

The Importance of One

Ephesians 4:4-6

INTRODUCTION:

- A. A proverbial nail made the following assessment of itself.
 They won't miss me. They don't need me. Nobody likes me. After all, here is a big beautiful building. It has stained glass windows, plush carpet, painted walls, a beautiful pulpit, and chandeliers. I am just a little nail holding down a shingle on the roof. I am not important.
 So the nail worked itself loose and fell to the ground. It began to rain, and the nail was buried in the mud and began to rust. The shingle loosened and rain began to leak into the beautiful building. The water stained the pews, pulpit, walls and carpet. All because the nail felt he was not important. Therein lies a lesson in the importance of one nail.
- B. Are we as human beings any different?
1. We often feel unimportant.
 2. Such feelings keep us from being actively involved in:
 - a. Our Lord's work.
 - b. The local congregation.
 - c. Individual Christian living . . . Service . . . And ministry.
- C. In counseling, one of the more common denominators in many cases is the problem of poor self-concept.
1. We allow our feelings to get in the way **self**.
 2. We allow our feelings to get in the way of **faithfulness**.
 3. We allow our feelings to get in the way of our **spiritual growth**.
 4. We allow our feelings to get in the way of **service**.
 5. We allow our feelings to get in the way of our **Lord**.
 6. We allow our feelings to get in the way of our **worship**.
 7. We allow our feelings to get in the way of how we **treat** (or mistreat) **our brethren**.
- D. Maybe . . . Just maybe others in your home congregation aren't what they ought to be because you aren't what you ought to be.
1. We often feel important.
 2. When we feel unimportant, we fail to do our part.
 3. When we fail to do our part, the whole congregation will suffer from the bad that was done or the good that was withheld.
 4. When the whole congregation suffers, the whole church of our Lord suffers.
- E. One person . . . One Christian is important . . . YOU are important!
1. Your individual importance far exceeds in value the sum total of all the material things in our world.

2. **Matthew 16:26** – “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

F. Let us study about “The Importance of One.”

1. As an adjective, one is a single unit of a thing.
2. As a noun, one is the number denoting unity.
3. As a pronoun, one is a certain indefinitely indicated person or thing.
4. To God, one is a definitive part of the New Testament Gospel of Christ.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE IN SECULAR HISTORY

- A. Thomas Jefferson was elected President of the United States over John Adams because of the difference of **one** electoral vote.
- B. Rutherford B. Hayes was elected President over Samuel Tilden by the slimmest of margins . . . One electoral vote.
- C. A congressman from Indiana won his election because of one vote.
- D. One vote kept President Andrew Johnson from being impeached.
- E. Indiana’s Senator Ed Hannegan cast his one vote and Texas became a state in 1846.
- F. California, Oregon, and Washington State all became states on the basis of one-vote margins.
- G. One vote put an end to the French monarchy.
- H. One man by the name of Karl Marx, with his theory of dialectical materialism, brought communism into existence. Communism at one time dominated one-third of the world’s population.
- I. One man by the name of Anton Lavey began the church of Satan. In its first ten year period, it grew to a membership of some two million people.
- J. Madelyn Murray O’hair, just one woman, was responsible for the 1963 Supreme Court decision to ban prayer in the public schools.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE IN BIBLE HISTORY

- A. One woman by the name of **EVE** plunged the human race into sin.
 1. **Genesis 3:6** – “Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate [it] ; she also gave [some] to her husband, [who was] with her, and he ate [it].”
 2. The complacency of Adam in the matter is further stated in **Romans 5:12** – “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all men, because all sinned.”
- B. One man by the name of **NOAH** made a great deal of difference in a wicked world in generations past . . . Some 1,656 after the flood.
 1. Noah was the singular shining beacon in a vast sinful wilderness of darkness. **Genesis 6:5-8** – “When the LORD saw that man’s wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every scheme his mind thought of

was nothing but evil all the time, ⁶ the LORD regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ Then the LORD said, ‘ will wipe off the face of the earth: man, whom I created, together with the animals, creatures that crawl, and birds of the sky—for I regret that I made them.’ ⁸ Noah, however, found favor in the eyes of the LORD.”

