

Filií Dei

Corpus Christi; Ecclesia uno corde

"The Body of Christ: The Church With One Heart"

By: Seth Winslow Young

Propter Regnum

Young

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Lord of all nations and Shepherd of one flock, we humbly bow before You. In Your mercy, You have entrusted us with the sacred duty of shepherding Your people, proclaiming the truth of the Gospel, and preserving the unity for which Christ Himself prayed. But Lord, we confess: we have strayed. Division, pride, and denominational arrogance have shattered the visible unity of Your Church. We have exalted traditions over truth, labels over love, and factions over faith. O God, unite our hearts once more in Christ. Tear down the walls that separate us. Revive the apostolic fire that once bound Your people together. Through Your Spirit, lead us back to the one fold under the one Shepherd. In Jesus' holy name, we pray. Amen.

O Lord of Heaven and Earth, Eternal Father of Truth, Mercy, and Unity, We call upon Thy Holy Name to guide us with wisdom, cleanse us from pride, and heal the wounds that have torn Thy Body asunder. May Thy Spirit descend upon Thy servants in every land-Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and otherwise-that we might remember the words of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: "May they all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You." Unite us, O God, not in flesh, but in Spirit and in Truth. Make us one Body, one Bride, and one Church, that the world may believe that You have sent Him. Amen.

Prologue

There comes a time when silence is sin. A time when love must speak—not with hatred, not with flattery, but with boldness born from grief and hope alike. I write to you now as a servant compelled by conviction, burdened by the deep fracture that wounds the Body of Christ. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matthew 5:9).

These words of our Lord, spoken on the hill overlooking Galilee, are not merely suggestions. They are commands. The Sermon on the Mount—the very charter of the Kingdom of Heaven—was not given to a divided Church. It was given to those called to be salt and light in a rotting and darkened world. How can we be salt if we have lost our collective taste? How can we be light, when our flames burn against each other?

Jesus taught us not only to believe, but to become. “That they may be one,” He prayed in John 17, “even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You...so that the world may believe that You sent Me.” The unity of the Church was Christ’s final petition before His passion. And we, His undershepherds, have trampled that prayer underfoot.

We live now in an era of Christian tribalism. We see Protestants dividing over worship styles and polity. We see Orthodox believers isolated by ethnic boundaries. We see Catholics fractured by internal confusion. And across the earth, a watching world sees us—divided, bickering, arrogant, and ineffective.

Let us not deceive ourselves: Christ is not divided. But we are. And this division has weakened the Body and corrupted our witness. The historical Church was one. In the Acts of the Apostles, they were “devoted to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42). There was one baptism. One creed. One altar. One Church. The bishops of the early centuries, from Ignatius to Cyprian to Augustine, understood the Church not as a loose federation of opinions, but as a visible, Eucharistic, Spirit-filled communion founded upon the apostles.

It is only in modern times that we have normalized division. From the Great Schism of 1054, to the Protestant Reformation, to the modern explosion of over 45,000 denominations, the Church has been dismembered. The Reformation, though born from a

cry for justice, became a tide of permanent schism. And now, each group claims the Holy Spirit while accusing others of apostasy. We have made a mockery of unity.

In a world sliding into darkness, our disunity renders us irrelevant. Governments pass laws against the unborn, against marriage, against Christ Himself, and we-God's shepherds-are too busy defending our ecclesial brand to stand together. Christians are persecuted in Nigeria, North Korea, Iran, and China, yet we refuse to lock arms in suffering because we cannot agree on communion or bishops. Enough. We must return to the apostolic faith. Not a faith of nostalgia, but of power. The Church of the first millennium held the key: unity grounded in apostolic succession, centered on the Eucharist, governed by bishops in communion, and living out the moral law of Christ. This Church baptized, taught, and disciplined the nations. We must not reinvent it. We must return to it.

How do we begin?

- 1. Let us reaffirm together the Nicene Creed, the true summary of our shared faith.*
- 2. Let us restore mutual recognition of Trinitarian baptism and begin shared liturgical efforts.*
- 3. Let each Church send delegates to a new Council of Christian Unity-not to compromise truth, but to reestablish communion through the lens of the early Church and the Fathers.*
- 4. Let us teach our people that their identity is not in denominations, but in Christ crucified and risen.*

Let us not wait for persecution to drive us together. Let us come together willingly-while we still have breath. Our children are watching. Our nations are collapsing. We have a narrow window to reclaim the mantle of the apostles. This is not a call to return to Rome or to Constantinople or Geneva. It is a call to return to Jerusalem, to the Upper Room, to the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and to be once again "of one heart and soul" (Acts 4:32).

