

Week 3 - Wednesday, August 31
ST. PAUL: APOSTLE TO THE WORD
with Dr. Geoffrey Lentz

Shema! Unity, Reconciliation, and Peace

Readings: Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 2:11-22, 1 Corinthians 1:10-12, 1 Corinthians 3:1-11, 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, Colossians 1:15-20

One of Paul's major themes of ministry is unity. He believed that Jesus and the Spirit were the one God of Israel. Because God was one and yet diverse, the church could be united in differences, whether Jew or Gentile, slave or free, or male or female. His mission was to keep the church structurally and relationally united despite the major cultural differences present in the Roman Empire.

- I. Review
- II. Opening Reflection
- III. What is the *Shema*?—Deuteronomy 6:4
 - A. Hear, O Israel: YHWH is our God, YHWH alone. You shall love YHWH your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.
- IV. Paul's use of the *Shema*
 - A. "God ... is one" (Rom. 3:30).
 - B. "to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever" (16:27)
 - C. "God is only one" (Gal. 3:20)
 - D. "the only God," and more explicitly, "for there is one God" (1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5)
 - E. "There is ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" (Eph. 4:4-6)
 - F. "We know that ... there is no God but one.... there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him" (1 Corinthians 8:4, 6).
- V. Unity in the Church
 - A. Unity in Church—1 Cor. 1:10-12, 1 Cor. 3:1-11
 - B. For Jew and Gentile
 - C. Slave and Free, Male and Female—Gal. 3:28 (Next Week)
 - D. Rich and Poor, Powerful, and Powerless—1 Cor. 11:17-34
- VI. Nicene Creed—We believe in the one Holy catholic and apostolic church.
- VII. Structural Unity or Spiritual Unity
- VIII. What can we do to contribute to unity in the church without losing our diversity or distinctiveness?
- IX. Closing Reflection

The Shema

Shema Yisrael Adonai eloheinu Adonai echad

Hear (listen)
Israel (people of God)
The Lord (The Father)
Your God (Your relationship)
The Lord (Christ Jesus)
Is One (unity)