

# OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY

A Symposium on the Seventeenth  
Chapter of John

BY  
REPRESENTATIVE WRITERS

Compiled by the Publisher

*Rowe, F. L.*

---

F. L. ROWE, Publisher  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
1918



Class .D X g

Book .AVT?7

Gopigftt'N

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIK

Our Saviors Prayer  
for Unity

A Symposium on the Seventeenth  
Chapter of John

BY

REPRESENTATIVE WRITERS

Compiled by the Publisher

.-wo, ^ £ ,

F. L. ROWE, Publisher

Cincinnati, Ohio

1918

2\*\*

Copyright, 1918

By F. L. Rowe

APR 10 1918

W

©CL.A4 94 538

/

vt^-0

INDEX

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By Willis H. Allen 7

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By Monroe M. Bell 11

The Savior's Prayer for Unity. By Joshua Brown 14

The Redeemer's Prayer for His People. By W. J. Brown. 18

Unity. By J. E. Cain 23

Unity. By S. R. Cassius 28

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By J. A. Craighead 32

The Lord's Prayer for Unity. By J. H. Curry 36

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By W. H. Devore 42

The Union of God's People — John 17. By Tice Elkins 48

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By Ben J. Elston 53

The Savior's Prayer for Unity. By H. M. Evans 58

A Call to Unity. By E. N. Glenn 61

The Oneness of Christian Believers. By Flavil Hall 65

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By W. H. L. Hamilton. 68

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By W. N. Harkins 72

Christ's Prayer for Unity. By C. E. Holt 77

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By Isaac C. Hoskins 82

Unity. By Thaddeus S. Hutson 86

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By Lee Jackson 91

In the Shadow of the Cross. By D. C. Janes 96

Unity. By L. E. Johnston 101

The Savior's Prayer for Unity. By E. L. Jorgenson 106

Unity — Oneness. By T. H. Kirkman 111

Christ's Prayer for Unity. By George A. Klingman 115

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By John A. Klingman-- 121

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By J. M. McCaleb 125

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By N. C. McDougale 130

4 our savior's prayer for unity

The Unity of the Church yet Future and Glorious. By

Walter McMurry 133

The Lord's Prayer for Unity. By C. C. Merritt 138

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By C. D. Moore 144

Our Lord's Prayer for Unity. By Ira C. Moore 148

How Should We Pray? By J. C. Mosely 154

Unity. By J. A. Perry 158

The Savior's Prayer for Union. By C. Petty 162

Unity in Christ. By John T. Poe -- 164

Our Lord's Prayer for Unity. By Geo. M. Rane 169

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By W. L. Reeves 172

Christian Unity — Its Importance, Nature and Basis. By

C. R. Rice 179

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By E. G. Rockliff 185

Union. By T. Short - 189

Our Savior's Prayer for Unity. By H. C. Shoulders 193

Unity of the Spirit. By J. F. Tomson 198

The Lord's Prayer. By George W. Varner 205

Shades of Infidelity Not a Basis for Unity. By J. J.

Vanhoutin 210

Union of God's People. By L. S. White 217

Christian Unity. By C E. Wooldridge 223

"Thou in Me and I in Thee." By F. L. Rowe 230

## INTRODUCTION.

Probably no section of scripture has given religious people more occasion for serious thought than the prayer of our Savior in behalf of his apostles, and those that were to believe on Him through them. It was an easy matter for the Savior to keep them rallied about him, listening to his every word, following his every suggestion, comforted by his words of warning and sympathy, while he was with them; but the Savior realized that they were going to be put to a severe test after he should take his departure. Not that he had not taught them all things ; not that his example had not been always perfect ; not that his doctrine had not been firmly ingrafted into their hearts and lives, but because he realized that when he would leave them, "grievous wolves would enter, scattering the flock. " So far as the record shows, the apostles were all faithful throughout their lives, having been a part of all that Christ began to do and teach; and, having received a special endowment of the Spirit, it became quite second nature for them to "declare the things they had both seen and heard."

The danger would come when others, to whom the words would be committed, would prove false, and, "having itching ears, would lead off many" who were not satisfied with the simple faith of the Master and His chosen ones. Paul warned Timothy that there would



be those who would try to make shipwreck of the faith of some. Even within a few days of the time Christ had ascended to the Father, the little church in Jerusalem was put to a severe test, proving that in the absence of the Master there were some there who did not grasp the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom. The lack of perception and subsequent fall of Ananias and Saphira clearly showed that some of them did not comprehend that the Holy Spirit, even though Christ was not present, could discern the thoughts and intents of their hearts,

#### 6 our savior's prayer for unity

and that God, through the apostles, could detect their lie and smight them dead with the words yet warm on their lips. Evidently some of them thought, as some do now, that the Church was just an association of people for social purposes ; but the warning thus early given to the first Church has served to safeguard the Church through all the centuries after against those who would profane its holy character and discredit the Father's connection with it.

There was no variation between Christ and the Father: they were absolutely identical in thought and in purpose. Christ could not have been the son of God had his mind or purpose been the least shade different from the mind and purpose of God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and whatever Christ spoke were the words that the Father would have spoken had he been here. One was the exact counterpart of the other, but Christ was the visible part. To know the Son

was to know the Father; to hear the Son was to hear the Father ; to obey the Son was to obey the Father with the promise of the Spirit. The oneness of the Father, Son and Spirit is hard for some to understand. How could two or three separate bodies be one and the same ? It is not necessary for us to understand this from a physical sense, enough to know that Christ has said so. Recognizing, therefore, this three in one, we can then ask the question, What is real Christian union? That is an interesting question with a more interesting answer. Christian union is absolutely a condition of the heart and mind. It is not outward, it is inward. In the apostolic Church there were no sects ; therefore, the thought of unity in the mind of Christ was not of the scattered sectarian bodies, or branches as we hear them called, but of his immediate followers who were members of the one and only church that existed at that time. In the chapters following the readers will be uplifted by the thoughts of devout brethren on this deep spiritual theme. F. L. R.

#### OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Willis H. Allen.

To the writer's mind there is nothing that should be so close to the heart of a faithful follower of the Lord than our Savior's prayer for the unity of His people, made during the last hours of His eventful life. On the night before His cruel death, with His mission on the earth almost completed, having carefully taught and drilled the chosen twelve for the great work soon to be committed to them, with the tenderest of affection for

them and of love for the whole world, Jesus spent some time in very earnest prayer to the Father; first, for His chosen apostles, and second, for all of His disciples in succeeding generations, even for "them also that believe on me through their (the apostles') word." That prayer, therefore, was for you and me. And the great burden of His petition was "that they may all be one . . . that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (See John 17:21.) And in these words, Jesus clearly indicates the purpose of that prayer, and the great need of unity among His people — "that the world may believe"

The work of evangelizing the world has been put into the hands of the church, and by the church it must be done. But it must be pursued in God's own way. In the light of present-day conditions as given to us by men who have investigated these conditions, and know, therefore, what they are, it seems to us that we are not progressing fast in carrying out this assignment of our work of saving men. And we are sometimes made to ask the cause. Without attempting to name the various causes that may be partly responsible for this apparent slow progress in missionary work, may we not say that the chief cause is that we have not regarded our Savior's

## 8 OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY

prayer for unity as serious enough to direct our activities in that direction? How was the gospel preached throughout the known world during the apostolic age, and so many men were made believers? Why is it so

much more difficult now to get men to believe in the Son of God than it was then? Is it answered that the world is larger now than it was then? But, is there not the same proportionate increase in the number of workers in the field? They preached that there is one God; so do we. They taught that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; so do we. But they went to different cities, towns and villages in different parts of the world, going as a united people, and preaching one doctrine; today, men go as representatives of so many different sects, preaching as many different doctrines, each with his own distinguishing creed, etc. Is it much wonder, then, that some tell us they are bewildered? One says, "I don't know what to do"; another, "I don't know which church is right"; and another, "I am so bewildered by the conflicting doctrines in the religious world that I shall take chances by staying out." Dear reader, would such statements as these be made if we were all "one," even as Jesus and the Father are one — yea, would it be possible for such conditions as these to exist if we were all speaking the same things? In the days of the apostles, when the last apostle died, and for some time afterward, there was one church — one in name, one in faith, one in doctrine, and one in practice. Why should it not be so now? Then there would be no grounds for bewilderment in the minds of the people. Paul says, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." (Eph. 4:4-6.) Thus, we see the great unity of things pertaining to the body of Christ. Men should as reasonably expect to find many Lords as many churches, or bodies. When at one time the Corinthian church was being ruptured

p©ss9jdx3 sip Xq sapj-ed pun suoipbj o;ui papiAip pun

## OUR SAVIOR S PRAYER FOR UNITY ^

preferences of some for certain men, Paul promptly re-proved them and corrected the evil. "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgmnt." (1 Cor. 1:10; read also 1 Cor. 1 : 1 1 - 1 3 . ) Divisions among the Lord's people are no more pleasing to the heavenly Father now than in the days of Paul and the Corinthian church.

But, how may we become united? Who can devise a plan of unity that would be so satisfactory to the world that all of the different religious sects and denominations would upon that plan come together in one great body? Ah, there we must not make a mistake ! No mortal can devise such a plan ; the plan is divine. And in that plan may be included the following propositions :

1. Nothing is essential to the conversion of the world but the union and co-operation of Christians.
2. Nothing is essential to the union of Christians but the inspired scriptures.

On the first proposition, let us note again the words of Jesus : "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one ; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us : that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:20-21.) And

Paul says : "For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." (Rom. 12:4-5, R. V.; also, read very carefully in this connection, 1 Cor. 12:12-27.) On the second proposition, we note Paul's words to Timothy: "Every scripture, inspired of God, is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness : that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16, R. V.) What need have we of anything further? All may be perfect and complete by the simple

#### 10 our savior's prayer for unity

word of God. Let it be understood that we are not after a unification of the sects of the world, but our purpose should be to get men and women everywhere to take God's word as their only guide, to become and be just what it tells them to be, and to teach and practice just the things revealed therein, subscribing to no creed, written or unwritten, of men. Brother Alexander Campbell was not far wrong when he said that no human creed can be found that has not made a division for every generation of its existence. And, brethren, may I say just here that we make a sect of ourselves when we make use of such expressions as "we as a people," "our plea," "our doctrine," etc. We have no plea of our own, no doctrine of ours; but let us ever strive to present the doctrine of the Lord plainly and simply to the world, praying that the Lord may hasten that glorious day when we may all be one.

## OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Monroe M. Bell.

Question No. 1 : Has Christ's prayer for unity been answered? (John 17.) Yes, as to the apostles. (See verse 6.) And they have kept thy word. (Verse 7.) For Jesus had given them God's words, which God had given him; and they had received them. (See verse 8.) And none were lost but Judas, who had to fulfill the scriptures. (Verse 12.) God's word had made them a unit as to oneness ; and Jesus had given them the word, and it has the power to make them one faith. (See John 1 :1.) "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was God" ; therefore, we conclude as Jesus had given them of God's words that they were as one through the truth of God's words, being begotten by the words of God's truths. (See John 1:13, 14.) And now born of God's words were one mind; thy words are truth and everlasting. (See John 1:17.) They were his witnesses given by God himself, and were filled with words of truth sent from God ; and were one and the same ; all of the same faith, and knew Jesus was the Son of God, as Peter had heard God speak from the clouds and confess him (Matt. 3:17) ; and on the Mount of Transfiguration, on the mount. (See Mark 9 :7 and 2 Pet. 1 :18.) Peter confesses to the brethren having heard God confess his son. It came in words of truth from God, and it is impossible for God to lie; so Jesus and God are the same in spirit and truth. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," Jesus says. All are one who keep Jesus' words, and he says, "If you love me you will keep my words ; ye shall know the truth, and the

truth shall make you free."

Has that prayer been answered to Question No. 2?

Yes, as follows: In so far as they hear and keep God's

12 our savior's prayer for unity

word in faith and obedience to Christ. For all who truly believe him are willing to confess his name, and to obey his word as told by the Holy Spirit through Peter and the rest of the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. The first offer of remission of sins to all the world of mankind if they want their sins remitted; that is God's offer to the world, and all who refuse are to be condemned. (See Mark 16 :16.) So Christ made it possible to save all believers through his words to all people, as his words are life and truth and spirit; and faith comes by the hearing of God's words. (See Rom. 10:17.) On the Day of Pentecost, God sent his Holy Spirit to the world and confirmed his Son's words in the mouths of Jesus' witnesses, who had been fully qualified by the words of God and Christ, and then by the Holy Spirit was confirmed to all mankind throughout the world for the remission of their sins ; and all who want forgiveness can obtain it in the same way ; not by prayer, or any other way, but as in Acts 2 :38 ; and the gift of God to the world is sure, and life eternal is offered in obedience to God's words as spoken on Pentecost by the apostles as they spoke just as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4.) Those who gladly received his words were baptized and were added to the church. (Acts 2:47.) And the Lord added three thousand that day, and they were all agreed in



fellowship kept by the word of God, and had more love for God and all men than the money of earth; sold their possessions of earth and gave to those who had need ; and when the Gentiles were added at Antioch, they were called after the name of Christ as Isaiah had said, when the Gentiles have seen my glory, etc. ; and Paul was sent, for Barnabas went after him, and Jesus told Ananias that he should bear his name to the Gentiles ; and Paul stayed with them a whole year, and the Lord added many people to Christ's church, as all power had been given into his hands. (See Matt. 28 :18.) The Holy Spirit set the new offer in operation then.

To Question No. 3 (i. e.), will it be answered? We

our savior's prayer for unity 13

can't tell, except as God tells ; but we think it certainly will, as Christ has been given all power in heaven and on earth. (See John 14:6.) No man cometh to the Father but by me. Verse 7 says the apostles had seen the Father in seeing Jesus ; verse 9, have I been so long with you and yet you have not known me ? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. See verse 10 : I am in the Father, and the Father in me. See verse 13 : They were to pray in Christ's name and Jesus will give it ; verses 14, 15 and 16, the Comforter which is to abide with you forever, which is the spirit of truth, verse 17. But the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, verse 26; and strengthen their memory, as we are to hear Christ's name ; and be Christians and follow Christ by words of truth. We are to pray in his name (see John 16:16) ; but the world

seems to hate the very name Christian. Yet it is the only name offered to the world of mankind. (See Acts 4:12.) The world must be educated by the word of God till all love the name of Christ; as the babies are all in the same faith, so all could be taught God's words, and all be in unison or oneness ; as the three thousand on Pentecost were added to the church (Acts 2:47), and shortly thereafter five thousand, and they all went everywhere preaching the Word of God as they had heard it; and the world soon had the gospel ; but a lot of the Jewish Christians thought they needed to keep the old Mosaic law, and be circumcised, to which the Holy Ghost replied, "not so." (See Acts 15 :8, 9.) But faith comes by learning God's word, and Jesus says, if ye love me ye will keep my words. But the old law was taken forever out of the way. (See Chap. 15:10.) Jesus had said he did not put a new patch on an old garment ; it was moved out to make room for the new and living way to life eternal through Christ, and those who are not willing to keep God's words are deceiving themselves, and are condemned already, and hate God's words and true believers.

#### THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Joshua Brow^.

That they may all be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 17:21.)

The unity that the Master prayed for is the same in quality and kind as exists with the Father and Son, as

thou, Father, art in me and I in thee.

1. They were one in purpose to redeem man from the thralldom and degradation of sin to the highway of holiness and righteousness, which leads to deathless glory and immortality.

2. They are one in love for sinful man, which prompted the Father to give to the world his only begotten and well-beloved Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, and prompted the Son to leave the glory of heaven and come to this sin-cursed world and suffer all the indignities and ill-treatment heaped upon him by his enemies, and to shed his life's blood for the redemption of man.

3. They were one in devising and in the execution of the great plan of salvation. The Father, recognizing the fact that a full and adequate satisfaction must be made for man's transgression of the divine law, the Son recognized and concedes the same truth and heartily cooperates with the Father to accomplish this important part of man's redemption. Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. (Rom. 4:25.) Although he prayed that the bitter cup of suffering might pass from him, yet he said, "Not my will but thine be done." (Luke 22:42.) Here we find perfect unity with the Father and Son.

4. In all the provision for the salvation of man there is perfect unity with the Father and Son. The

## THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 15

Father did not promulgate one rule of faith and practice and the Son another and different one, as a criterion for man to guide him to present and eternal salvation, and then give man the choice to choose between the two, but they are one in the same great truths and facts of the gospel to be believed. One in the same requirements to be obeyed. One in the same promises to be enjoyed by man. The Father did not establish a church different from the church of Christ, and the Son another different from the one established by the Father. There is one body (Eph. 4:4), and Christ is the head of the body, the church. (Col. 1:18.) There is perfect unity with the Father and Son in everything that pertains to the salvation of man. Having seen the unity for which Christ prayed is the same in kind and quality as that which exists with the Father and Son, the question may arise, can this state of unity be attained by those who believe in him by the word preached by the apostles? It seems that most people would answer this question in the negative if we are allowed to judge from their teaching and practice. What say you, courteous reader, to this question? Do you think that the Master would have prayed for something that he knew could not be answered? But, says one, how can this state of unity be attained? We answer, by endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3), or by cultivation of the spirit of unity. "The spirit of unity is the spirit of Christ, without which we are none of his." (Rom. 8:9.)

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:5.) If the above injunction was heeded

by all who profess to believe in Christ, there would be no division among them, but would be perfectly joined together in the same mind and same judgment, all speaking the same thing. For instance, if Mr. A. has the mind of Christ, does this not constitute unity and make him one with Christ, and if Mr. B. is in possession of the same priceless boon, the mind or spirit of Christ, would

#### 16 our savior's prayer for unity

this not bring him in unity with Christ and Mr. A.?

There is not a proposition in mathematics plainer or capable of fuller demonstration than this ; as certain as that two and two are four, so sure would the process and condition which brings Mr. A. and Mr. B. in unity with Christ, and with each other, bring all true and confiding believers in Christ in unity with him and with each other.

When we take a view of the mind of Christ as seen in his life, of which the first four books of the New Testament is a partial record, we there see the most beautiful traits or characteristics of true righteousness, meekness, humility, entire submission to the will of the Father; my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work (John 4:34), said he.

If a man thinks more highly of himself than he ought to think, and is puffed up with pride and self-sufficiency, he lacks that much of the mind of Christ. For, although he did not think it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of man.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death; even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:6-8.) The lack of this quality of the mind of Christ, that of humility, and the possession of the opposite quality of too much self-esteem and pride, coupled with the other evil propensities and desires, such as the love of money and self-aggrandizement, it is but natural to cultivate hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, and such like.

A man devoid of the spirit (disposition) of Christ, and being lifted up with pride and an unholy ambition to leadership, combined with a little ability and enthusiasm, is capable of doing great evil in drawing away disciples after him and causing division among the people of the Lord, and if he has some unscriptural hobby, there are those who are willing dupes and are ever ready to help to keep the hobby in good condition, and well groomed, and, if dismounted at any time, to assist in re-

## THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 17

mounting, though this last service is seldom needed in some cases.

If we who denounce so earnestly sectarian division and plead for the unity of all God's people on the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, let us lay aside our unscriptural hobbies and bickerings and curb our unholy ambitions for leadership and inordinate desire for worldly gain and power, and instead cultivate the spirit (disposition) of

Christ, by cultivating the traits and characteristics of his mind; humility, meekness, forbearance, love, entire submission to the will of the Lord, taking Christ as our only perfect exemplar and humbly following in his steps, and imbibing his spirit; and then our plea would have weight in the world, and no doubt we would see answered to some degree at least the prayer of the Lord for the unity of all true believers in him.

To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory, majesty, dominion and power forever. Amen.

#### THE REDEEMER'S PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE.

By W. J. Brown.

"Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they may also be in us, that the world may believe that Thou didst send me."

It is certainly a great privilege for one engaged in the struggle for existence and the fight for eternal life, to have a dear friend to intercede for his success in threading his way through the labyrinths that shroud the entrance upon the threshold of eternal life ! When far away from home and loved ones, doing my best to preach the gospel in a way that may win the people to Christ amidst discouragements, my thoughts have turned back to the one place where I have been remembered and found strength and comfort. But how inestimable the privilege of having the Savior of the world interceding for you !

The Son of God praying for me! The purpose of that prayer includes all of every age who believe in the Son of God through the gospel ; it is for the salvation of the people and the glory of the Father. The Savior offered no meaningless petitions to his Father on such occasions in behalf of the lost ; he has no disposition to trifle with the spiritual interest of those for whom he suffered and died. He was not playing the role of an actor ; he was in earnest.

These petitions set forth a strong desire, a purpose, and a result. God is not willing that any should be lost. Neither is the Savior. He was possessed with a burning desire for the salvation of the lost. God so loved the world that he gave his Son to save it ; but it was doubtless because the Son first determined to give himself that the Father consented to make the surrender of his own Son. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,

#### THE REDEEMER'S PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE 19

even so must the Son of man be lifted up" to save the world. The necessity was not owing to any command of the Father, but was owing to needs and love. Jesus looks forward to the results to be attained through his sacrifice. A result so glorious and far-reaching, the result for which the Son of God was praying the Father, was to be brought about by his people on certain conditions. The appeal is to the Father of all our mercies, the all-good and all-powerful God, that certain results may be attained; it comes from the Son of God, the suffering and triumphant Savior, the one who has all authority invested in him. Shall we give heed to that prayer ? The



prayer is for all that believe on Him through their word; every creature, everywhere, in all the world, to the end of the world and the dawn of eternity!

From no source ever came a more important or urgent appeal. Our Savior, the Son of God, desires, prays, labors, dies, rises from the grave, ascends, that his people might be one : and that the world may believe and be saved !

No result could be greater nor more desirable. It appears to be the end for which the Son of God died and rose again. "That they may believe that Thou didst send me." Since the Son of man died that men might believe in him, and prayed that they might be one that the world might believe the truth that saves from sin, how important that Christians "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace !" Faith in Jesus and his mission to the world certainly depends in great measure upon it.

If this unity and co-operation of the people of God ever becomes a matter of fact, how glorious the success of the gospel ! But if it should fail, as it appears to have done since the "fathers fell asleep," the church falls short of the highest mission ever committed to mortal man. In the event of success, the most glorious and far-reaching in results ; as a failure, the most direful and disastrous !

20 our savior's prayer for unity

One has said, "God will not convert the world independent of the means he has appointed and without regard to the prayer of his Son." That is the condition, and the world will never believe in the sense intended without the answer to his prayer. We should contend as earnestly and strive as faithfully to attain those conditions as we strive for the end itself. For the Lord commands to "strive to enter by the narrow door" which is the means of entering heaven — the end.

The prayer implies the practicability and possibility of a union so perfect that the unbelieving will be convinced of His mission to the world. If, as many seem to think and some say, such unity is neither possible nor practical, the Savior had never commanded nor prayed for it. There have been many plans suggested and ways tried to bring about the union of the people of God, but all human plans must fail. No human being, however good and wise, shall have the honor of devising the plan. It would be to the advantage of the good cause we serve, and wisdom on our part, to remember this. We have no grounds for believing that God will convert the world without answering the prayer of his Son. And it seems that the prayer will be answered through a believing church. "Nothing is essential," says a writer upon this subject, "to the conversion of the world but the union and co-operation of Christians. Nothing is essential to the union and co-operation of Christians but the teaching of Christ and the apostles. Truth alone will not unite them, nor union alone will not suffice to convince the world. Hence, the word of God alone will not effect the union desired if approached in a wrong spirit. Let the Bible be substituted for human creeds, facts for definitions, things for words, faith for speculation, unity

of faith for unity of opinion, the positive commands of God for the traditions of men, piety for ceremony, love of man for love of party, practice for profession, and the work is done."

Some of us have forgotten, perhaps, that this prayer

## THE REDEEMER'S PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE 21

was once answered in part. The church of Jerusalem was of "one soul and one heart; not one said the things which he possessed were his own, but they had all things common." How did they attain that? It was by believing the word of God that was preached to them and by obeying it. The same word believed, and obeyed, with the same disposition, will produce the same results. Similar causes under similar conditions produce similar results. If that is not true of the gospel, who can tell what will bring about the desired result? Suppose a number of people now, as in the days of the apostles, believe and obey as the people did on the day of Pentecost. Would they not be just what the gospel made them? If not, the gospel does not make believers and unite them in one body. If it did make them "one" then, will it not do the same now? Assuming that it will, suppose we continue to preach as they did, and the people believe and obey as of old, what will they be and to what church do they belong? When we preach as they did and call upon the people to "save themselves from this wicked generation," are we asking them to leave their church and "join our church?" Who would think so? If that is not the right thing to do, who will tell us how to preach, and what the people must

do? It would be wrong to tell the people to leave their "denomination and join our denomination" unless ours is identical with the church of the New Testament.

In the light of New Testament denunciation of sects and parties, we are not justified in building up a separate institution unless it teaches truth that can be found nowhere else. And these truths must be fundamental and essential to the common end — the oneness of believers and the salvation of the world. Do you know of a religious body that thus measures up to the New Testament requirement of a church? The New Testament church requires the sinner to forsake all wrong ways and accept all that the Lord requires; it demands that religious people give all that is peculiar to themselves that stand in the way of the unity of God's people, and accept all

## 22 our savior's prayer for unity

that is common to the people of God and essential to the salvation of the world. Does not God demand that his people be one? Is it not such a union of inward principle that convicts unbelievers by visible means? Does not the Lord engage human instrumentality in preaching the gospel and convincing unbelievers? He certainly does all these things. What position should one occupy in preaching the gospel to be clear of the charge that might be brought, "You are asking the people to leave their church and join yours?" Why, he should belong to the church of the New Testament, of course. Where would you expect one to stand when pleading for the people to answer the Lord's prayer? He would be

both inconsistent and insincere if he were to belong to one church and tell the people to go to another.

But listen to this : "The glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them, that they may be one even as we are one/" That glory seems to be a part of the process. What was it? It must be the glory of saving the lost and restoring the souls of men, marred by sin, to the divine image in which they were created. Christ commits this glory to us by putting the means of salvation into our hands. May we preach that oneness, pray for it, and put ourselves in a position consistent with our labors and prayers.

UNITY.

By J. E. Cain.

Jesus' mission to the world was to save the world ; to place the lost in such an attitude toward God that they might hear God's voice, learn his will, and become obedient to his divine law ; voluntarily come to God through obedience to Christ, that they might become "heirs to our eternal inheritance." The Savior was with the Father in glory before the creation of the world. His prayer to the Father when he had completed his work upon the earth stands thus recorded : "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5.)

And Paul, writing to the Colossians, says : "All things have been created through him and unto him: and he is before all things and in him all things consist." (Col.

1 :17.) This reveals unity of purpose, though not unity in person. The apostle has placed this upon record concerning the Father and the Son : "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds."  
... (Heb. 1:1-2.)

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." He does this by his Son as the agent. The Savior "proceeded from" the Father. The Father "sent" him. His words were not his, but "the words of Him who sent him." (See John 14:24.) His works were the works of the Father. (John 14:10.) He came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father. (John 5 :30.) From the time his Father sent him, all that Jesus did was in obedience to the Father. Being in the form of God and counting it not robbery — a prize to be grasped — to

#### 24 our savior's prayer for unity

be equal with God, he took upon himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of man ... he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Read Phil. 2:6-8.)

All this was voluntary upon the part of the Son. His will was lost in the will of the Father (and I may add here that our will must be lost in the will of the Savior if we would meet the divine approbation). It is because of this unity between the Father and the Son

that God highly exalted him and gave unto him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11.)

From all this evidence — though not a tithe of that submitted — it is evident that the oneness of God and Christ is not unity of person, but unity in will and purpose — determination.

It is into this unity God and Christ would bring us — must bring us — to save us, for neither against God's will nor our own will can we be saved. Hence, the prayer of Jesus. (John 17:21.) "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." This, and nothing less than this, is the "union" — the unity for which Jesus prayed — oneness in Christ: oneness of the saved, and that in the name of Christ alone is salvation. Peter emphasizes in his defense before the "rulers" in these words : "And in none other is their salvation : for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.) In Christ denotes both state and relationship — not degrees in moral quality. There are degrees in moral quality — good, better, best, or bad, worse, worst; but not so in relationship. A man is either in Christ or he is out of Christ — either in the family of the redeemed or not in it. In Christ in the body, in the "kingdom," in the "house," in the "temple," in the

## UNITY 25

"church," etc., declare the same state and relationship. In Christ a man is a new creature, the old things have passed away; behold they are become new. (2 Cor. 5: 17.) In Christ we have "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins." (Col. 1:13, 14.) We can not, by our moral goodness, reach heaven, nor can we remit one sin. And it is our sins that separate us from our God.

The spirit of promise by which we are sealed is in Christ. (Eph. 1 :13, 14.) And "in Christ Jesus we are created for good works which God before prepared that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10.) And we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. (Eph. 1 :3.)

And above all, especially to the travel-worn pilgrim, this divine assurance comes to the soul laden with exceeding joy: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; for their works follow with them." (Rev. 14:13.)

These scriptures settle forever in the mind of the informed the certainty that pardon of sins, divine aid in the work of the Lord, every spiritual blessing, the great and precious promises revealed by the Holy Spirit, peace in life and joy in death, are in Christ — in the house of the Lord, the "body of Christ," the "temple of God," the "church of the living God," the "one body" — the ecclesia — the called-out, called from sin into the holy and divine service of God.



These are the "children," the "sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty," and these, I repeat, and none others, whom as a "royal priesthood," a "holy nature," a "people for God's own possession" (1 Pet. 2:9), of whom heaven makes the demand to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." And it is to these, and these alone, that the apostle submits the seven elements of divine unity. "There is one body, and one spirit; even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who

26 our savior's prayer for unity

is over all, and through all, and in all." (Eph. 4:4-6.)

