

# The Church of Christ and Unity

Ephesians 4:1-6

J. W. Pitts, Jr. - Minister  
Woodland Park Church of Christ

# Unity

- Unity is very important to God
- There is unity between God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, 1 John 5:7
- There is unity in the Scriptures, 2 Timothy 3:15-16
- There is unity among believers, God's family, the Church, Ephesians 4:4
- Unity – oneness, wholeness, completeness  
a willingness to cooperate, agree, and unite

# God Hates Division in Churches

***“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (naive people).”***

***Romans 16:17***

- Paul notes in these verses to mark those who were causing divisions and offences
- They were to be marked because they were teaching things that were contrary to the doctrine that they had already been taught
- Paul says that they which do such things don't serve the Lord but their "own belly" or their own personal gain
- He says that they were deceiving the people by "good words" and "fair speeches"
- So Paul found it necessary to warn people lest they be misled (doctrinally)

# Paul Warns Against Division

## 1 Corinthians 1:11-17

***“For it had been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.”***

# 1 Corinthians 1:11-17

***“..Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.”***

***“...And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”***

# Observations

- Note that we learn that there were divisions among Christians at Corinth.
- Some were claiming to belong to Paul, some to Apollos, some to Peter, and some to Christ
- Paul then asked them 3 questions to show the fallacy of their thinking
  - Is Christ divided?
  - Was Paul, Apollos, or Peter crucified for you?
  - Were you baptized in the name of Paul, Apollos, or Peter?



- Christ was not divided
- Christ had been crucified for them
- They were baptized in the name of Christ
- Therefore it was absurd for them to follow Paul, Peter and Apollos or anybody else other than Christ
- Since Christ was not divided, and had been crucified for them, and they had been baptized in His name, then to wear His name only, showed that they were ***UNIFIED!***

- He went on to say that the Lord had sent him not to baptize but to preach the gospel
- He was not diminishing baptism but extolling the virtues of preaching the Gospel of Christ
- If by the preaching of the blessed gospel someone wanted to be baptized, then they would be
- Paul was simply saying, ***FIRST THINGS FIRST! Romans 1:16, The Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation”***

# What Can We Learn From These Verses?

- The Lord is not pleased with division
- In the case of the Christians at Corinth, He opposed it and condemned it
- Well does he say anything to the Christians in Corinth about **unity**?

# 1 Corinthians 1:10

***“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”***

**So you can see that division is condemned and unity is encouraged!**

# In John 17, Jesus Prayed On Behalf Of The Apostles And All Who Would Follow Them

***“Neither pray I for these alone, but for all of them that shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”***

***John 17:20-23***

# Observations

- Notice that Jesus was praying for those who would believe on Him through the word of the apostles as recorded in Mark 16:15-16, and ***that they all might be one!***
- If all of the apostles preached the same message and all those who heard it believed it, all would believe the same thing, do the same thing, and all would be one!
- Paul knew that if they were divided and opposing one another, it would only do harm and the world would laugh at them rather than believe that ***God had sent Jesus***

# Finally, Paul Lays Down The Basis For Unity

## *Ephesians 4:1-6*

***He says, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.***

***With all lowliness and meekness and longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”***

***“There is one body, and one Spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”***



- Notice that Paul makes a plea for **UNITY** on the basis that there is one God, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one church, and one hope
- What Paul says then, is that the one God has revealed His will to us through the Holy Spirit, and the one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
- When we all believe the same teaching, and obey the same Lord in baptism, a burial in water, the Lord adds us to the one body, the church
- In the church we have the hope of eternal life (Ephesians 5:25)

# In Closing

- There is so much division in the religious world today among those who claim to follow Christ
- But don't blame Christ and His teachings for the division
- Man is unwilling to accept and do only what the Lord asks
- Man is forbidden to add to God's word (Deuteronomy 4:2, Proverbs 30:6, Revelations 22:18-19)
- There is a church that we can read about in the Bible

- We must humbly go to Christ and His word for the truth (no where else is truth found, St. John 17:17)
- We must believe the truth, obey the truth and in doing so become a member of the church in the Bible
- Yes, it is still possible to have the kind of unity that God prayed for in scripture
- If we want to be saved and go to heaven ***we will settle for nothing less***

# The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel                      Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel                  Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins                        Acts 17:30

Confess Christ                        Acts 8:37

Be Baptized                            Acts 8:38