

ONE Devotional

Seven Days of Celebrating Oneness in Christ

Introduction

Unity is a place where three pools converge. Each pool is fed by a spring of water, creating ripples on the pool's surface that race to the pool's edges, and then cascade over its sides. The life of the springs, when clean and unclogged by debris, cannot be contained by the pools concentric sides. At the very center of the pool, a great fountain leaps forth into the air, a great dancing expression of the combined joy of the self-giving springs.

Each pool is one of three relationships that sustain the life of the Christian community. The first pool is our relationship with Christ, whose life-spring is the very source of our hope. The second pool is our relationship with our heavenly Father, whose love for us springs forth from his heart and overflows into ours. The third pool is our relationships with each other, fed by the gospel of peace, which is our mission. The Spirit of God is the very life of these springs which converge and leap forth as the great fountain, which bursts forth with joy, filled with hope. This is the wonder of the faith we share, made visible, so the world is flooded with the gift of life we have received.

It is our prayer, as you spend the next seven days exploring, contemplating, and living out the rich truths mined from the Scriptures, that you will experience in new ways this unity all believers share because of the life and purpose we have each received in Christ.

Download a full week of devotionals based on the theme of ONE

Click Here: <http://www.chogy.org/one-event/>

We would like to thank Rev. Xen Riggs for sharing his creative writing abilities through these devotionals.

ONE Devo

Day 1: ONE Shepherd

Intake

Read John 10:1–18

- Use a highlighter to highlight every action word Jesus uses to describe who he is as the Good Shepherd.
- Circle every action word Jesus uses to describe his sheep.
- What other words does Jesus use to describe himself as the Good Shepherd? List them on a sheet of notebook paper.
- Watch the YouTube video, [“The Good Shepherd and His Sheep”](#).

Outflow

“I am the Good Shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd” (John 10:14–16 NIV).

Have you ever found yourself asking, “How do I know that I belong among God’s people?” You may find yourself asking this question because of your personal background, or because of personal experiences, or because you have been left thinking that you lack something other believers seem to have. You are not the only one who has asked this question. The good news is that there is one thing that all disciples of Jesus Christ have in common, and by this you can know that you belong. Jesus has declared that his “sheep listen to [his] voice.” Watch this [YouTube video](#) for a demonstration of just how true this is.

What feelings does watching this video awaken in you? Did all the sheep look the same in either of the videos? Were they all the same color, size, and shape? There were several different kinds of sheep, including black, white, large, small, fluffy, not-so-fluffy, etc. What happened when the shepherd called all these different sheep? Did only the fluffy ones turn their heads? Did only the black sheep come running to him? We watched all the sheep of every pedigree turn their heads and come running at the sound of their shepherd’s voice, excited to greet him!

All of these sheep we saw belong to the shepherd because they heeded his voice when he called them. Therefore, all of these sheep belong in the shepherd’s flock. Likewise, all of us who heed Jesus’ voice and choose to follow him every day belong together as fellow disciples. We all belong together in the flock of Jesus Christ because we heeded his voice and became his disciples when he called to our hearts, “Come, follow me.”

Overflow

What is one way you will greet Jesus with a group of your fellow disciples this week? Practice being conscious of those who worship beside you.

Living Echoes

“As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep...I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land.”

—Ezekiel 34:12–13a NIV

ONE Devo

Day 2: ONE with God

Intake

Read Ephesians 2

- As you read, record any questions that come to your mind on notebook paper.
- Highlight some of the key words Paul uses in this passage to describe our relationship with God apart from Christ.
- Using a different color, highlight some of the key words Paul uses in this passage to describe our relationship with God when we put our faith in Christ.
- Make a short list of what this passage says God has done to bring us back to him.

Outflow

“His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit” (Ephesians 2:15–18 NIV).

We were created to be in relationship with God. When God formed Adam and Eve, the author of Genesis describes God’s handiwork as an intimate act meant to establish a permanent bond between himself as Father and all humankind as his children. Thus, it is written that we are created in God’s image. We were made to resemble God in every way.

What happens when a child chooses their own way and loses faith in their parents’ love? What happens when one sibling becomes jealous of their brother or sister because they seem to be more highly favored by their parents? God knows. This story stands at the heart of all human brokenness. Jesus retells this story in Luke 15:11–32 and sheds a light on where God stands in it when he tells us the story of a son who left his father and brother to squander his father’s money. Click [here](#) to watch a contemporary rendering of this story.

As you watched this video, where was the father as his son was squandering his money, at the end of his rope, and living on the streets? The father was calling him and waiting for him to come home. Jesus is the very voice of God calling us back to our heavenly Father. Spoken words are never enough for God; he speaks through the very life of Jesus Christ. When Jesus says, “Follow me,” it is the Father’s voice pleading, “Come home.” And when we choose to receive Christ, when we become Jesus’ disciples, we receive our father’s embrace.