Jesus, in his memorable prayer, offered these petitions : (1) For himself, that God, whom he had glorified on the earth, would now glorify him with God's self, with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; (2) for the apostles that the Father had given him, he prayed thus : "Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are." (3) for these, also, "that believe on me through their" — the apostles' — word "that they may all be one, even as thou art, Father, in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou didst send me."

Jesus rejoices in the unity existing between his Father and himself, and prays that his believing children shall enjoy like unity — unity in will and purpose. It is in harmony with this prayer that the Father inspires Paul

to thus admonish the saints : "Now I beseech you, brethren, through 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 perfected together in the same mind and the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.)

And this also: "If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, fulfill ye my joy that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind: doing nothing through faction, or through vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, each counting the other better than himself : not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." (Phil. 2:1-5.)

These two admonitions alone, if heeded, will keep peace within the borders of Zion. But "evil men shall arise." Yes, but none are prepared as are these, thus united, to "reject them."

In any event, the Lord's will is the Lord's will. This prayer of Jesus is not yet answered, but it will be answered. Upon this depends God's victory over Satan

## UNITY 27

and sin. And "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet." (1 Cor. 15:25.)

UNITY.

By S. R. Cassius.

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them thou hast given me; for they are mine." (John 17:9.)

Unity can not be effected by two or more persons or things unless there is a perfect and complete agreement in manners, habits, thoughts, conversation, mind and opinion ; if it is people, all the above principles must form one complete whole ; or if it is anything else, the parts must join so as to make one complete whole, or else the thing, or machine, is not only incomplete, but it will not work.

"I pray for them/" For who is it Jesus is praying?  
Not for the world. Why? Because the world was opposed to him and his teaching, and while he was living in the world, he was not of the world, and the world hated him ; but Jesus loved the world, even as God loved the world. (John 3:16.)

Jesus also loved God ; therefore, there being a perfect union between Christ and God, we find Jesus ready and willing to do the will of God, regardless of what the consequences might be to himself, for, "Lo, saith the scripture, I come in the volume of the book as it is written of me to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:7; Psalms 40:7.) Jesus himself said, "I can do nothing myself," and then he, in the fifth chapter of John, shows why the works that he does and the words that he speaks are not his works or words, but that it is God who does the work and that it is the word of God that he speaks. There was a perfect union between Christ and God; so great

was that union that one was inseparable from the other, for Christ and God were one; they were complete in each other.

## UNITY 29

i4 I pray not for the world. " God knew that the world could not be saved by prayer, and Christ, being the express image of God, knew that God knew it; and as Jesus was not seeking his own glory, but that God should be glorified in him, he did that which he knew his Father would be well pleased with. Jesus knew that, as far as prayer was concerned, God would hear only the prayer of faith, and that the only way to create faith in the world that would be unto salvation was to convince the world that God was not a man, but that God was a spirit, and that because God was not a "man," he must not be approached as a man. God, being a spirit, could only be approached in the spirit; not the kind of spirit that Jesus came into the world to condemn, which was a spirit of falsehood, murder, whoredom, and all manner of filthy communications that are the outgrowth of the spirit of the devil, which had marred the image of God in man's being, thereby bringing in sin and death upon the children of men, thus causing this earth, which God had made a place of life, peace and joy, to be a place of death, confusion and misery.

They that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth. Why? Because we know that God heareth not sinners ; but if any man be a worshiper of God and doeth his will, him he heareth. (John 9:31.) Jesus

prayed only to his Father for those whom the Father had given him out of the world, and the reason he gave for making this request of the Father was that he had taught them the same things that God had taught him; and so perfectly had he taught his disciples what the perfect will of God was, and so earnestly did they believe what Christ had taught them, that Jesus was not only ready, but he did pray that God, his Father, would make his disciples one in God, even as Christ and God were one in each other.

Ought we to pray for the world to be saved? I answer, No. Why? Because it is not consistent with the gospel plan of salvation. At no time and in no place in

### 30 our savior's prayer for unity

God's word has any part of the world ever been granted eternal life because someone prayed for it. God has promised salvation to such only as believed in him, and he made the faith of the individual not dependent on prayer, but upon hearing, believing and obeying what was taught to them by the preacher or teacher. The world in the days of Jesus could not believe in God without believing first in Jesus, because it was the works that Jesus was doing that was to convince them that no man could do the miracles that Jesus did, except that God was with him ; in other words, except there was a perfect union between Christ and God, God would not and could not be with him. Because Christ did not pray for the world, neither do we find that the apostles prayed for the world. I am sure it is not right for us, as God's

children, to ask our Father to do a thing that Christ, our example, and the apostles, that gave us the doctrine by which we became a complete body in God through Christ Jesus, his only begotten Son, would not ask of him.

I never hear a man praying to God to save the world but what I think that he is either ignorant of God's way of saving the world, or else he is trying to invent some other way that he thinks is a better way than God's, except the prayer is for something that we need, or to overcome something that is beyond our strength, or is offered in thanksgiving for a blessing that none but God could bestow. Any other kind of prayer is vain and presumptuous and shows that the prayer is out of harmony with God's word, and where there is no unity there can be no fellowship. What right has a Christian to ask God to save the world when God has placed the means of salvation in the hands of his servants? If I ask God to do what he has told me to do, I admit that I am not an obedient servant, and that my confidence in God is not perfect, and that I am not one in God through Christ Jesus, and, like Simon the sorcerer, I am in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. It is not that I am an enemy of God, but being ignorant of God's

### UNITY 31

righteousness, I go about to establish my own righteousness. In this way we do more harm to the cause of Christ than if we simply did nothing at all.

Christ wants all of us to be one in him, as he is one

in God. He wants us to abide in his word. He did not send us into the world to coax the world to do good ; he has sent us into the world to convince the world of its unrighteousness, and by our righteousness to compel the world to glorify our Father who is in heaven. It should not make any difference to us whether the world believes us or not. Our duty is to go and preach the gospel and baptize those who believe, and in so doing we will condemn the world and become heirs of righteousness, which is by faith, and as Enoch walked with God by faith, so shall we not only walk with him, but we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

#### OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By J. A. Craighead.

Only a few hours before Jesus died for the sins of the world, he prayed fervently for the unity, peace and harmony of his people. This prayer is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John.

I know of no more pathetic pleading in all the sacred writings than this prayer. I know of no theme that could engage the mind of Christian people today that is more important than the unity of God's people. He prayed the Father to keep them through his own name, that they might be one as he and his Father were one. The prayer includes us because he says : "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

This prayer is not for those only who were with him

then, but for all those who might believe on him and become his people through all coming time. He gives us his reason for asking that his people may be one. He says : "That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (Verses 21 to 23.)

Unity among the children of God is as good preaching as can be done to get the world to believe in Christ, and to realize the love of God and Christ for the human family. When people comprehend the love that God has for them, it causes them to love him, and God promises to save people in Christ, by faith which works by love. "We love him because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19.)

If we are true Christians, and love God, we love the brethren also. (1 John 4:21.)

When we love the brethren, we will strive to live in union and harmony with them. When we love the children of God, we are willing to sacrifice our opinions and

our savior's prayer for unity 33

personal preferences for their happiness and to be in union and peace with them. Christ prays for us to be one as he and his Father are one.

They were not one in person, but they were one in mind, design and purpose. This prayer is that we may be one in the same way. Indeed, I believe all true Christians are one at heart in desire and purpose. If we are



true Christians, we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16.) To have the mind of Christ is to have that spirit, purpose and design which was announced by the heavenly host at the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem, singing "Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-will Toward Men." True Christians are always humble; so humble that they always prefer the will of God to be done in preference to their own.

It is God's will that his people be happy in this life, and there is only one way to be happy here, and that is by living the Christian life, and being in peace, union and harmony with the brethren. David says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Ps. 133:1.) True Christians will always dwell together in unity, because James says: "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." (Jas. 3:16.)

There is no happiness, no pleasure, in strife and confusion. Paul says : "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation (calling), wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:1-3.) When we walk with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, striving together for the faith of the gospel, contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, we will always be ready to yield when no principle, but only our opinion, or personal preference, is involved.

Always courteous and kind, but steadfast and inv\*

### 34 our savior's prayer for unity

movable when and where truth, divine or sacred principles are involved. It is a privilege we have, pure and precious, of waiving and surrendering our fancies, fads, opinions and personal preferences in the interest of peace. True Christians always do that. I believe the simplest principles of true politeness, as well as God's eternal truth, demand that we do this. Jesus says : "Blessed are the peace-makers : for they shall be called the children of God."

If we have the spirit of Christ, we are willing even to sacrifice temporal interests for the sake of peace. Abraham, the father of the faithful, gives us a fine example of making a sacrifice for the sake of peace. When he and Lot came up into the land of Canaan, which by divine promise belonged to him, it is said that there was a strife between the herdmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle. The land was not able to support the cattle of both of them. "And Abraham said unto Lot, 'Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.'" (Gen. 13:8-12.) Lot chose the best of the country. Abraham was satisfied with the rough and refuse. So far as earthly possessions and personal preferences were concerned, Abraham's desire was peace at any price, rather than strife among brethren. The

same lovely, self-sacrificing spirit is set forth by the peerless apostle Paul, when he says : "Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." (1 Cor. 8:13.) The same self-denying spirit is manifested by all true Christians because it is the spirit of Christ, and "if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9.)

Paul also teaches us that we should all speak the

our savior's prayer for unity 35

same thing and that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. We can all speak the same thing by speaking what is revealed in the Bible and no more. When we teach and practice that which is taught in the Bible, then we are teaching and practicing essentials only, and that will always tend to union and harmony. But when we begin to teach and practice things on which the Bible is silent, we are then teaching and practicing things that are not essential to the welfare of humanity, and it will certainly produce discord, because all will never agree on things for which there is no standard.

When we begin to sow discord among the brethren, we cease to be followers of "the Babe of Bethlehem" and become "an abomination to God." Then let us be careful while passing through this world ; let us do all the good we can to the suffering, sighing sons and daughters of men while we live. If there be anything

we can do or say that will help our fellowman, and promote peace and unity, let us do it .now. Let us not neglect nor defer it, for we shall not pass this way again. Let us strive to live in peace and unity with the brethren that our Savior's prayer may be fully answered. Let us remember that : "As we've sown, so shall we reap, when the harvest time appears, whether it be joy or gladness, weal or woe."

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By J. H. Curry.

No one can read the New Testament without admiring the unselfish life of Christ. He never did his own will, but in humility and love did his Father's will. He even rebuked a young man for calling him good. He knew the proneness of man to exalt himself, and declares that, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased. " Again he says, "Call no man your father upon the earth." And again he says, "Neither be ye called masters : for one is your Master, even Christ . . . and all ye are brethren/" (Matt. 23:9, 10.) The above shows that there was to be no seeking of power and preference among the disciples, but that all were "brethren" and Christ was their only master. The most beautiful prayer in John 17 sets forth this idea of unity in all of its strength. To this I now invite the reader's attention. Having taught his apostles for more than three years, the time was at hand for him to be offered for the sins of the world, and he pours out his soul to God in prayer. He has great anxiety for the apostles, and prays for their unity that "they may be one, as we are." (Verse 11.)

This unity of the apostles is predicated on the fact that Jesus had given them God's words and they had received them. (Verse 8.) Jesus received those words from God, the fountain of all truth. He says : "My Father gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (Chapter 12:49.) As Jesus came down from heaven to do God's will, not his own, the unity of purpose between the Father and the Son is manifest.

The love of God for his creatures was so deep that he gave his Son as a sin-offering to show the depth of that love, that all men might be induced to lay down the

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 37

arm of rebellion against Jehovah. The supreme thought of God was to unify Adam's posterity in one body by the cross. Jesus vied with the Father in this glorious undertaking and prepared the apostles by careful training to go forth to the nations and invite them to come back to the Father and be united to him in the name of Jesus Christ.

The unity of the apostles is laid deep in the fact that they were all taught by the same Teacher. Hence, he could consistently pray for unity among them. Having declared the unity of Father and Son, and having prayed for the unity of the apostles, he then turned his mind to mankind in a most impressive strain. "Neither pray I for these (apostles) alone, but for them also who 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." (Verses 20 and 21.)

Now, dear reader, let us think together: Would it not be folly to say that Jesus prayed for an impossibility? Surely he did not. Why pray for an impossibility? Granting this prayer to be in harmony with God, we can then appreciate the crowning result of unity, "that the world may believe." One of the chief hindrances to the success of the gospel is the divided condition of the people religiously. Human opinion is so rife today that the gospel has but little effect on many. They are blinded by "smart men."

The proposition that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is the most vital proposition ever uttered, and its truthfulness rests upon the most comprehensive and perfect chain of evidence ever adduced since time began. And the men who were to demonstrate this proposition to the nations were the best qualified men the world has ever possessed. They heard and accepted the message Jesus delivered them. They saw the wonderful works wrought by him to prove his divinity. And not only this, but they saw the Spirit descend upon him at his baptism

38 our savior's prayer for unity

and heard the voice of God in heaven proclaim his sonship by saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17.) They saw his agony in the garden, witnessed the mock trial, and his cruel death

on Calvary. They ate w r ith him, drank with him, and handled him after his resurrection. They listened to his forty days' instruction, then saw him go into heaven with angelic assurance that he is the Christ, and that he will one day return in like manner as they saw 7 him go into heaven. (Acts 1:3, 11.)

The Christ who prayed so earnestly for the unity of the apostles and all who should believe on him through their word, did all he could to produce the desired result. Yet after all they had seen and heard, they were not to be intrusted with the life-giving message unaided. They were men, fallible men, untrained in language and scholastic lore ; and the Lord, knowing what they had to meet, ordered them to go to Jerusalem to wait for a baptism of the Holy Spirit, that he might bring to their remembrance all Jesus had taught them, and guide them unto all truth. Being now filled with the Holy Spirit, they were able to go into all the w r orld and preach the gospel to every creature, in all the languages of earth.

Words of encouragement are of great value in times of trials and persecutions. Jesus gave the apostles much consolation in the following: "I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to gainsay nor resist"; (2) in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; (3) in my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there may ye be also (John 14:6, 7) ; (4) "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the

world." (Matt. 28:20.)

After the fall of Judas, and another had to take his

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 39

place to make the twelve foundations, Matthias must have the same qualifications as the others. Hence, a man who had accompanied Christ all the way from his baptism to his ascension must be chosen. Matthias was baptized in the Holy Spirit, and had the same sign — the tongue as of fire, as the others. In the selecting of Saul to become the Gentile apostle, we would naturally expect a like equipment or unity could not be maintained. Let us hear Paul himself: (1) "Now we (apostles) have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things we also speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth." (1 Cor. 2:11, 12.) (2) "But though we (apostles), or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ... If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8, 9.) Is it not manifest that unity must maintain when no man dare preach any other gospel, no, not even an angel from heaven? (3) For do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (Verse 10.)