Let this be our rallying cry: One Lord. One Faith. One Baptism. One Church.

May this letter not be shelved or ignored. May it stir consciences. May it trouble the proud. May it awaken the slumbering shepherds. For the sake of Christ, the Gospel, and our people, let us reunite—not in name, but in truth.

The Necessity of Reuniting the Church Under One Apostolic Body

I. Executive Summary

This proposal outlines the urgent theological, historical, cultural, and generational necessity of restoring the visible and doctrinal unity of the Church under the apostolic model preserved in the first millennium. Grounded in Scripture, supported by the Church Fathers, and necessitated by the moral, spiritual, and societal collapse of the modern world, this report contends that unity is not optional—it is essential for the preservation of truth, the strengthening of the Body, and the effective witness to Christ in a hostile age.

II. Scriptural Foundation for Unity

John 17:20–23 — *Jesus' high priestly prayer declared that His followers be "one" as He and the Father are one, so that "the world may believe that You sent Me." Unity is evangelistic and spiritual.*

Ephesians 4:4–6 — *St. Paul states: "There is one body and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism." This unity is rooted not in sentiment, but in shared faith, doctrine, and sacrament.*

1 Corinthians 1:10–13 — *Paul rebukes division: "Is Christ divided?" Factions were treated as grievous violations of the Body of Christ.*

The early Church was not a plurality of denominations, but a communion of local churches bound by apostolic teaching, Eucharistic worship, and a shared creed. The fragmentation that exists today would be unthinkable to the apostles.

III. The Apostolic and Historical Vision of Unity

1. The Church of the First Millennium

From Pentecost to the Great Schism (1054 AD), the Church operated with visible unity. Bishops upheld apostolic succession. Councils resolved doctrinal disputes. The Creed, Eucharist, and Scriptures bound East and West. Major figures-Athanasius, Basil, Augustine, Chrysostom-taught within this communion.

2. The Great Schism (1054)

This tragic divide between East and West severed the communion between Constantinople and Rome, largely due to theological misunderstandings and political pressures. It was not based on heresy, but on growing mistrust and power struggles.

3. The Reformation and Its Aftermath

The Protestant Reformation rightly protested abuses, but tragically replaced reform with rupture. Instead of healing, it resulted in over 45,000 denominations today, often mutually exclusive and antagonistic.

This fragmented ecclesiology undermines the original apostolic faith and weakens the witness of Christ's Body.

IV. Present Crisis: Cultural, Moral, and Spiritual Decay

1. Collapse of Moral Order

Western civilization, once shaped by Christian truth, now faces an aggressive post-Christian agenda. Marriage, gender, the sanctity of life, and moral law are rejected by modern governments and institutions.

2. Rising Persecution

Christians in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East suffer persecution-martyred, imprisoned, silenced. In the West, believers face marginalization, censorship, and legal pressure. A disunited Church cannot resist this oppression.

3. Cultural Confusion Among Youth

Without a unified Church to disciple them, new generations are abandoning Christianity entirely. The faith appears divided, antiquated, and uncertain to young seekers. Unity would restore credibility and clarity.

V. Theological and Practical Benefits of Reunification

1. **Clarity of Witness** - *A unified Church could once again speak prophetically to culture with a single voice on moral, social, and spiritual issues.*
2. **Shared Resources** - *Christian education, charity, missions, and social action could be exponentially strengthened through unity.*
3. **Evangelization and Discipleship** - *The Gospel would shine more brightly if believers shared pulpits, sacraments, and efforts in a coordinated, doctrinally sound manner.*
4. **Healing of Wounds** - *Centuries of animosity could be replaced with reconciliation and communion, fulfilling Christ's prayer for unity.*

VI. Strategic Path Toward Unity

1. Restoration of the Apostolic Creed

Encourage every congregation, denomination, and local church to publicly affirm the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed-the ancient symbol of Christian faith.

2. Recognition of Shared Baptism

Acknowledge the validity of Trinitarian baptisms across all apostolic traditions and begin inter-denominational catechetical dialogues.

3. Convene a Global Council of Unity

Invite leaders from Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and Non-Denominational communities to form a Council for Christian Unity, modeled on the Councils of the early Church.