2. Inspiration has a glowing description of this one man . . . Noah.
 - a. ‘But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.’
 - b. “Noah was a just man.
 - c. “Perfect in his generations.”
 - d. “Noah walked with God.”
 - e. A preacher of righteousness.” 2 Peter 2:5
3. It has been estimated that there were some twenty-five million people living in Noah’s day.
 - a. Noah and his family (a total of eight) were spared.
 - b. The remaining 24,999,992 people perished.
 - c. Herein we again see the importance of one.

C. **ABRAHAM** was one man who made a difference.

1. Bible readers are introduced to him in the Bible some 427 years after the Great Flood.
2. God called Abraham and used him in a great way.
 - a. God used Abraham to bring the Jewish nation into existence.
 - b. Through the Jewish nation Christ was born in Bethlehem in Judea.
 - c. Through Christ the church was established.
 - d. Through the Church the Gospel is preached.
 - e. Through the Gospel salvation is offered.
 - f. Through salvation sins are forgiven and Heaven is gained.
3. Listen to Inspiration’s description of Abraham.
 - a. “For what does the Scripture say? **Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness.**” **Romans 4:3**
 - b. “Against hope, with hope he believed, so that he became **the father of many nations.**” **Romans 4:18**
 - c. “He did not waver in unbelief at God’s promise, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God.” **Romans 4:20**
 - d. “So the Scripture was fulfilled that says, **Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness**, and he was called God’s friend.” **James 2:23**
4. This man of faith had interceded for Sodom in Genesis 18. The city could have, and would have been spared, had only ten righteous souls could have been found there.
5. In Abraham, we continue to see the importance of one.

D. **MOSES**, time and time again, kept God from destroying Israel.

1. On the occasion when the Israelites, newly delivered from Egyptian bondage, built and worshipped a golden calf, Moses interceded on their behalf.
 - a. **Exodus 32:14** – “So the LORD changed His mind about the disaster He said He would bring on His people.”
 - b. **Exodus 32:32** – “ Now if You would only forgive their sin. But if not, please erase me from the book You have written.”
 2. In Moses we continue to see the importance of one.
- E. **JONAH** is another example of the importance of one man.
1. After the great fish story that many still find it hard to swallow, Jonah went and preached God’s message in the ancient Assyrian capital of Nineveh. **Jonah 3:5** – “The men of Nineveh believed in God. They proclaimed a fast and dressed in sackcloth—from the greatest of them to the least.”
 2. Jonah learned that one man and the One God constitute a majority anywhere.
 3. Listening friends . . . You can be the Jonah in your community.
 4. Jonah is another positive example of the importance of one.
- F. **ELIJAH**, truly a great prophet , was only one man as he stood on Mount Carmel and successfully challenged the 450 prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:20-40
1. The 450 prophets of Baal were outnumbered by one man and his one God.
 2. After a great victory was won on the side of righteousness, Elijah prayed to God and the 3½ year draught ended. James 5:17-18
 3. Elijah demonstrates the importance of one.
- G. How about Achan? . . . How about Rehoboam?
- H. The importance of one is illustrated four powerful New Testament passages.
1. **Matthew 16:26** – “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”
 2. Luke 15:1-32
 - a. 100 sheep . . . Then **ONE** is lost and sought.
 - b. 10 coins . . . Then **ONE** is lost and sought.
 - c. 2 sons . . . **ONE** is lost “in a far country.”
 3. The rich young ruler who desired eternal life. Matthew 19:16-22
 - a. He asked in **verse 16** – “. . . Teacher, what good must I do to have eternal life?”
 - b. In verse 21, Jesus told him he lacked one thing.
 - c. Not many things, but one thing, stood between him and the Lord. “Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack . . .” Mark 10:21
 4. In **Matthew 25:30**, the one-talent man failure to use the one talent he had been given caused his master to say: “ And throw this good-for-nothing

slave into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- a. He had failed to use the one opportunity that he was given and was severely punished for it.
- b. What about you and your talents.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE IN OUR GENERATION