Man is not to be favored by preachers in fulfilling the



Lord's prayer for unity. (4) "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Verses 11 and 12.) Many more statements might be given to show the idea of unity among the apostles, and hence their opposition to divisions. A faithful servant will always contend for his master. And the apostles were no exception to the rule. When the church at Corinth became divided over preachers, Paul honors his Master by saying: "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

#### 40 OUR savior's prayer for unity

that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1:13.) Notice carefully that he makes this demand in the name of Christ, and not of his own will. In Chapter 2:1, 2, he reminds them that when he preached at Corinth he delivered unto them the testimony of God, with a determination not to know anything except "Christ and him crucified. " He closes the chapter by saying, "For we (apostles) have the mind of Christ." What loyalty to Jesus, the King ! They had Christ's message and preached it to the exclusion of human opinions. To the church at Rome, he says : "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded, one toward another, according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (15:5, 6.)

We will now listen to Peter's testimony : (1) "Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." (3:8.) (2) "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.)

Unity of mind insures unity of teaching, and unity of teaching unites the people, and this fulfills the Lord's prayer for unity. Oh, if all preachers would "speak as the oracles of God," and were satisfied with the Lord's way, what a sweet savor it would add to the Lord's prayer in the eyes of the world. If all would endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in "the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3), and study to show themselves approved unto God, and not unto men ; if they would "let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom 3 ' (Col. 3:16), remembering that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, what a happy change would come over this sin-cursed world, and many who stand dazed at human wisdom would see the fog lift and the radiant sunlight of the glorious gospel would shine unto them.

What the world needs to hear is this love message from home, calling the benighted millions out of the bondage of Satan into the liberty of the sons of

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 41

God. This love message is the one gospel that creates the "one faith." This "one faith/" working by love (Gal. 5:6), brings "peace on earth and good-will among men," and thus the angels sang in the night in

which the Christ was born. How significant was this angelic refrain. This glorious gospel message is for all, with no respect of persons. Oh, that all would appreciate the proffered mercy, and, giving up all for Christ, would come unto him and make an unconditional surrender to his requirements ! Thus becoming "united with him in the likeness of his death" (Rom. 6:4), all may, by a loving, faithful service, have a part in the first resurrection and enjoy a glorious immortality in that precious inheritance "reserved in heaven" for the faithful. Let us all take it to heart to do our part in calling the world to unity, and thus honor the prayer of our dear Savior, who so earnestly prayed for our unity here that we might enjoy him forever in heaven's bright home.

#### OUR SAVIORS PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By W. H. Devore.

The question has been asked time and time again, "Has the Savior's prayer been answered?" Most assuredly it has.

There has not been a year, no, not a day, during all the days and years which have come and gone since the Father glorified his Son by placing him upon the mediatorial throne and crowning him Lord of all, but what could be found, here and there, now and then, disciples of the one Lord, whose teaching and life filled the measure of the Savior's prayer. Such lived in the beginning of the reign of Christ ; such live now in union and unity with God. But if all who professed to believe on Christ through the word of his chosen twelve had lived as the

Savior prayed that they should live — if all had kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3) — this would have been heaven's crowning argument, and proof so convincing in its effect that long since the world would have believed that God sent his Son into the world to save the world, seeing that the Savior prayed for his people to 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 has sent me." (John 17:21.) Right at the point where one or more of his disciples, either in teaching or practice, not in harmony with the teaching of Christ, that the big eye of the world discovered. It was then the world began to doubt that God sent his Son, and his Son was not all he claimed to be, and as divisions multiplied, the world sank lower and lower in the hopeless pit of unbelief, because heaven's best and most convincing proof of the divine mission of Christ into the world — the unity of God's people — had been destroyed by ungodly division and strife among God's people, and

our savior's prayer for unity 43

that, too, over things Christ never prayed for his disciples to believe, or the world either. "Neither pray I for these alone (his apostles), but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; that they all may be one . . . even as we are one/" (John 17: 21, 22.) Therefore, all the Savior prayed for in order that his people may be one, which things were to be believed and obeyed as acts of faith, were to be found, and are found, and found only in the express will of God; all of which has been made known, and are to be

found in the teaching of the inspired apostles of Christ.

Seeing that the Savior prayed for his people to be one, a oneness with both the Father and the Son is imperative. In what sense did the Savior pray for his people to be one?

It is unmistakably true that the basis of Christian unity (and this is the oneness Christ prayed for) is the expressed will of God, understood and rightly applied by those whom the Savior prayed for. To be in oneness with God — to be one "as thou, Father, and I are one," is to be one with God in thought, one with Christ in mind ; His people to be one in doctrine and practice; one with the Holy Spirit by keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph. 4:2-8.)

Therefore, the visible result of the unity the Savior prayed for is that all his people speak the same things ; all walk in the same steps ; all be of the same mind one toward another; all strive together for the faith of the gospel ; all of one heart and one soul ; all continuing steadfastly in the apostles' teaching, in fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer; all speak as the oracles of God ; all walk by the same rule ; all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. The Savior not only prayed for unity, but showed how union with God could be possible, and how it could be fed and fostered and maintained. "Father, I have given unto them thy word."

Thus we see the Son of God prayed for his people

#### 44 OUR savior's prayer for unity

to be one in creed, one in discipline — "I have given unto them thy word/" One divine system of faith, one government for all, in all and over all. Is it possible that Christ became the author and perfecter of a law that, when obeyed, would introduce souls into a spiritual oneness with God, and then would give them a discipline each one could interpret to suit himself and thus divide themselves off into separate organizations under different names and creeds, and live in oneness with God? No, a thousand times no ! But God, the Father, did give the units of the faith and revealed the fact that, if believed and obeyed, they would not only bring men and women into spiritual oneness with God, but would make absolutely sure the perpetuity of the oneness the Savior prayed for. God is the author of the marriage tie, and said to the husband and wife, "You are one" ; and then, after making them one in the marriage relationship, did he give them a religious system which, if obeyed, would divide them religiously, and have each one spend time and strength in the church of his or her choice, and while thus divided, each one working to tear down what the other builds up? Are they one? Is this the oneness the Savior prayed for? No, a thousand times, no. Does God add to and build up one church, and the Son of God another church different in name, creed and discipline? Has the divine Father one rule for his people to live and work by, and his Son a different rule of faith and practice? No, a thousand times, no. The Son of God said, "My Father and I are one" — one in material creation, one in spiritual creation, one in upholding the laws looking to the development of both. The Savior said, "I came to do the will of him that sent me." It is

thus in works he and his Father are one. No two men or women who differ in thought, word or deed, in things which go to make up New Testament Christianity, one or the other, and probably both, are wrong. Such are not keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; therefore, are not in union with God.

our savior's prayer for unity 45

The Savior prayed for his people to be one in name: "Father, keep them in thy name" ; so he prayed that his people might be one "as thou, Father, and I are one." He prayed his Father to keep them "one in thy name" ; the name in which there is salvation, and in it and it only, the name of Christ. There can't be oneness with God unless all God's people do, both in word and deed, is done in the name of Christ, and that, too, to the glory of God, the Father. We, as his people, are to "glorify God in this name" — in the name of Christ. This is the seal God places or stamps upon every soul born into the family of God. All those the Savior prayed for have been baptized in and into the name of Christ. In this name every gospel sermon is preached ; every prayer acceptable to God is made or offered in the name of Christ. Those in the divine family walk in the name of Christ, they worship God in this name, they transact all the Father's business in the name of Christ. They give their money to support the claims of the gospel in the name of Christ; they meet around the table of the Lord each first day of the week, in the name of Christ, to eat and drink of the bread and wine in memory of him who "prayed that his people may be one."

Divisive names were introduced by those who trample under their feet the spirit and sense of the Savior's prayer. To live in unison with God, God's people must be one in name. "Father, keep them in thy name."

The Savior prayed for his people to be one in relationship. "I pray that they all may be one, as thou, Father, and I are one." This relationship is the relationship existing between Father and Son ; a divine, spiritual union. All of those the Savior prayed for were born of God — born of water and the Spirit; all in the kingdom of God's dear Son ; all partakers of the divine nature of God; all having equal access to all the privileges and immunities of the one church — the one body — which is God's habitation through the Spirit, in which and through which the life of God flows through Christ, to and

#### 46 our savior's prayer for unity

through every obedient member. Through the one body, and through God's commandments, ordinances and promises flows the cleansing blood of Christ. "Having fellowship one with another the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin." In the one body we have fellowship with God, with Christ, and the Holy Spirit, all his holy apostles, with all the saints on earth and in heaven. This is the oneness the Savior prayed for. Christ is the life of every member in the one body who keeps his holy commandments and ordinances. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory."



Christ prayed for a visible, organic oneness; a oneness the world could see. Not an invisible oneness only, but a unity in heart and soul with God, which makes itself manifest in word and deed by those who are obedient to Christ in all things. This is the oneness the Savior prayed for ; a oneness the world could see and be convinced that God sent his Son into the world that the world, through him, might be saved. The world then could say, "Behold, how these people love one another; they have been with Christ and learned of him. „ To be in union with God we must love the Savior of men, we must walk with him by faith, and, hand in hand, heart to heart, move forward in his footsteps, carrying the message of Christ to a world lost in sin and ignorance, and keep in one solid compact that unity the world can see ; the oneness the Son of God prayed for when he lifted up his tempest-tossed soul to God. right under the shadow of Calvary's cross. In tears and sweat and blood he prayed that his people might be one, while his head bowed low with the weight of a lost world upon his soul. Lower still he bows his head till it touches the green sod near the side of Kedron's rippling brook; and, while death rippled in the brook, and the wind moaned and sobbed and whispered low among the mountain trees, lower and lower still he bows, until his body lies prostrate on the sod, moistened with the bitter tears

our savior's prayer for unity 47

wrung from the big, loving heart of the world's Redeemer.

"Father, I pray that all who believe on me through their word may be one, as thou, Father, and I are one."

Dear Lord, keep me in thy name.

## THE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE— JOHN 17.

By Tice Elkins.

I feel honored that I was thought worthy of assisting in the compilation of a book treating upon so all-important a theme as Christian union. And since Brother Rowe has invited me to submit my views of this subject for the good of the cause of Christ and humanity, I, in humility and reverence, offer the following lines concerning the seventeenth chapter of John.

This is the prayer of the Savior on the night in which he was betrayed into the hands of sinful men. This prayer for the unity of his people in all the history of the world we dare not lightly esteem. That it was his intention that all his followers in all the succeeding ages be perfectly joined together, united, and that the same intention was founded upon a perfectly good and sufficient reason, is clearly taught in the words of the Savior himself : "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." That is the reason for his desire. And to anyone today who will open his eyes and honestly view the condition of Christendom, it is plain that the world does not believe, and infidelity laughs at the claims of Christianity because there is no union among those who profess to be-

lieve.

I believe there would be union, more union today, if the people could find a basis for it, but they have been misled and blinded so long they can not see the foundation for unity laid in the blood and tears and groans of the man of Galilee.

Now, that foundation is what I must speak of, and that, basis I shall show. I will outline a few of the greatest denominations, the product of division, in the

#### THE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE 49

kindliest manner I can, and show you what is necessary in order for them to unite, assuring you that whatever will unite a few will unite all.

We will reduce each of these sects to its prime factors and take out from all these factors the things that are not common to them all, and upon which all can not agree, and thus find a basis upon which we all can agree and work together in perfect harmony.

First, the Episcopal church — they call themselves Episcopalians ; then Christians — they believe in the inspiration of the Bible; have thirty-nine articles of faith; require faith in the Son of God; require baptism for church membership ; baptize by pouring, sprinkling or immersion ; believe in the holy communion, require their members to live holy lives. These are the great or prime factors in the Episcopal church.

Now, we will take the Methodist church. They call themselves Methodists ; second, Christians ; third, they believe in the inspiration of the Bible ; fourth, have twenty-five articles of faith; fifth, require faith in Christ; sixth, require baptism for church membership; seventh, baptize by pouring, sprinkling and immersion ; believe in the holy communion ; require their members to live holy lives. These are the prime factors of the great Methodist church. Third, take the Presbyterian church. They call themselves Presbyterians, then Christians, believe in the inspiration of the Bible, have the Westminster confession of faith, teach faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son, teach baptism for church membership, baptize by pouring, sprinkling and immersion, believe in the holy communion, require their members to live holy lives. These are the prime factors of the great Presbyterian church.

We will now call attention to the Baptist church. They call themselves Baptists, also Christians, believe in the inspiration of the Bible ; they accept the Philadelphia confession of faith, or Pendleton's manual, teach faith in Jesus Christ, require baptism for church membership, teach that baptism can only be performed by immersion,

50 our savior's prayer for unity

believe in the holy communion, and require their members to live holy lives. These are the prime factors of the great Baptist church.

Now, among all these factors, how many, and which ones are common to all these religious bodies? How

many of them can we all agree upon, and how many and which ones will we have to sacrifice in order to unite and worship God together and alike? Let us examine carefully.

First, we take the name. Is the name Episcopal common to all? No. Is it in the Bible? No. Is the name Presbyterian common to all, or will all agree to wear it? No. Is it in the Bible? No. Is the name Methodist common to all? No. Is it in the Bible? No. Is the name Baptist common to all? No. Is it in the Bible as the name of a church or a religious body? No. Is it necessary to be called any one, or all of these names in order to be saved, to be a Christian? All answer, no. Is it necessary to be known as a Christian? All admit it is. Is that name in the Bible? It is. Then we all can and do accept the name Christian as a common factor, and all can unite upon it. Second, we are all agreed upon the inspiration of the Bible. So we put that down as a common factor, for it is taught in the Bible. Third, we are not agreed upon the thirty-nine articles of faith, the twenty-five articles of faith, the Westminster confession, the Philadelphia confession, the Pendleton manual ; therefore, they are not common factors, and, moreover, they are not to be found in the Bible. Next, faith in Christ. We are all agreed that this is essential and all accept it, and agree upon it; therefore, it is a common factor. Is it set forth in the Bible? All admit it is. Next we come to the question of baptism. All require baptism, upon that all are agreed ; it is a common factor. Is it taught in the Bible? All agree that it is. But what about sprinkling and pouring as modes of baptism? Will all religious bodies accept them? No ; therefore, they are not common factors, for all can not agree upon them.

## THE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE 51

But are they set forth in the Bible? They are not. And as they are not taught in the Bible, one can not urge them upon another. Then we must cancel these because they are not common factors. Next we take communion. Is it a common factor? Can all agree upon it? Yes. Is it set forth in the Bible? All admit it is. Therefore, it is a common factor. Next, we notice holiness of the Christian life. Do all require it? Is it a common factor? Can we all agree that it is essential? We can. Is it taught in the Bible? All admit that it is.