4. Return to the Apostolic Model

Encourage alignment with early Church governance: bishop-led communities united in sacrament, doctrine, and pastoral care-drawing especially from the 1st-5th centuries.

5. Establish a Visible Fellowship of Churches

Even before full doctrinal integration, form an ecclesial alliance of apostolic faith communities committed to unity in worship, ethics, and evangelization.

VII. Anticipated Objections and Responses

***Objection:** “Unity compromises doctrine.”*

***Response:** True unity does not forsake truth; it demands fidelity to the apostolic tradition. The goal is not ecumenical dilution but doctrinal convergence under historic orthodoxy.*

***Objection:** “It’s impossible-too many differences.”*

***Response:** With man, yes. But not with God. If we believe Christ is risen, we must also believe His prayer for unity can be fulfilled.*

***Objection:** “We don’t need visible unity-just spiritual unity.”*

***Response:** The Church is not invisible. It is incarnational-like Christ Himself. A divided Church cannot fulfill its incarnational mission.*

VIII. Call to Action

Let this report serve as a preliminary appeal-a trumpet sounding across every denomination, from cathedrals to storefronts, from bishops to missionaries, from seminary halls to underground churches.

We must return:

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To one faith.

To one altar

To one Body.

To the one Shepherd

Let us be courageous. Let us be humble. Let us begin.

✠. Final Exhortation

As persecution intensifies, as confusion spreads, and as darkness grows, the light of Christ must shine-not in fractured glimmers, but in the blazing unity of the apostolic Church. The world is watching. Our children are watching. Heaven is watching.

Let us make history-not through revolution, but through reconciliation.

“That they may be one...” (John 17:21)

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Young

Grace and peace be multiplied to you, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I write to you with a heavy heart and a sincere cry for the unity of the Body of Christ. In the face of increasing cultural decay, moral confusion, and the mounting persecution of the faithful, I beseech you, as fellow shepherds of God's flock, to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd calling His people to unity in Him.

Jesus Christ, our Lord, commanded us to be one, even as He and the Father are one (John 17:20-23). The Apostle Paul exhorted us to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3). And yet, despite these clear instructions, the Church remains fragmented-separated by divisions, misunderstandings, and prideful distinctions that prevent us from fully manifesting the Kingdom of God on earth.

In this time of trial and tribulation, we can no longer afford the luxury of division. The world watches us, and our fractured witness to the Gospel is a stumbling block to many. How can we preach reconciliation in Christ if we are not reconciled to one another?

In light of this, I have attached a report that details the theological, historical, and cultural urgency of uniting the Church under one apostolic body. This proposal is not a call for compromise or syncretism, but a call to return to the fullness of the apostolic faith that has been handed down to us from the early Church. It is a call for reconciliation, healing, and a united witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

I urge you, dear brothers and sisters, to prayerfully consider the contents of this report. May the Holy Spirit guide our hearts and minds as we seek the restoration of the unity for which Christ prayed.

Let us unite, for the sake of the world, for the sake of our children, and for the sake of the Gospel.

Letter to the Shepherds of the Church

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To the Ministers, Elders, Bishops, and Patriarchs of the People of God,

With humility and holy urgency, we address you as fellow laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. We write not with condemnation, but with grief—a grief born from the visible fractures within the Body of Christ. Our shared faith is being tried by fire in these final days, and yet, instead of standing united under one banner, the Church has scattered into sects, denominations, and opposing doctrines, each defending their own orthodoxy while the world drifts further from the truth.

Did not our Lord Jesus Christ preach the Sermon on the Mount, calling us to be salt and light, meek and merciful, pure in heart and peacemakers? How then can we preach this gospel while refusing to live in peace with one another? We are convicted by His words: “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste” (Matthew 12:25).

This letter precedes a full proposal—a cry from within the fold—for the reunification of the Church under one apostolic mission. We appeal to the conscience of every leader in the Body of Christ: Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Evangelical, and beyond. The age of isolated kingdoms must end. The world is watching. The persecutors are advancing. The time is now.

Proposal for Ecclesial Unity: “That They May All Be One”

1. Theological Foundation

Christ is One. His Gospel is One. His Church must be One. The division among Christians, while often born of historical trauma and doctrinal disagreements, cannot be excused forever in light of Scripture:

- *John 17:21 - "That they may all be one... so that the world may believe."*
- *1 Corinthians 1:10 - "Let there be no divisions among you."*
- *Ephesians 4:4-6 - "There is one body and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism."*

From the apostolic age, unity was not optional—it was a mark of the Church. The early Church Fathers, including Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus, and Cyprian of Carthage, emphasized communion with the bishop, apostolic succession, and doctrinal unity as signs of faithfulness to Christ. Yet today, thousands of denominational splinters preach conflicting gospels while claiming the same Spirit. This cannot be sustained.