- A. Bro. **Ira North** used to say at Madison that they were always after **ONE** more.
 1. Question: What difference would one more make?
 2. Answer: All the difference in the world if that one more is one of your family members or friends.
 3. Therein lies the importance of one.
- B. Bro. **Marshall Keeble**, famed black evangelist with only a 4th grade education.
 1. During his ministry, he was responsible for the baptism of some forty to 50 thousand souls into Christ.
 2. In bro. Keeble we continue to see the importance of one.
- C. One of the best examples of the power of one is seen in the mother of bro. Rue Porter.
 1. In 1904 his mother was the only person in her community that claimed to be a New Testament Christian. After hearing a gospel preacher in another community. She invited him to come to her community and preach. She cleaned up the old school house. She killed a couple of hens to feed the preacher and song leader. A few souls were converted as a result of this effort. Later E. M. Boren came to that community for a debate and others were converted. Since then, thousands have been converted and at least forty men from that congregation have become gospel preachers.
 2. The power of one souls dedicated to doing God’s will is incredible beyond human imagination.
 3. In sis Porter we continue to see the importance of one.
- D. I am impressed with one man in Forth Worth, Texas, a car salesman, began to invite people to church.
 1. He put forth great effort.
 - a. He called them on the phone.
 - b. He sent out letters.
 - c. He offered many personal invitations.
 2. On one day . . . One day, mind you . . . He brought 2700 to church with him.
 3. Another example of the importance of one.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We all have influence . . . Each one is important . . . You are important.
- B. Luke writes in:

1. **Luke 15:7** – “I tell you, in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous people who don’t need repentance.
 2. **Luke 15:10** – “I tell you, in the same way, there is joy in the presence of God’s angels over one sinner who repents.”
- C. The fact that each of us will give individual accounts of our lives before God in the judgment, speaks loud and clear about the importance of one and the vast influence of one soul. **Romans 14:12** – “So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.”
- D. Someone has written:
- “I am only one, but I am one.
I cannot do everything,
But I can do something,
Because I can’t o everything,
I will not fail to do the
Something, I can do.”
- E. You are one . . . But with God on your side, you are a majority in all situations in life.
- F. You are important . . . Go forth and make a difference for good!
- G. **Ephesians 4:4-6** - “There is one **BODY** and one **SPIRIT**, just as you were called to one **HOPE** at your calling; ⁵ one **LORD**, one **FAITH**, one **BAPTISM**, ⁶ one **GOD** and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”
1. The fact that these seven ones come from God, emphasize the importance of their singular place in Christian doctrine to refute false doctrines that make each a plural.
 2. God knew the importance of one in each of these seven.
- H. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**

THE VALUE OF ONE MEMBER

Ten little members standing in a line.

One disliked the leaders then there were nine.

Nine ambitious members offered to work late.

One forgot her promise then there were eight.

Eight creative members had good ideas about heaven.

One lost enthusiasm then there were seven.

Seven loyal members got into a fix.

They quarreled over programs then there were six.

One moved away then there were five.

Five faithful members working together hard.

One gave up then there were four

Four cheerful members who never disagreed.
One complained of meeting then there were three.
Three eager member, What do they do?
One got discouraged then there were two.
Two remaining members feeling all alone.
Couldn't stand together, then there was one.

One faithful member was feeling rather blue –
Met with a neighbor then there were two.
Two earnest members each enrolled one more –
Doubling their number then there were four.
Four determined members just couldn't wait –
Each won another, and then there were eight!
Eight excited members evangelized six more.
In another six verses there'll be . . . 1,204