Now, then, let us see what are the common factors to all of us. First, the name Christian ; second, the inspiration of the scriptures ; third, faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God ; fourth, obedience to Him in the command of baptism; fifth, the observance of the communion of His body and blood; and sixth, a consecrated Christian, holy life. Now, these are the things upon which all these churches can unite, none of them being peculiar to any one of them. But do you notice that all of those things upon which we disagree are the non-essentials, that they are the things believed and practiced by the churches which are not to be found in the Bible? Take the denominational names. They are not in the Bible. The articles of faith, and so on ; all the things we fail to agree on are things not to be found in the Bible.

While the things that are really essential, and are set forth in the Bible, all are agreed upon. Now, if each religious body will eliminate everything from their creeds

and practice which is not essential, which is not taught in the Bible, we would then be a unit on the things that remain. There are many churches today. There ought to be but one. Paul said there is "one body" and "one spirit," and that is the body of Christ, filled with the Spirit of God, and if all professed followers of the Lamb today would give up everything that is not plainly taught in His glorious gospel, we all would then be one, and the world would then believe that God sent Him into the world, and nations would walk in the light of

52 our savior's prayer for unity

God, and the claims of the gospel would be accepted by the very ones who now scoff and deride it on account of the strife and division among the ones who claim to be guided by it.

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in ONE ; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."  
(John 17:23.)

Dear Father, speed the day when all may be one:  
when all party strife may cease. When all will be willing  
to tumble their old dead mother sect into her grave,  
and then, while the clouds fall upon her coffin, sing : "Let  
names and creeds and parties fall, and Jesus Christ be  
all in all/'

One here, one hereafter, where we "will cast our  
crowns at Jesus' feet and crown him Lord of all." Amen.

## OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Ben J. Elston.

In the first place, trying to realize my own place as one should, I feel that only the gravest impiety could move one to unfavorable criticism of that prayer. Jesus knew, and loved and cared as only He could. I think we should say that, whatever other objects our Savior hoped to accomplish, his two chief aims were to glorify God and to save man — if possible, all men — this unworthy scribe, thank God, among the rest. And, of course, the more universal the salvation of man, the greater the glory accruing to God. Conceding Christ's infinite wisdom, we must conclude that, in this prayer, will be expressed His own incomparable view as to the most infallibly sure way to attain the first end, upon the realizing of which so clearly depends the other.

Knowing what we do of our fallen selves, it may appear to be the natural thing to have expected that man would deepen the dye of his own disgrace by also adding this to the long list of things in which men have "rejected for themselves the counsel of God." For, generally in practice and often in theory, this advice has been so treated. Let the calamitous shadow rest, by man's own choice, on the brow of his compassionate, solicitous Master, yet must he have his own foolish and wicked will rather than heaven's, and his own fancied glory instead of cheerfully and lovingly giving the glory to God. Are we not yet saying, "We will not that this man reign over us?" Why do we say, "Lord, Lord, and do not the things which He says?"



Neither theoretically nor practically, so far as my understanding carries, will I dispute that the prayer displayed good sense. Can not the world see that its only possible hope is in the unity of "all" believers? Will not

54 our savior's prayer for unity

ihc future redeem a little of its partly ignorant, but always erroneous, past reflection on the Redeemer, by bringing itself promptly to the condition for which we know he poured out his longing soul to the bosom-rent Father in this prayer?

This is one of the few prayers preserved for us by the Father. The Master did much, not little praying. Out of His all-night pleadings, volumes might have been treasured. They would all have been jewels. There is manifestly, then, on divinity's part, unavoidable necessity for the prominence given to Christ's passionate, pathetic supplication on this theme. Will humanity be admonished and burn the obvious reason into its own soul?

With what mingled emotions one contemplates what "might have been/" Our stupid and reckless disregard of the wondrous plea breathed into the Father's ear, as earth was about to give the last and most bitter dregs of its cup of indignities to its most distinguished visitor, is the thing fundamental to which must be charged so much of the world's woe. Lust could never have been companion to sanctified desire. Ambition could never have crumbled to ruins the hopes and the homes of the weak and the pious and the toiling. Appetite would have been

controlled. Uncontrolled, it has dragged down, in divers forms, unimaginable myriads to a degradation, present and eternal, which beggars description. In a word, the refusing to receive God, which is almost precisely equivalent to spurning the unity desired by the Savior, has made possible every triumph of evil. For the folly furnished by human wisdom, on this one vital point, has been the food upon which only the vile could flourish. "For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." Meditation of this kind dims the eye with a sadness inexpressible.

But afresh the tears come as the enlightened think of thwarted good, so mercifully made possible by the sacrifice of him who so prayed. You and I are deprived today of an inheritance justly ours. A sinless earth is easily

#### OUR savior's prayer for unity 55

conceivable. And how exhilarating such a conception. A dictionary with all terms of criminality expunged ! A world with misery only as a memory. We never can know how we have wronged our Maker till we have all the vision of what "might have been" — of both good and evil. I know the world's cup of iniquity is not yet full, else God would strike an unmistakable blow ; the wicked must yet "flourish as a green bay tree in its native soil," but let us rejoice that some feel and see the Father's hand, and, while they fear and tremble, yet work and watch and wait and pray and trust and expect.

But tears of joy also come. I'm sure "blessed are they

that weep now." The heart leaps ! Well may the bod> also. Deliverance has not come to us all, but it is coming. "God is not unrighteous to forget." "He can not deny himself." Let us, as his servants, not grow "weary in well doing." "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Jesus prayed not in vain. That prayer will be our withering curse, or our everlasting blessing, just as we choose. He has said and suffered his part. No more can be done by him, or, assuredly it would have been done. Will we do our part? Darkness can not dwell where light is. Only disobedience, willing if not wilful, can keep us from presently enjoying the blessing for which Jesus begged. The piteous appeal should be felt directly and distinctly by us. "Today, if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts." We do not all see alike, but is it certain "we can not all see alike?" We can "all speak the same thing" if we so determine. We can be more perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment if we conscientiously try. Herein is the saying true, "Not failure, but low aim, is crime."

And now, with no descent from the seriousness that should ever characterize the disciple of the Author of such a prayer, what, personally, will I do, or yield, or quit, for my own necessary but joyful contribution to the ends sought ? Will I yield the trifling and insipid in literature, present or past, so that I may really heed when

56 our savior's prayer for unity

God would speak to me in His word? Will I compel myself until my "supplication," like that "of a righteous

man, availeth much?" Or, until I can read and speak "to edification," as "the need may be?" Will I put from my life all that I know hinders me or others from the fullest and happiest growth in grace?

Will I ever neglect either a plain duty, or a plain privilege, when that will set me in a false light before others, or tend to weaken even my weakest brother? May I rightly, needlessly waste one moment or one cent that could possibly be given to good thought or purpose? Will I begin or continue any needless habit that permits "my good to be evil spoken of," or that can make me less efficient as a Christian? Do not I owe every moment of my time, every power of my being, every cent I can rightly command, outside of what is confessedly needful for the proper earthly care of my body, to Him, who in this very prayer would move me to my best? And can there be found, or could there be needed, a better avenue, through which all my various duties may be performed, than the very body — the church — which, by his own blood, he is purchasing almost as he prays?

My own honest, humble efforts must speak my regard or disregard for the prayer and its Author. Even to hint satisfaction with something less, or other, than the complete oneness enjoined in this prayer, is to proclaim our own wisdom, while impeaching His — to say we walk by reason and not by faith. And, as it seems to me, he, who would contend for point or place or thing not necessary to the maintenance of unquestioned scriptural unity, and which could possibly hinder even the weakest disciple, needs to study the effect of this prayer on him who said, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." Paul urged and practiced, at the greatest conceivable

earthly cost to himself, that for which his Master prayed. In harmony with the life he lived, which renders gain-saying impossible, Paul testifies: "If meat causeth my

our savior's prayer for unity 57

brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble."

Help us, "good Master," one and all, to hear thy pleading as did Paul.

And may our hearts be moved each day

To nobly do; not merely say.

THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By H. M. Evans.

It is not within the scope of this article, nor is it the intention of the writer to attempt to exhaust the subject under consideration, and yet if all the writers confine themselves strictly to the Bible as the only standard of unity, there will consequently be seen a uniformity of teaching, and perhaps of expression, which will indicate, to some extent at least, that the writers are of the "same mind/" "same judgment," and that all are speaking the "same thing," and thus this book may become a means towards reaching the end for which its writers plead.

On that memorable night of the betrayal of the Son of God into the hands of bloodthirsty and jealous religionists, His greatest and last concern was not for a grand "confederation of churches" ; it was not for a great "union meeting" of "all denominations" ; it was not for an amalgamation of Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians and Essenes ; it was not for a union and consolidation of Judaism and Christianity, nor for a compromise with heathenism in any form. Neither did He pray for an improvement in the "interdenominational relationship of church membership" (if our reader knows what that is). That spontaneous outburst of His great loving heart contained no sickly, sentimental, denominational loveism for the rebel who trampled beneath his unhallowed feet the conditions and principles of Christian unity.

In that prayer under consideration we observe three propositions: (1) Father and Son are one; (2) that all believers should be one; (3) that these two units should form one grand unit. The first was the model for the second, and the third would be the result of the second faithfully copying the model.

## THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 59

The great arguments set forth by the Savior for the

complete unity of His followers were: (1) That the world might believe; and (2) that His followers might be where He is and behold His glory. This being true, it needs no further argument to prove that the salvation of the human race and the happiness of His professed

followers depends upon Christian unity, a unity as complete as that existing between the Father and the Son, and, further, there is no proof that His professed followers shall ever be where He is, or see His glory without that complete oneness in Christ for which He prayed.

"I have given them Thy word," said Jesus in His prayer, and it is the "Word of God" that decides the conditions which make this unity in Christ possible. Warring sects and parties may go on forever revising and modifying their creeds and confessions of faith, utterly ignoring the Savior's prayer, and be as far away from that unity for which He prayed as they were when they began. Until men are willing to throw down denominational altars, cast to the flames all creeds, confessions of faith, catechisms and disciplines, and fall at the feet of the Son of God, the Savior of men, and accept the "Word of God" as their sole rule of faith and practice and accept His terms of unity, teeming millions will continue to pass into the unseen world without a gleam of hope, and they, themselves, as advocates of human standards of Christian unity, and who have thereby ignored the only conditions which make this unity possible, will learn that they are not in the class for which Christ prayed when He requested that those "whom Thou hast given me may be where I am that they may behold my glory."

It is the jealous ambitions of priestcraft and clergy to build up denominational partyism, both in home and foreign fields, that is hindering the answer to the Savior's prayer more than anything else. The declaration of the apostle that there is "one body and one spirit . . . one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one bap-

## 60 our savior's prayer for unity

tism, one God and Father of all who is over all, and through all and in all," is in complete harmony with the Savior's prayer and admits of no misunderstanding. That the beseeching cry of Paul, "That ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment, " is treated with silent contempt, can not be wondered at when denominational selfishness and sectarian partyism is untouched and unmoved by the outpouring of the loving, bleeding heart of the Son of God upon the eve of giving His life to accomplish the object for which He prayed.

He who divides the "body of Christ" by forcing "creeds," "aids," "auxiliaries," "expediences," etc., upon it must meet the Judge at the last day as an opponent to that unity for which Jesus prayed and stand condemned as a rebel against heaven's King.

### A CALL TO UNITY.

By E. N. Glenn.

Heaven is the abode of unity. When the spirit of unity comes into a soul or into a church, it, therefore, comes from above, being brought on its way by the Comforter. Discord — the opposite — is of the earth, earthly. The divisions of Christians show that there is still much carnality among them, and the more carnal a Christian



is the more sectarian will he be; but the more spiritual he is the more loving, forbearing and self-renouncing you are sure to find him. As it is with Christians, so it is with the church.

The fruit of discord is strife, hatred and division. No wonder that, "He that soweth discord among brethren/" is an abomination to God. Our Savior left the sweet motto of unity with his disciples that their love, one for another, might be welded, and their work of converting the world might be mutual ; but alas ! The walls of separation have been built by the party spirit of discord until the exclamation of old, "Behold, how the Christians love each other," is now resounding, "See how they hate and assail one another. " It is to be noted that Jesus did not warn his followers against unbelief, or the trials and temptations of life, or the power of the evil one, in his last admonition and memorable prayer, but his expressed desire and prayer was that all his disciples might be "one," even as he and his Father were one. Love is the grand underlying principle upon which the unity of his people must rest. During the miraculous age "signs" were a great power to convince unbelievers that Christ was divine, but the power of love is far greater. The age of miracles was to soon cease, but "love" abideth forever. For had he not told them the same night, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye

62 our savior's prayer for unity

have love one to another ?" Now, so long as they should have "love one for another/" peace and unity would pre-

vail ; but when the seed of discord is sown in their hearts, love is displaced by malice and contention, which results in alienation and division. The apostle Paul, referring to the carnality among Christians, says: "For if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye do not consume one another." For wolves to devour sheep is no wonder, but for sheep to devour one another is astonishing! Hence, the sweet singer of old sang, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

A "union meeting" of the various denominations of the community is a prevalent and popular idea today of the religious world. But mere denominational uniformity is not "Christian unity." It is not the amalgamation of denominations that Christ prayed for, but he prayed for a union of all spiritual men "in the Lord." Any other union is a misnomer. So let us make the distinction between the word union and unity. As one brother illustrated it : "We can tie the tails of two cats together and string them across the clotheslines and we have union, but have we 'unity\* ?" There is no unity in a heap of stones hardened into a mass ; they are yet simply a mass.

### Bible Illustrations.

The Savior gave us a perfect illustration of unity in the parable of the vine and the branches. (John 15: 1-7.) There is a vital connection between each branch and the vine. Christians are to desire the same degree of unity as that found in the vine and the branches. Again, Jesus prays, "That they may be one, as we are." Now, let us notice this unity. We have the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — these three — yet these three

agree in one. Each of the three is God, yet they are all one God, for they have all one nature, and one God-head, and one substance, and one counsel, and one work, and one majesty, glory and co-eternal rule. The unity mi

## A CALL TO UNITY 63

essence is not taken away by the distinction of persons. Another beautiful Bible example is the unity of the body. Here we have a combination of many parts, viz., body, soul and spirit. Yet this is "one" man. The senses, passions, understanding and will are all in themselves unities, yet it is the mutual relation and dependence of the parts that constitute the body as a whole. The reason, will and memory must work in unison. Just so with "the body of Christ," of which Christ is the head. (Col. 1:18.)

Great is the force of unity, peace and concord. Unison is power. One man, when in unison with others, serves to strengthen and stablish another like sticks or staves bound together. Let them be severed and they are easily broken. This is true in the family, church or nation. A single drop of water is a weak and powerless thing; but an infinite number of drops united will form a stream, and many streams combined will form a river, till rivers pour their waters into the mighty ocean, whose proud waves defy the power of man. Unknown power lies in the concentration of combined unity of God's people. This is the power calculated by the ruler of the universe to bring into subjection the rebellious world to Christ, which, without this unity, defies the solitary

efforts of single forces.

In consideration of the importance of the unity of God's people, its value and power, and the misconception of the great majority of professed Christians today as compared with illustrations and teaching of God's word on the subject, and realizing that it was intended by our Father for his people to be one, desired and prayed for by the Savior himself, let us in conclusion note how it may be attained.