2. Historical Context

The Church's great schisms—from 1054 (East–West) to 1517 (Reformation)—each came with legitimate grievances. However, each also created wounds that have yet to be healed. The Reformation, while exposing corruption, also left behind a broken landscape where individualism, relativism, and doctrinal confusion became common.

Protestant denominations number over 45,000 worldwide—a staggering image of disunity. Meanwhile, the Orthodox Church remains separated from Rome, and intra-Orthodox tensions persist between national jurisdictions. Even within Catholicism, confusion and conflicting interpretations plague the faithful.

Yet, history offers hope: Councils were once held to resolve major disputes—Nicaea, Chalcedon, Trent. If councils resolved doctrinal war then, why can they not do so now?

3. The Cultural and Societal Crisis

We face a global culture increasingly hostile to Christianity:

- *Marriage redefined*

- *Children confused in identity*
- *Religious liberty threatened*
- *Churches burned or abandoned*
- *Apostasy rising*
- *Artificial intelligence, surveillance, and war looming*

In the face of this darkness, the Church should be the light. Yet how can we shine if our lampstands are scattered?

The secular world sees a fractured Church and deems us irrelevant. Our divisions give rise to skepticism, ridicule, and silence in the face of moral collapse. A unified Church would speak with one voice on justice, family, truth, and salvation.

4. The Cost of Division

Division costs more than just doctrinal coherence. It:

- *Weakens evangelization*
- *Breeds pride, not humility*
- *Delays Christ's mission*
- *Diminishes credibility*
- *Enables persecution without unified defense*

Historically, empires feared a united Church. Today, enemies rejoice in our chaos. To survive the coming trials, we must be bound together as the early Church was—devoted to the apostles' teaching, breaking bread in unity, and holding all in common (Acts 2:42-47).

Pathway to Unity: A Practical Proposal

1. Convening a Pan-Christian Synod (Council)

An international Council must be convened including bishops and theologians from:

- *The Roman Catholic Church*
- *The Eastern Orthodox Churches*
- *Major Protestant and Evangelical denominations*
- *Messianic and Eastern Christian communities*

This Council would:

- *Affirm the Nicene Creed and apostolic tradition*
- *Discuss central doctrines and explore convergences*
- *Draft a unified statement of faith and mission*
- *Establish a “Council of Unity” for ongoing coordination*

2. The Apostolic Accord

A proposed unifying charter: The Apostolic Accord-recognizing the shared foundations of the Church:

- *One Triune God*
- *One Incarnate Lord: Jesus Christ*
- *One Gospel for salvation*
- *One Baptism for the forgiveness of sins*
- *One global mission to make disciples of all nations*

Without requiring identical governance or liturgy, this accord allows for a common Eucharistic fellowship and public witness.

3. Rebuilding Trust Between Traditions

Efforts must be made to:

- *Apologize for historic sins (e.g., Inquisitions, excommunications)*
- *Restore mutual respect for saints and Church Fathers*
- *Share resources and clergy training*
- *Encourage ecumenical Bible studies, catechesis, and inter-church ministries*

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- *Celebrate joint liturgical services during Christian feasts*

The Urgency of This Hour

This call is not theoretical. The window is closing. Faith is fading. The next generation is growing up with no knowledge of the Gospel, or worse, associating Christianity with hypocrisy and division. A united Church, rooted in truth and holiness, would shake the foundations of this world. We must remember: We do not serve the spirit of this age. We serve the Risen Lord. The Bride of Christ must be restored to radiant beauty-not fragmented, but whole.

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Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

You prayed that we might all be one.

Look now upon the broken state of Your Body.

Have mercy on us for every prideful word, every judgment, every hardened heart.

Forgive us, O Lord, and pour out Your Spirit of unity upon Your Church once again.

Make us One Church, One Heart, One Body.

Let the world see Your love made manifest in us.

And let all division be healed under Your Kingship,

until You return in glory.

Amen.

Prepared in the Name of Jesus Christ,

Our Lord and Redeemer,

By The Servant In The Wilderness,

Seth Winslow Young

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