the point is, how do they become one? This is the mystery.

Individual Christians here and there, that's not a great mystery. People have accepted the Lord. You know what they say, save souls.

It's easy to go around saving souls. But to make them into one body, that's a mystery. And the mystery is not individual salvation.

I want you to understand this. It's the local body of Jesus Christ. And if you want to know how difficult it is to build that, just look around and see the amount of confusion there is in so many churches.

And the only way that it can be done is if we can understand what happened on the cross of Jesus Christ. It says when Jesus died, he made, Ephesians 2, 14, both groups into one. In the Hindu caste system, there are the upper class Brahmins and the lowest caste of, I don't know what they are, I'm not very familiar with it.

But there's a group called the Untouchables. I mean, they are so much untouchable that I've heard that the upper caste people, if that person walks by and the shadow falls upon this upper caste person, he's got to go and have a bath. That's how much, that's why they keep these people at a distance.

And to bring even an upper caste and lower caste person who's come to Christ, one. See what a massive problem it is, even in India. And the Jews and non-Jews were far more separated than upper caste and lower caste in India.

The greatest difference in caste system in India is nothing compared to the way the Jews looked at non-Jews. Now we can read in the Acts of the Apostles that Paul said, no, there shouldn't be any difference. But you try and go into the villages of India and convert the Brahmin and the lower caste person and say, now you've got to mingle together and break bread together and drink from the same cup.

And then you'll see what a difficulty it was to make Jews and Gentiles together. We read it so easily in the scriptures. But it was a tremendous problem.

But when Jesus died, it says here, he broke down, Ephesians 2.14, this barrier of the dividing wall. And if that barrier is not broken down, you can never become one with another person. And he abolished this enmity there is in the flesh.

You know that there is an enmity in your flesh? You love yourself. You never fight with yourself. You never find your left hand hitting the face or right hand hitting the face.

You never fight with yourself. But you fight with your wife. She's supposed to be one flesh with you.

It says you've got to love your wife as your own body. If you want to know how difficult it is for two people to become one, go and ask any married couple, honest married couple, who will tell you the truth of how it is in them, how difficult it is to live at peace with one another, even for one month. It's possible.

It's possible if you've understood the way of the cross. If you've not understood it, even one week will be difficult. And imagine, this mystery is where people are so different like us to become one body.

It's like this human body. It's a real mystery, I tell you. That's why people shy away from it and say no, the main thing in the church is evangelism, reach out to others and collect money and do social work and care for the orphans and care for the widows and never talk about becoming one.

Because that is the most difficult thing of all. It's like sending your child to a school where they never teach difficult subjects like maths and science. You go to a school and they teach you how to play marbles and something about geography and little history.

Will you send your child to a school like that? You wouldn't. But that's what's happening in Christendom today. The most important subject is left out.

But the easy ones are all talked about. This is the problem. We need to understand this.

When we proclaim the whole purpose of God, this is part of the whole purpose of God, that we have to become one. In our marriage we have to become one. In our church we have to become one.

We are so many different cultures and upbringings and differences of opinion.

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