How Attained.

Union with Christ is an absolute qualification to the union with his church. In other words, an individual must be joined to Christ — having been grafted into the

64 our savior's prayer for unity

true vine — before he may expect to bear fruit to Christ, or become a true member of his "body" or church. This union of Christians or churches of Christ must come from the characteristic spirit of love. It certainly is possible, for it was planned and prayed for by our Lord while on earth, and we may as surely expect an answer to this prayer in God's own good time. When the ruling element of all professed followers of Christ is "love" — love for God and his will above all things in this world; above self-will, opinions of men and party creeds — then there can be no separation except bodily separation.

Churches or Christians brought together on any other ground than this will fail. As well attempt to weld iron that is cold than to unite people by simply making them think and act alike. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." They must of necessity be made to feel alike in this gospel work before they can be united. James says (3:17): "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." Paul, speaking by inspiration, entreats us to be "diligent to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3.) This unity consists in submission to one single influence — the Spirit. Does not the unity of the body consist of the one influence of the mind, uniting all its members ? Take away this life or influence and the members fall to pieces, no longer having any union with the rest. Those individuals closest to Christ are the nearest to one another, and will be the first to blend together in the fulfillment of his prayer: "May they all be one." "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous : not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." (1 Pet. 3:8, 9.)

## THE ONENESS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS.

By Flavil Hall.

All believers in Christ are familiar with his prayer that all who believe on him through the apostles' word might be one (to the end that the world might believe on

him), that they all might be one as he and his Father were one. (John 17:20-22.)

This prayer was answered when the glorious light of the message of redemption burst forth in all its brightness in the first century of the Christian era. Had Christian believers then gone to pieces, dividing into multitudes of denominations with party names and various other distinctions, such as we have now, Christianity could never have commanded the respect of the world, have grown in power over the nations and marched triumphantly through the ages as she has done.

Isaiah prophesied as follows : "Thy watchman shall lift up the voice ; with the voice together shall they sing ; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." (Tsa. 52:8.) This was the happy state of Zion (the church) until she was corrupted by "the mystery of lawlessness" and many of the communicants ceased to love the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thes. 2:5-12, R. V.) By reason of her glory in the age of her oneness, she has shone brightly upon multitudes, even through the chaos of denominational gloominess. All systems of science and philosophy that assail her perish, empires and kingdoms of men crumble, but upon the swelling waves of time, with a crucified and risen Redeemer as Captain and Helmsman, the grand old ship of Zion sails, in fearless might and splendor, for the haven of rest on the eternal shore. "Ye are come unto mount Sion, ... to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven. . .

## 66 our savior's prayer for unity

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. 12:22, 23, 28.)

The Savior's prayer was that all who believed on him through the apostles' word might be one. Who is willing to take the position that all who have believed only through the pure word of the apostles are not one? Many believe through a corruption of the word of the apostles, and this is what produces and fosters divisions. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them."

The church is called "the body of Christ." (Eph. 1 : 22, 23; Col. 1 :24.) He gave his fleshly body to be tortured and crucified that he might establish and save the church — his spiritual body. (Eph. 5:23-26.) It would seem, therefore, that the latter is far more dear to him than the former, and hence he who would willfully teach and practice that which the word of the apostles does not contain, and thus rend and divide the spiritual body of Christ, becomes guilty of a greater sin, if possible, than those were guilty of who wounded his fleshly body.

The only way for unity to be effected and promoted is for all to believe, love and obey the word of the apostles, not going beyond it or discarding anything therein. "Their word" is the teaching of Christ, and those who go beyond his teaching and abide not therein can not stand in the favor of God. (2 John 9.) "Their

word" is also the word of the Holy Spirit. Of his writing, John says seven times in Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." It is only by means of his word that the Spirit leads and influences people. Led thus by the Spirit, believers will just be Christians, not sectarians. The religious world can never be united as long as some claim to be led and influenced by the Spirit separate and apart from his word, and others claim the right to be

#### THE ONENESS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS 67

guided by "sanctified common sense. " This is self-evident from reason and past observation, and could they be thus united it would not be pleasing to God. But those who love the Lord and his truth above everything else, who seek to obey and honor him in all things, and who, with hearts beating with anxious solicitude for the salvation of dying men and women, unceasingly work and pray for the conversion of the world, are so "fitly joined together and compacted," are so strongly united "by joints and bands," and are so thoroughly "knit together" by the chords of love, that the powers of darkness and of gospel perversion can never sever them in their onward march to victory and to glory.

#### OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By W. H. L. Hamilton.

Has that prayer been answered ? Is it being answered ?



Will it be answered? It seems to me that these questions should strike deep into the minds of all those who claim to be Christians.

Unity ! What is unity ? Oneness in mind, thought and action ; blended together, cohesion, concord, harmonious working, speaking, thinking and acting. (See 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:2.)

In John's record of the gospel, Chapter 17, we have our blessed Savior's prayer for the ("unity") oneness of his apostles ; see verse 11 ; and in verses 20 and 21 he included all those that should believe on him through their words. Has that prayer ever been answered? Most assuredly it has. Jesus first prayed for the "unity" (oneness) of his apostles just before his passion, which prayer was answered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 1:13-14), where we find the eleven by name with certain women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethen (about 120), all assembled with "one accord" No jars, divisions, no strife among them; therefore, "united," of one mind, one spirit, ready to (by concrete action) select Judas' successor; and while two were appointed, a prayer offered for divine guidance, and each lot cast (doubtless) for the candidate of their choice, not a dissenting voice, nor a single howl raised, upon the election of Matthias (to the place), from which Judas by transgression fell. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (the one hundred and twenty) were all with one accord in one place." (Acts 2:1.) In unison, in oneness, in answer to Jesus' first prayer. Following this narrative, we have the account of the addition of about three thousand souls, and we

our savior's prayer for unity 69

team that "they (the three thousand and others) continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. And they continued daily with one accord in the temple." (Acts 2:44-46.) A united band of at least 3,120. A one body in word, spirit and action. Therefore, I have demonstrated by the foregoing our first position, i. e., that "Jesus' prayer for unity" has been answered.

Second proposition : Is Christ's prayer being answered? I shall be forced (by facts) to say yes. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, used the "keys of the kingdom of heaven, opened the door of admittance, and three thousand entered into a state of oneness, into the one body, into Christ, into his church, into the unity for which he prayed. Now, if these be facts, all who obey the requirements today, just like they did, are by the Lord added to the one body just like they were. So as we are living in the same age (gospel age) and seeing the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1 :16) is God's power to save, and that we are called from darkness into light through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14), I am forced to conclude that all who whole-heartedly obey the gospel today are freed from sin, added to the church, blended together in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace — a culmination of the Savior's prayer for those that should believe on him through the apostles' word. From the above I am driven to this, as the only logical conclusion, that Christ's prayer for unity is being answered by all who obey his gospel as taught by his chosen apostles, and that a strict adherence unto the apostolic creed without

addition or subtraction, will keep us in unity and grant us an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (see 2 Pet. 1:5-11), and finally result in the final unifying of faithful saints around God's throne. (See Rev. 22 : 14; 3 :4.)

When Christ shall come to earth again to gather up his jewels, he will send forth his angels and gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and they that do in-

70 our savior's prayer for unity

iquity (Matt. 13:41-42); and when the final separation shall take place (Matt. 25:13-46), Christ's prayer for unity will be fully answered, and he surrounded by a united host of blood-bought saints, whom he will escort and introduce to his Father as his Bride, for whom he gave his life that he might sanctify and cleanse with the washing of water by the word.

Yes, Christ's prayer for unity has been, is being, and will be answered — God's people are united ; Christ's church a unit. Who, then, are God's people? All who come under his saving power, divine power (2 Pet. 1-3), the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16), are thereby made Christians, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; and add the seven Christian graces set forth in Eph. 4: 3-6. But we, like the infant church at Antioch, are often burdened with Judaizing teachers, who sow seed of discord, which may lie dormant for a while, but in the process of time will germinate and bring forth fruit unto the disruption and disunion of the once unified body of

Christ, and these rough places often become so rough that they result in separation of disciples and the establishment of rival institutions. We fail to heed and follow the noble example preceded by Antioch in appealing to the apostles concerning our troubles. Oh, if we could only grasp that noble spirit in our minds, in its Christ-like meekness, when temptations and troubles arise, and only appeal to what is written in God's holy law and let that be final, rough places would be smoothed, disunion averted, division annihilated, and the devil gloriously defeated, and God's people would be made to rejoice in the unity of the Spirit and in bonds of peace and love. Many times God's children are led out of unity by teachers prompted by mercenary purposes into confusion (Babylon), and to all such the call goes forth, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins nor receive of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4.) If Christ's professed followers would adhere to our motto in word and deed, "speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent

our savior's prayer for unity 71

where it is silent, " Christian unity would abound, because God's word nowhere endorses division among his followers, and it can only be the introduction of unwritten things that can produce strife and disunion. Ah, that carnal principle in man ? No wonder Paul said : "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. 8:5.) So in our divided state, we, as a whole, can not please God. Then let us appeal unto the apostles, the divinely delegated givers of the new law of the spirit of life in

Christ Jesus for all our work and worship, thereby entering into that unity with God's children for which Jesus prayed, that we may be eligible to admission into that united throng of blood-washed saints beyond is my prayer.

#### OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By W. N. Harkins.

Brother Rowe sends me, as well as many others, a request to write on the above subject. In his request, he asks three questions: First, has that prayer been answered? Second, is it being answered. Third, will it be answered

I can say yes on the first. It was for a time after the church was established on Pentecost, after the resurrection of Christ. The apostles constituted the church in the beginning and were what that special prayer for them requested. And those who believed on the Savior through their word were added to them, and they all continued one until false teachers began to mix Judaism with the gospel of Christ. Very little of this was done (if any) until the Gentiles became obedient to the gospel. And even then their unity was affected but little until after the mystery of iniquity began to work.

The second question is, is it being fulfilled? I can not say that it is, only in part. At the beginning of the present restoration by the Campbells, Stone, and others, that unity prevailed there is no question. While there was a slight difference in their views on the office and

work of the Holy Spirit and the appointment of elders, still they never made it a test of their fellowship, nor called each other unsound, disloyal, nor any ugly names, but they discussed their differences in love, kindness and the spirit of the Master. And in this way they grew in favor with the Lord. They had for their motto, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak ; and where the Bible is silent, we will be silent. " But finally designing men hungered after the flesh pots of denominationalism by wanting to be like the sects, and this caused a rent in the fellowship and a separation followed. And by this it gave strength

our savior's prayer for unity 73

to the denominations. We could no longer plead for unity with the telling result that we could before. But the rest of us stood for a return to the good old way ; and for a number of years we were a united people, still standing for the same unity that Jesus prayed for. But the last few years a new set of bosses have shown up, with new ideas advanced on various questions. And if you can not with a clear conscience indorse them, you are branded as being unsound. And even if you say nothing about it, if you are not reading the right paper, it becomes a test of loyalty, and you are marked down as disloyal. When we preach we emphasize the fact that this unity is desirable for the advancement of Christianity and that it is possible to accomplish it. If not possible for us to be one as the Savior prayed it to be, then Jesus did very wrong in praying for something that was not possible to be accomplished. But we would not dare charge the Lord with doing one single thing that was

wrong. So we will have to look for the failure from some other source. But let me ask, in what does our unity consist? Do any of the speculative themes in regard to the future state — the thousand years' reign of Christ, the removing of Paradise, and many such themes, really belong to and go to make a part of the unity Christ prayed for? If our unity depends on and includes them, we can say most assuredly that it will never be accomplished. All such themes are based on figures, symbols and prophetic statements. And the more they are discussed (in the spirit in which they are) the farther we get apart. It is all right to write what our opinion is on them if we feel like it, but not to try to impose them on anyone else as a test of our fellowship. But I can't believe that the unity that Christ prayed for includes any more than the law that makes a Christian out of the alien sinner, and the law that is to govern them after they become the children of God. This may include the reign of Christ here in this life, his kingdom and church or body. These are all plain, literal statements, and all we have to do is

#### 74 our savior's prayer for unity

to state them just as they are in the new covenant scriptures. We all agree that an alien, believing with all his heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and repenting truly of all his past sins, and being immersed into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and Holy Spirit, that such a person has the promised remission from all past sins ; and we will continue a unit as long as there is no one to raise an objection as to where the water is found that we use. God created all the

water but has not told us where we must go to find the water we are to use. We all know that a glassful is not enough till someone makes a glass large enough to hold sufficient water to immerse one in. There is a matter that we are not all agreed on that looks to me like it could be very easily settled. We admit that to have a congregation in good working order, bishops (overseers), are a scriptural necessity. But if there is no ordinance telling how it is to be done, there can be nothing very important about it. But we can't think the Lord has left us in the dark on this. If in apostolic times men were appointed to this position by the laying on of hands with prayer and fasting, why, when and where did the Lord make the change ? Did you say that the cases in apostolic times were to impart spiritual gifts? Will you show one case w T here hands were laid on anyone to ordain them that spiritual gifts were then imparted? A clear statement from the new covenant will suffice, or a case where it is implied. When this is done there will be no more contention, so far as I am concerned.

Brethren, you are all opposed to the fad that was raised a few years ago, "that elders belong to the inspired ministry, and with the inspired ministry ceased." You all with one voice opposed it, and why? If your contention on the appointment of elders is correct, you are responsible for the introduction of the new elder position. But now, brethren, rather than to cause any more strife and end in a war of unbecoming words, I would prefer to let it remain as many congregations are now, without any



scriptural elders. I can not see why we can not be one on this as easily as on baptism for remission of sins. If it was one of the speculative themes, of no real value to the Christian life, I could not think it worth our while to discuss it at all. But if it is a matter of opinion, let us not bring it in as one of the things that is included in the unity. And now, brethren, let us from now on devote our time in preaching and writing on what it takes to make Christians out of men and women that are in sin. And then after they become Christians, to instruct them how they should live and work in spreading the gospel to the lost of earth. The unity that Christ prayed for is to be in this life, and we need not give ourselves any uneasiness about it in the future. If we live in unity here we will be sure of it in the future. And by our continually living steadfast in the apostles' doctrine with the words of Christ dwelling in us richly, and day by day try to develop our inward beings so we can continually grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord.

Third question, "Will it be answered?" It can when the saints can be satisfied with the Lord's will in doing the work as he has directed it, and worshiping as he says in his word. His will in teaching is to be done through the church without any outside organization as a help. The all-important thing is to glorify the Lord through the church. We are united on doing mission work, and not only on doing the work but how the work is to be done. When the church sends its contributions direct to the workers, without any organization, they are doing as directed by the Lord. The money raised is by individual Christians, by their weekly contributions, or as individuals for a present distress. We all oppose Satan's method in having all kinds of worldly amuse-

ments and entertainments to raise money for the spread of the gospel.