All of us are in need of our heavenly Father’s forgiving and compassionate embrace. All of us who are in Christ have received this embrace along with a place at Jesus’ side. In this way, all of us are reconciled to each other because, through Jesus Christ, our relationship with God is restored and our lives are made new together.

Overflow

What is one way that you will celebrate with your brothers and sisters the new relationship you have with God and with each other?

Living Echoes

“In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

—Hosea 1:10b NIV

ONE Devo

Day 3: ONE Fellowship

Intake

Read Acts 2:36–47

- Make a list of everything the believers shared together, according to this passage, on notebook paper.
- Read the passage through a second time and try to add more to your list of things the believer held in common.
- What is the one central thing all believers hold in common?

Outflow

In Matthew chapters 5–7, Jesus declared to his disciples the true law of the kingdom of God. In Acts 2, what was declared in words burst upon the world as a community of people whose hearts reflected the very light of Jesus' words in the way they lived together. Thousands of people who previously looked to their own means for survival and lived according to their own desires and wisdom suddenly shared one source of life, and lived under the authority of one King. How does this happen? What does this even look like? Take a look at this [YouTube video of the historic flash mob at the Antwerp Train Station](#).

In this video clip, you watched a “mob” of children and adults suddenly start dancing to the same music as they emerged from the crowd around them. We know how this happens. One director has taught them how to move and has rehearsed this with them beforehand. But notice that all of them shared two things in common: they all have one teacher and they move to one song. When a believer accepts the Lordship of Christ, they are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches us the dance of God which Jesus danced first for our example as God sang over him. More than that, his Spirit fills us with that dance and sings the song in our hearts. Suddenly, the kingdom of God bursts into our midst as we live, love, hope, and partake together in the abundance of God's goodness; a goodness we are suddenly moved to generously share with each other.

In Christ, all believers share together a community of peace and the abundant life in the Spirit Jesus promised to extend to us when we abide together in his love. All we must do is learn the dance the Spirit of Christ teaches us in our hearts.

Overflow

As you worship with fellow believers, what is one way you can deliberately share a blessing you have received from God? Find someone who needs it and share it with them, and Jesus promises that your joy will be made complete.

Living Echoes

“How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.”

—Psalm 133 NIV

ONE Devo

Day 4: ONE Faith

Intake

Read Hebrews 11

- Take inventory of all our “fathers of faith.” On a sheet of notebook paper, create two columns. In the first, list the names mentioned in Hebrews 11. In the second column, briefly write how their actions displayed their faith in God.
- Highlight each of Paul’s statements in which he explains what makes our faith a valuable treasure for the community of believers. One example of this can be found in Hebrews 11:1.
- Imagine that your name has been added to this list of our “fathers of faith.” What might it say about how you lived out your faith in God? Write your thoughts in your journal.

Outflow

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1 NIV).

As the people of God, we all share many treasures which cannot be bought; heirlooms of the kingdom which have been passed down from generation to generation. Abraham passed these treasures down to his sons who then passed them down to his sons and on down the generations until it came to rest in the hands of Jesus Christ himself. Now we receive these treasures from him to whom they first belonged. These treasures are most valuable because we do not hold them in our hands but in our hearts.

One of these treasures is the source of miracle vision, which is our faith. Our eyes enable us to see the world around us in part, but the material world is only a small part of the world God has created. Faith gives our hearts eyes so that we can see and interact with the greater reality of God’s kingdom at work in the world around us. Take a moment to check out this [YouTube video](#) to see an illustration of what I’m talking about.

Without our faith, we find ourselves walking blindfolded through life, unable to fully come to know the world in which we live, and unable to recognize the One who gives it to us as a gift of his love. When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the gift of seeing more fully the world God has made and is making new. When we put our faith in Jesus, we walk with the blindfolds off as he guides us into the wonder of our heavenly Father’s kingdom. Our faith is the key to this kingdom and the first taste of our heavenly inheritance.

Overflow

Think of one person who has been an example of living by faith in God. Express your gratitude to this person either in person or in writing. Make sure you describe to them how they have been a faith example to you.

Living Echoes

“Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith.”

—Isaiah 26:2 NIV

ONE Devo

Day 5: ONE Hope

Intake

Read Romans 8

- Underline the words *death, dead, weakened, hostile, slaves, groaning, sufferings, and frustration* or similar words.
- Highlight the words *life, adoption, and liberated* or similar words.
- Describe in your journal how this passage describes hope and what we are hoping for.

Outflow

“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently” (Romans 8:22–25 NIV).

Have you ever found yourself caught up in the cyclical nature of this world and wonder to where it is all leading? Have you ever looked at your own life, found yourself dwelling on the difficulties you are now experiencing and wonder how it will end? For these questions, we are heirs of another great treasure! It is also a source of sight that does not merely impact how we see the current state of things. It furthermore acts as a spyglass that enables us to see beyond our current circumstances to the final destination to which God is leading all creation. This great treasure of the kingdom of God is the gift of hope. Switchfoot expresses the great value of this gift well in their song [“Only Hope.”](#) Click on the song title to take a moment to listen to their words and let them sink in.

