



Unity In Christ – Part 1

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In an age of division, politically, socially, and especially religiously, where there are literally hundreds of various religious organizations (all with doctrines that vary in some form or another), we must ask, “What is unity?” and “Can we obtain that unity today?” It is important to understand the difference between union and unity. It is best understood with the following illustration (**Note:** we are not suggesting anyone do this): if you were to tie the tails of two cats together, you would have union; however, you would not have unity. We should strive for the unity for which Jesus prayed: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which 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 also may be one in us**: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20-21).

First, notice the extent of Jesus’ prayer. After praying for Himself, He then prayed for His apostles. In verses 20-21, He then prayed for all who would believe in Him. Notice the purpose of the prayer, that all believers be **one**. Is this seen today? What is one? Alone, only, single, not two or more. Notice the quality of that unity or oneness in Jesus’ prayer: “as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.” Did God the Father and Jesus ever disagree (cf. John 10:30)? They never disagreed on the nature, teaching, name, or any other aspect of the church. Look at the Apostle Paul’s plea for unity to the Corinthian brethren: “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**” (I Corinthians 1:10).

There are those who believe the only way we can have “unity” (what they really want is union) is to agree to disagree. They believe that if they put aside their doctrinal differences, and simply accept anyone who believes in Jesus, then they can have the unity Jesus demands. We can NEVER ignore doctrine. John wrote, “Whosoever transgresseth, and **abideth not in the doctrine of Christ**, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 9-11). Only by accepting and applying the teachings (doctrines) of the New Testament to our lives, can we have the unity for which Jesus prayed. Not only does God have a plan for unity, the fact is God hates division. “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him...he that soweth discord among brethren” (Proverbs 6:16-19).

At the West Jefferson Church of Christ, we strive for the unity for which Jesus prayed. We do so by closely adhering to only the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament, which is our only source of authority. If you would like to study further with us from God’s Word by either an in-home open Bible study or correspondence course my mail, please print & return this coupon to: Back To The Bible; 221 Barnett Street; West Jefferson, NC 28694 or visit our website @ www.wjchurchofchrist.org.

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