If we become one as Christ prayed we should be, we will do as Paul instructed the church at Corinth to "all speak the same things, to be perfectly joined to-

76 our savior's prayer for unity

gether, in the same mind, and in the same judgment." This would be letting the mind of Christ be in us. And Peter says. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." In doing this, brethren, we would have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And we can never attain to that unity Christ prayed for till this is accomplished. Let us all, one and all, learn not to be more wise than what is written, nor to think we are so much smarter than our brethren, or that we have discovered an idea that is brand new that others have never thought of. We desire unity. Let us all work for unity. We can if we are in earnest and in love for the cause of right ; and to be right is to be on the side of the Lord. What I have written, I have written with a sincere heart and a strong desire that unity, with all that it means, may be brought about.

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By C. E. Holt.

The reader's attention is directed first to the Savior's

words in John 17:20. 21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who 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."

Is it possible for millions of persons, no two of whom are exactly alike in tastes and talents, in intellect and education, in pursuits and possessions, in feelings and ambitions and aspirations, as being different also in thousands of other ways, to attain to, and to maintain such unity as that for which our Savior prayed ?

No one can afford to answer this question negatively, because in so doing the wisdom of Jesus would be impeached. If it were not possible nor practicable nor profitable for such unity to exist among Christ's followers composed of people of all nations and kindreds and tongues, then strange, indeed, and inexplicable is the language used. We are almost nineteen hundred years this side of the time when that wonderful prayer was uttered in behalf and in the interest of the cause for which Jesus shed his blood, and the divisions which exist among his professed followers are numerous and strong, and the lines of cleavage are deep and well fortified and carefully and loyally and patriotically guarded, and every attempt to break them meets with the most vigorous and most determined opposition. It is even asserted from pulpit and press that divisions are wise and helpful and should be encouraged. Hence this prayer of prayers for unity of feeling, faith, purpose and conduct of God's people is treated lightly by some and entirely disregarded by others who claim to be his friends.

## 78 our savior's prayer for unity

But it is encouraging to know that among the warring sects which constitute our Christendom there are men and women who would rejoice to see a literal and complete fulfillment of that wonderful prayer which the Savior deemed so essential to the salvation of mankind and the restoration of all things to their paradisaical state of purity and perfection. To encourage and to assist these is that which prompts the writing of this article. It is a part of our faith that this prayer will be answered in God's own time and way, and we desire to go on record as a humble contributor thereto.

First, this unity is to be confined to the great fundamentals of the Christian religion. The opinions, deductions, inferences and interpretations of men, however learned and however wise, are not included.

These latter may be accepted and studied with more or less profit, but are not to be regarded as part of the one faith, and no one should be required to accept them as such. Such things should not be made conditions of salvation nor tests of Christian fellowship. The essentials and not the incidentals or circumstantialia of Christianity constitute the system in reference to which there can and should be perfect unity. But why put the matter in this form? We reply that this distinction is vital and must be made and honestly and religiously adhered to in order to be indeed and in truth what Jesus desires and prayed we should be. To clarify the matter, if need be therefor, we illustrate thus : There is one baptism to which all believers should submit.

It is impossible to be baptized as Christ directs without water. This is the element and nothing else can take its place. But whether the water be found in a river, a creek, a lake, or in a pool, it will be acceptable to Christ. The validity of one's baptism does not depend upon a strict conformity to the incidentals of any one baptism recorded in the New Testament, but upon the act itself and the necessary prerequisites thereto. Again, Christians should observe that divine memorial feast, the

#### Christ's prayer for unity 79

Lord's supper, upon the first day of the week. But the exact hour of the day is not mentioned by the Holy Spirit ; therefore, we are not to select one hour to the exclusion of all other hours of that day.

In the Lord's supper there are two, and only two, elements to be used, viz., the bread and the fruit of the vine. Nothing is said as to how much of each one is to use at each observance, hence this is left for each communicant to decide for himself or herself. Neither is there an intimation as to how many plates and how many vessels are to be used in conveying these elements to the people who commune. Nothing is said about how many "deacons" are to serve the congregations at each service.

These and other incidentals are not to be made an essential part of the service. Go teach the nations is as essential and as imperative now as when first uttered by Christ to the apostles. The chief thing in reference to this great command is to go. The selection of the field

of operations, the method of travel, and many other matters are the incidentals which may vary as to place and time and surroundings, but the command can not be obeyed by staying at home and refusing to go.

But in Christianity, as in every system of ethics, religion or politics, there must be a basic principle, a central idea, an accepted standard of authority. What, then, should constitute the standard in Christianity by which everything connected therewith, or which belongs thereto, should be measured or tested? Almost everything depends upon a correct answer to this question. If there should arise any controversy among the members of any fraternal or religious body of people in regard to any vital point of teaching or practice, what would be the proper course to pursue in arriving at a proper understanding and a satisfactory adjustment thereof? The constitution and by-laws and edicts of the organization are the things to which all would appeal. In the settlement of any difference among Christians involving matters of doctrine, appeal can not be made to the writings

80 our savior's prayer for unity

of anyone of ancient, medieval or modern times, who did not write under the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit. Only the apostles of Christ thus wrote, for Christians. In their writings they were guided by the immediate power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is not in order here to discuss the nature of their inspiration, as to whether it was verbal or plenary, or both. All Christians, it is presumed, are united as to the fact that

the apostles wrote under the immediate power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and that their writings constitute an infallible guide for Christians for all countries and for all ages. The infallibility of the scriptures as to the facts of history, law and prophecy, also as an infallible guide to Christians in all matters of faith and practice, is a doctrine that constitutes the chief bulwark of Protestantism, and which differentiates it from Romanism. An infallible church is the central idea of Romanism.

An infallible Book is the keynote of Protestantism. The great Chillingworth said : "The Bible alone is the religion of Protestants. " This is one of the most vital points to be considered and honored and emphasized in our efforts to bring into actuality the unity for which Jesus prayed and which he deemed so essential to the Christianization of the world. Let us never lose sight of this fact. Upon the one Book all believers can meet, and by it all can and should be guided. Every vital point of difference can be satisfactorily and correctly settled by an appeal to the Book. This is, indeed, the true basis of union and unity and peace among Christians.

It is also agreed that Christ is the central idea or truth of the Bible, especially of the new covenant scriptures. All professed Christians accept and emphasize this truth. All love to ascend the mountain of transfiguration and linger there while the Father clothes the Son with authority supreme and universal. The vision is beautiful. It is of tremendous significance.

Moses, Israel's great leader and law-giver; Elijah, bold, intrepid, loyal and unshakably true to God's word

## Christ's prayer for unity 81

in the midst of the greatest apostasy that ever cursed Israel — these illustrious men of God in robes immortal, appear upon the scene. Jesus is arrayed in the beauty and glory and majesty of kingly power. Then, as suddenly as they came, Moses and Elijah took their departure. "And when they (James, Peter and John) had lifted up their eyes they saw no man, save Jesus only." (Matt. 17:8.) A voice from heaven, unmistakably clear, proclaimed His supreme authority in all things divine. Let complete silence reign in heaven and on earth while God speaks. Listen, ye men and angels to this voice : "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him!"

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,

Let angels prostrate fall ;  
Bring forth the royal diadem

And crown Him Lord of all."

## OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Isaac C. Hoskins.

What is implied in and upon what is the unity based for which Christ prayed? Hear him: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word ; that they may all be one ; even as thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee ; that they may



also be one in us ; that the world may believe that thou didst send me. . . . That they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me." (John 17:20-23.)

Coming to the study of this prayer as an humble believer seeking to know His will, we must note carefully what He says : "The word which thou gavest me I have given unto them." (Verse 8.) "I pray for them also that believe on me through their w r ord." (Verse 20.)

It is as clear a demonstration that the present divided state of the religious world is wholly out of harmony with His will as expressed in this prayer. It is not only realized by the missionaries "on the firing line" in far-away lands that divisions hinder the progress of His church, but in our own land leaders of thought among the denominations more and more are encouraging the idea of union, though groping in the dark, as it were, for a ground of union.

Attention is called to these words quoted from Newell Dwight Hillis : "Gone forever the day when the church can be split into one hundred and sixty sects. The whole spirit of the age is against this disunion and separation. The time has fully come for the church of Jesus Christ to unite — slowly we are coming toward the church of Jesus Christ, and at last all again will be of one accord at one place — the place will be the cross of Jesus Christ

and there we will stand face to face, and all will have come into the unity of the faith."

Still more clear and ringing are these words quoted from P. S. Henson: "Back to Christ is the ringing watchword of our time. Back to the church of the apostles is as wise a watchword as the church of the twentieth century can inscribe upon its banner. True, there was the ideal church. Alas ! that that unity should ever have been disturbed. For myself I must frankly declare that I am not of the number of those who grow enthusiastic over the imaginary beauties of denominationalism. It is the abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not. God never meant that there should be two sects, much less one hundred and sixty. Back to Christ ! Back to the pattern of the apostolic church ! Back to the simple teaching of the word of God !"

It is as clear as a sunbeam that the oneness for which Christ prayed was to be based upon the word of God. He does not pray for those who believe in any sort of fashion ; who are depending upon their feelings, or the doctrines of men ; but for those whose faith is based simply on the word of God. It should be recognized at once that no "ministerial courtesies/" denominational recognition (nor "conglomeration of sects," I. B. Grubbs) can be a scriptural union.

Ira Landreth, lauding the Christian Endeavor movement, said : "Interdenominational co-operation and denominational loyalty is all we can hope for." It appears to the writer that interdenominational co-operation is not the oneness for which Christ prayed ; and, further, denominational loyalty is disloyalty to Christ.

Simson Ely, another staunch friend of the same "movement," made the concession : "Loyalty to the denominations is expressed in the Christian Endeavor pledge where the endeavorer is required to support 'my church.' Right or wrong, every endeavorer is pledged to the support of the denomination or church to which he belongs."

#### 84 our savior's prayer for unity

It is desired to emphasize the point that human organizations which are supposed to hasten the answer to Christ's prayer serve rather to perpetuate divisions. Any careful student should understand that none of these "movements," with their human foundations and party loyalty, can be the oneness for which Christ prayed. Whatever serves to disparage the word of God by exalting the doctrines of men is to be rejected. Infinitely better to be guided by divine revelation than to allow the teachings of men to come between our conscience and God. Not only must this oneness be on the word, but it must not be a fragmentary gospel. Paul would never be disloyal to Christ by suppressing a part of divine truth. He would not be guilty of that even during a so-called "union meeting/" There is no reason for a refusal to declare "the whole counsel of God." When one insists on preaching the preaching Jesus authorized, "it is not a controversy about mere dogma and non-essentials, but this : "Shall we recognize the exclusive Lordship of Christ, or, shall we erect by the side of His throne another labeled 'The Authority of Man.'

Paul would not combine anything human with the divine word; neither would he refuse to declare the whole counsel of God. Guesnel, commenting on Gal. 1 : 6-9, is quoted by Clark as follows: "If those are justly said to pervert the gospel of Christ, who were joining with it human ceremonies, which God himself instituted, what do those who would fondly reconcile and blend it with the pomps of the devil? The purity of the gospel can not admit of any mixture."

"That the world may believe that thou didst send me." If this was to be a mere internal or spiritual union, that would not cause the world to believe, that would not be visible to men, for no confederation of churches emphasizing denominational teachings can "save the world for Christ." There must be such a unity that the world can see, which manifests itself, whose power is felt because

our savior's prayer for unity 85

it would demonstrate to the world that His followers were members "one of another."

Such unity, such an exhibition of brotherly love and loyalty to Christ, would cause the mightiest wave of religious fervor to sweep over the world as has not been witnessed since the church was one, spake the same thing and were perfectly joined together in the same mind. (See Acts 2:42-47; 4:32, 33; 6:1-7; 12:5.)

There is "one body" — "the church" of which Christ is the head. (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:4, 5; Col. 1:18-24.)

All those who believe His word can unite in this one body, taking the Bible as the rule of faith and practice, wear the one name which honors the great head of the church, be one in Him without surrendering anything essential to salvation and without wounding the conscience of any brother who believes His word.

Christ prayed that His followers might be one even as He and the Father were one. There was perfect harmony in their purpose, teaching and method, so Christ's followers should be one in purpose, teaching and method.

When Jesus says, "There shall be one flock, one shepherd ; they shall hear my voice" (John 10:14-16), it is clearly out of harmony with His prayer to erect other folds into which distracted sheep are led by the discordant voices of rival shepherds. The unauthorized denominational folds existing in our day have originated because men have given heed to religious shepherds, whose voices are not harmonious with that of the Great Shepherd. "Who believe on me through their word" "One, even as we are one." "That the world may believe."

These words from His own lips express clearly His will, both as to what is implied in it and upon what the unity is based for which Christ prayed.

"How blest and how joyous will be the glad day,  
When heart beats to heart in the work of the Lord ;

When Christians united shall swell the grand lay,  
Divisions all ended; triumphant His word."

## UNITY.

By Thaddeus S. Hutson.

Unity of all believers in Christ is desirable, commendable, possible and practicable. There must then be some cause or causes why they are not thus united. One of these causes seems to be a failure to find or regard the only proper base of unity, and another is the failure to properly discriminate between human wisdom and divine revelation. Sectarian union, or an agreement to disagree in matters of faith, is not the oneness for which Jesus prayed nor "the unity of the Spirit" commended by Paul. Jesus said, "I pray for them also that believe on me through their word." (John 17:20.) Paul said: "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) So it is settled that the basis of "unity" is the word of God. Unity is desirable, because in unity there is strength ; in division there is weakness. Unity of believers promotes faith in others and destroys infidelity. Notice our Savior's prayer on this point: "Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word ; that they may all be one ; even as thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be in us that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:19-21.)

In the word of the apostles only is that unity possible or practicable. "Now I beseech you, brethren, through 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 perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.) Must we all

## UNITY %7

have the same mind and be of the same judgment in everything? Must we all build houses exactly alike, wear the same cut of clothing, use the same kind of machinery and follow the same manner of farming, school teaching, merchandizing and banking? No. And there are a thousand and one things about which we may differ in opinions as wide as the poles and still keep "the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace." We may agree in opinions, but it should not destroy our unity if we do not, provided we are united in matters of faith. Men do not make divisions by holding opinions, but by compelling others to help them to hold them. Opinions are what men think. Faith is what the word of God teaches. All creeds and confessions of faith of human origin are founded on human opinion and speculation. We may unite on and be bound by such a creed, but it would not be "the unity of the Spirit" nor "the bond of peace." All such creeds could be sent to the flames and not a righteous principle would be sacrificed. We would still have the word of God, the only basis of Christian unity, left us. An unwritten creed is no less a human creed because it is not in writing. Written creeds are human tests of fellowship. Human tests of fellowship is sectarianism. Unwritten tests of fellowship is sectarianism. Paul did not say one paper, one college, one editor, one preacher, one opinion. These do

not belong to the New Testament units. They should not all, nor any one of them, be made a basis of unity to the exclusion of all others of their class, nor should they be so exalted as to cause division and alienation. Those who would make them tests of fellowship, either pro or con, is a sectarian. Men and women may live the Christian life, die and go to heaven, and never see inside of a Bible college, read a religious paper, follow any certain preacher or hold as their guiding star any certain editor to the exclusion of all others in their class. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called,

8J< our savior's prayer for unity

with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love : giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Eph. 4:1-4.) Here are the seven units on which "the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace" can be effected and kept to the exclusion of all else in their class. "One body." "And he is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1 :18.) "And gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." (Eph. 1:22.)