Life can often feel like it is one battle after another or one challenge after another. Everyone at one time or another is tempted to give in to the seeming futility of facing challenge after challenge in order to hang on to the faith that we have. It can feel like we are trying to write the same song over and over again. God’s answer to this struggle is to give to us, who are his children, his song. It is the song of the eternal glory that awaits us when we continue to walk with him and trust him to lead us through it all, until the day his song becomes a prophecy fulfilled and all creation is made new. In that day, we will dwell with God as his children, ruling as princes and princesses at his side. Our “only hope” is Jesus Christ, who is making all things new and who will conquer all futility with his purposes realized and with his every promise fulfilled. This hope is our treasure because we are disciples of Jesus Christ.

Overflow

Take a moment and journal about something difficult you might be experiencing at this time in your life. What has God promised you? Write a prayer to God expressing confidence in his promises, or write a prayer asking God to show you what he has promised.

Living Echoes

“My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.”

—Isaiah 51:5–6 NIV

ONE Devo

Day 6: ONE Love

Intake

Read 1 John 4:7–21

- Count how many times the word “love” in any form is used in this passage.
- Draw a cross over the word “love” wherever you find the phrase “God is love,” “God showed his love,” “he loved us,” or any other similar instance of this phrase when it appears in this passage (it’s okay if you don’t find them all).
- In your journal, reflect on how this passage answers the question, “How do I know that I’m living in God’s love?”
- Check out this [time-lapse video](#).

Outflow

“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:16–19 NIV).

Hold out your right hand with your palms open as if you are about to receive a gift from God. Imagine that God first puts into your hand a powerful pair of glasses that helps you see invisible things. You place these glasses on your face gratefully and then you hold out your hand again. This time he places a powerful set of binoculars in your hands that enables you to see beyond the present into the future. You are more excited about this gift and, with a broad smile, hang the binoculars around your neck. And then God tells you to put out your hand one more time and close your eyes. This time you feel him place a small, smooth, rounded object in your hands. When you open your eyes, you see that he has placed a seed in your hand. Upon first glance, you see that the seed has already put out a shoot and is beginning to grow. “What is this seed?” you ask him. “This is my love for you,” he responds.

When we accept Jesus Christ and choose to follow him, we receive the gift of God’s love; a gift which God offered us first in the person of Jesus Christ. Have you ever planted a garden? If you have, you know that as you water and nourish the seed it grows into something beautiful. A fruit seed becomes a tree and people eat its fruit. God’s love bears fruit in us as we cultivate our relationship with him. When we share the fruit of that love with others, we give them the opportunity to receive the seed of God’s love. We have all received this love as fellow believers. Together we nourish this love so that it might grow in our hearts and transform this world into a garden of the Lord.

Overflow

Consider one relationship in your life where you would like to see God’s love flow through you more freely. Seek out a way to express God’s love for them in a deliberate way.

Living Echoes

“I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God.”

ONE Devo

Day 7: ONE Witness

Intake

1 John 1

- List the relationships this passage mentions (themselves and Jesus, etc.).
- Highlight the evidence John gives that what he is saying in this passage is true.
- Underline the word “fellowship” as often as it appears in this passage.

Outflow

“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:3–5 NIV).

Have you ever had the pleasure of watching a fountain lit and dancing to music? Take a moment to check out the Dubai Dancing Fountain [here](#). As you watched, were you struck by the beauty of the choreography that just seems to erupt from the moving tones and words of the song? The fountain was a visual representation of the power of the lyric to which it danced.

As believers in fellowship with Jesus Christ, we too are a fountain. The Spirit of God gushes up from within us, we are moved by its life within us, and the song of God is made visible as we are moved by it in the way we love others and live our lives. So wonderful is this song that we cannot help but give witness to the love we have found in the forgiveness and hope we have found in Jesus Christ, in the presence of God that surrounds us, and in the fellowship that we share together. It is as if our fountain pool overflows until we cannot help but drench others with the life-giving waters, and our joy abounds as others are refreshed by the abundant life they see shoot forth from us to touch heaven itself.

Out of this ONE fellowship in which we share the compassion of ONE Lord, have become the children of ONE heavenly Father, and have received the inheritance of ONE faith, ONE hope, and ONE love, a life flows out from us abounding with joy and goodness that comes from this very life in Christ that we share. In Genesis, God flooded the world with the waters of death to destroy wickedness. Now through you he floods the world with the waters of life so that peace might prevail. Do not hold back, let the waters rise!

Overflow

Think of one person you know who is not walking in fellowship with Jesus Christ. Commit to praying for that person and to show them who Jesus is until they have joined the fellowship of believers.

Living Echoes

“[God] says: ‘It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.’”

—Isaiah 49:6 NIV