1. The church is the body of Christ.

2. There is one body.



### 3. Therefore, only one church.

The unity of the spirit can be kept only in the one body. It is the only body in which men can be saved. It is the only body in which the commands and ordinances of Christ can be kept blamelessly. It is the only body that can be governed in all things by the law of the Lord. "One Spirit." Every separate animated body has a spirit of its own. This is true of physical, political or religious bodies. The spirit of Methodism is to build up Methodism. The Baptist spirit does not work to increase the number of Methodists, and this is true of each separate party of the whole Babylon of sectarians. The Holy Spirit, the spirit of the "one body," must be interested only in the building up of the "one church." A true member of the body of Christ can not be interested in building a rival institution which promises salvation, whether it be a church or secret lodge.

"One hope." What is the hope of the Christian? Is it confined to any excellency in this life? Do we hope only to outrival some other church in fine buildings, educated preachers, endowed colleges and superior numbers and wealth? No. But it is the hope of eternal life;

### UNITY 89

of a rest beyond the grave — an anchor sure and steadfast, reaching beyond the veil.

"One Lord." One Lord, Jesus Christ, not "Lord God the Pope," not a local Lord over God's heritage, not a

popish preacher, who would by his own whims declare a church out of order and proceed to lord it over the elders of the church. One Lord is all we need. More than this causes divisions and separations.

"One faith." "The faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.)

"One baptism." The one baptism is one in element, in action, in design or purpose. The baptism of the great commission (Mark 16:16; Matt. 28:18-20) is the one baptism. It was baptism in water. "Except one be born of water and of the Spirit he can not enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5.) "And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him." (Acts 8:38.)

The action was a burial. "Buried with him through baptism." (Rom. 6:4.) "Buried with him in baptism." (Col. 2:12.) The design of baptism was and is to bring the believing penitent into the remission of sins, into Christ, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, into the kingdom of God. (See Acts 2:38; Rom. 6; John 3:5; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 3:26-27.)

"One God and Father." The pope is not over God. And God "is not like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art and device of man." (Acts 17:29.)

"One Father." No priest on earth is our spiritual father. God being our Father, we are then his children, his heirs ; heaven is our home. What a sweet fellowship ! What a blessed relationship ! How foolish,

then, to divide over Paul, Cephas, Apollos, or any other preacher of the word. They were not crucified for us, nor were we baptized in their name. These are not the units on which we must have the same mind and judgment. "Who split the log" is a question much abused

## 90 our savior's prayer for unity

in our day. An opposition can be waged against most anything and raise this same question. The class question "who drove the wedge?" Those who advocate them or those who oppose them. "Secret orders" opposition to such extreme as to make them tests of fellowship would divide most any church. But could not that extremist cry, "Who split the log?" Midweek prayer meeting is advocated by some and opposed by others. "Who split the log?" is asked by the one who opposes. Religious papers can be opposed the, same way and the same provoking question raised, "Who drove the wedge?" "Who split the log?" and so on with the college question and many other things of like nature. Those who go to an extreme in negative opposition and denounce as digressives those who do not go to the same extreme in the matter not affecting the seven units, one or more of them, are driving a wedge of division. Let us all pray and work for "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Lee Jackson.

Having prayed for his apostles, whom he had chosen to perform the functions of their all-important mission, Jesus continues : "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word ; that they all may be one ; even 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 didst send me." (John 17:20,21.)

There is a necessary oneness of heart and soul on the part of the followers of Christ for which our Savior prayed that has never at any time been fully realized, not even during the apostolic age. Even while the apostles were yet living there were jealousies, ungodly rivalries and contentions prevailing in the congregations which they established. In some instances they had their self-chosen views relative to pre-eminence among the apostles and other inspired teachers. Some claimed to be followers of Paul, some of Apollos, and others of Cephas. The Jewish converts had their disturbing questions relative to the law of Moses, while the Gentile Christians were troubled by those who desired to subject the testimony concerning Christ to the test of philosophical speculations. And in the congregation at Corinth, even those endowed with miraculous gifts were disposed to misuse those gifts and to quarrel among themselves about the relative importance of their special endowments. The Lord's supper was abused by being turned into a common feast. Yet, notwithstanding these rivalries, contentions, abuses, factions and other existing evils and disorders, the apostles addressed these erring ones as God's people, as brethren, as saints, and as

members of the body of Christ. This should impress

92 our savior's prayer for unity

us with the necessity for love and forbearance toward those who are in error.

When we reflect upon the conditions prevailing when the gospel was first proclaimed in the world, we are not so much surprised at the misunderstandings and misapprehensions which led to disorders among primitive Christians. With the exception of the teaching which the people of Israel had received through the Old Testament prophets, all of the most enlightened peoples of the world had long been imbued with the notion that whatever there is of good for man must come through an observance of rules of conduct which were based upon principles of moral philosophy and doctrines concerning truth in the abstract. The devout Israelites maintained that especial blessings from the God of Israel could only be secured through a formal observance of the ceremonials of the law, as interpreted by the traditions of their fathers, while the untutored pagans were firm in the belief that the gods would favor those who were faithful in conforming to the requirements of a ritualistic worship. With notions so universally prevailing it is not to be wondered at that the perception of gospel teaching on the part of so many of the early converts to Christ was a perverted perception. As a leaven in the lump, these perverted notions were freely at work in many quarters while the apostles were yet alive, and it was this that caused them so much painful anxiety

and so many gloomy forebodings as to the future of their labors. It was with reference to this condition of affairs that Paul wrote, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." (2 Thess. 2:7.) And with reference to this same retrogression from the purity and simplicity of gospel teaching the apostle Peter wrote, "Among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them." (2 Pet. 2:1.) And foreseeing the inevitable results of this leaven of false teaching, Jude exhorts to "contend earnestly for the faith

our savior's prayer for unity 93

which was once for all delivered unto the saints." These inspired apostles knew that these prevailing misconceptions would eventually bring in divisive and soul-destroying heresies, which would lead to a rejection of Christ through a denial of his exclusive claims as man's only Redeemer. This denial of the claims of Christ would mean a denial of his rightful authority to rule in the hearts and lives of his people. After the passing away of these inspired leaders, the decline into a condition of apostasy from the truth of the gospel on the part of vast numbers of the professed followers of Christ was very rapid.

A study of the literature belonging to the period immediately following the time of the apostles shows that belief in abstract doctrines based upon superficial interpretations of the scriptures was the prime cause of the first schisms among Christians, and the apostasies

from the faith of the gospel. Instead of accepting it as a system of divinely inspired testimony concerning the Christ, they perverted the gospel by lowering it to the level of a system of theology. The scriptures were used as a support for orthodox doctrine and not for the purpose of learning of Christ as a Savior, and a man's Christian character was judged by the orthodoxy of his doctrine and not by his faith in Christ and obedience to his will. It is at once seen that this serious prostitution of the gospel from its original purpose as a means for bringing men to Christ could have no other effect than that of causing divisions and bringing in a reign of confusion and religious intolerance. The prayer of our Savior is "for them that believe on me through their word, that they may all be one." It does not in any manner contemplate a belief that looks toward or rests upon any formulated system of doctrinal tenets whether written or unwritten. This belief, which looks exclusively toward the Christ as an only and all-sufficient Savior needs to be distinguished from belief in doctrines which men abstract or deduce from the Bible as a book

#### 94 our savior's prayer for unity

of revelation. The faith which rests upon Christ as a personal Savior, having as its support the word of testimony proclaimed by the apostles as inspired witnesses, is unifying, while belief in a system of tenets deduced from the scriptures, or from any other source, is necessarily divisive. Such systems as can be devised for purposes of fellowship may be either enlarged or diminished, as the fancies of men may dictate, or accord-

ing to the knowledge of what the Bible contains as a storehouse of sacred treasures. The student of the Bible who adds to his creed as he advances in knowledge will have a long list of items in that creed, while the creed of the man limited in information will be correspondingly abridged. It is thus readily seen that to make such a system a test of fellowship is to introduce into the congregation a source of endless strife and confusion. The essential unity for which our Savior prayed is already an accomplished reality. The fruit-bearing branches are in vital oneness with the vine, and these branches are in unity with one another because of their joint participation in the life of the vine; and so under the mediatorial reign of the Christ all redeemed believers, as God's people, and as being in living communion with Christ, are necessarily in essential unity with one another. This unity of fellowship in Christ is the essential result of the fulfillment of God's purpose in summing up all things in Christ, whom he has given to be the head over all things to the congregation of the redeemed, "which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:10-23.) The supreme duty of those who hear the gospel is to believe in Christ with that degree of strength which accepts him in all that he claims to be as man's Savior. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the apostles and other inspired witnesses all bore the same testimony concerning the Christ, and those who believed exercised a faith that looked toward the same personal Savior, and were inducted into his kingdom by submitting to his authority



in obeying the same commands. These commands were not presented to them as being parts of a ritualistic faith, or as items in an inspired creed, but they were presented as conditions whereby the obedient ones were brought into fellowship with Christ and thus made partakers of the benefits of his shed blood. These first Christians were all one in the simple worship, for in its observance they were all guided by the apostles' teaching. In a word, the faith which held them in oneness with Christ, and which bound them together in fellowship with one another, was an active, living faith. It was a faith that was the law of the heart, because it worked through love. When the unity for which our Savior prayed is fully realized, this faith as the law of the heart will be the ruling force in the congregations of Christ, and strifes and divisions will cease because all will be obedient to him who said: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you."

## IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS.

By D. C. Janes.

A careful consideration of the circumstances immediately preceding our Lord's truly great and vastly important prayer will help much toward putting us in the right attitude, to let these words have their proper weight and solemn significance. The heavenly Visitant had passed the experiences of the stable birth and the manger cradle, the flight to Egypt, the growth to manhood, the baptism, the public ministry and the last pass-over. The Son of the Highest had washed the feet of

his disciples who had been in strife about who of them "was accounted to be greatest." The traitor had been designated ; the new commandment had been given ; Peter's denial and the scattering of the apostolic band had been foretold. At the opening of the fourteenth of John, our Savior began his last discourse, comforting them with words about the many mansions and the Holy Spirit. In the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, he continues with words on abiding in him, using the illustration of the vine and the branches, and also speaking of other matters. And the seventeenth is the great prayer chapter with its four divisions, in which he prays (1) for his own glorification that God may thereby be glorified; (2) for the keeping, the unity and the sanctification of the apostles; (3) for the oneness of those believing on him through their word, and (4) for the apostles again that they might be with him.

The climax was just at hand. In the presence of the apostles he was praying within the shadow of the cross which they could not see, but which was very real, very certain and very near to him. Within a few hours he was betrayed, deserted and denied. There were the trials and the mockings; then the sorrowful march to

## IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS 97

Calvary; the pierced hands and feet, the uplifted cross, the hours of agony, prayer for the wrongdoers, the weeping mother, the jeering crowd, the broken heart, the bleeding side — the atonement for your sins and mine. Here at the consideration of our blessed Redeemer's

prayer is a place to divest ourselves of every divisive and factious thing, thought and inclination. Here is holy ground. Let us take off our sectarian shoes, throw away our robe of self-righteousness, lay aside all shams and pretenses, and get down low enough to appreciate the who, the what, and the wherefore of this petition which comes in such close contact with the crucifixion, that event unparalleled in all the world's history.

There are many causes of division and disunion, and the removal of the causes at least contributes to the removal of the effect. Hatred (Prov. 10:12), pride (13:10), wrath (15:18) and whispering (26:20) are mentioned. "Foolish and ignorant questionings" (2 Tim. 2:23) tend in the same direction. Prejudice is no peace-maker. Ignorance such as that of the brother who is said to have regarded the American Standard Revised Version of the Bible as the work of the devil may be destructive of the oneness for which Jesus prayed. And unbelief is a great hindrance. It is bad enough that not all men believe that baptism is unto the remission of alien sins, but that some who see this clearly do not believe in God's special care for his children is also bad. That there is unbelief among "us" is evident from the question, "Must a church, before having elders, wait until a Christian is found that fills the qualifications in every little point?" He who rightly reads the qualifications in both Timothy and Titus will find the word must inserted just before them in each case. Of course, must in "Ye must be born anew" means must, but not all seem to think it really means must when Paul used it in telling the specifications for an overseer of God's flock. That there should be division when such a state exists is not strange.

## yo OUR SAVIOR S PRAYER FOR UNITY

Binding and loosing where God has not results in division. When he has required us to teach without legalistieally specifying the method, trouble results from trying to bind a method which God has not bound. Likewise, when Jehovah has bound us (Eph. 5 :19; Col. 3 :16) as to the kind of music we offer to him, to break the bond and include what he left out, becomes the occasion of a great schism, loss of property, hard feelings, and a wounded, blighted and blasted cause. Magnifying differences may also contribute to disunion. Exact agreement in minutiae in every matter need not be expected while there are various degrees of knowledge and growth among Christians, nor need these be the occasion of discord. What does it matter if "he that is weak eateth herbs?" (Rom. 14:2.) Not all differences are sinful, and not all differences justify division. All human standards of religion, creeds, and the like, whether written or unwritten, are unwarrantable causes of separation where unity and harmony should be supreme.

When brethren are persistently out of order and will not be set right, it becomes necessary (according to the word) to discontinue fellowship with them (Rom. 16: 17; 2 Thess. 3:6; Tit. 3:10) ; but, unfortunately, not all seem to believe this. Disorderly members are permitted to remain in the fellowship and to damage the body for which Jesus died. When discipline is properly exercised, it is wrong to receive and fellowship the disorderly members anywhere before they have made amends for their misconduct. Failure to observe the King's directions on

this subject will result in evil ; indeed, it is evil within itself. How fine it would be if the main body of members in each congregation would make all the flock to know that persistent misconduct would not be tolerated.

Some of our modern journalism is a disgrace to Christianity and a contributing factor to bitterness and dissension where love and harmony should prevail. A brother writes of a fellow preacher and others as, "The 'old man' and his little popes' " ; a paragraph telling of

#### IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS 99

a "holiness" woman attempting to speak in a tongue is headed, "Sic 'em, Tige." "He is as dishonest as the very devil himself," says one preacher and editor of another preacher and editor, and further describes him as "a mischievous servant of the devil." And we have this: "They must be idiots, sure enough," and other matter which I do not feel like putting in here. That brethren should thus write is too bad, and that editors should publish such material seems not to make the matter any better. Would it not be a grand, good thing if readers of religious papers would say in that way which has to be heeded, "We will not have such work as this?" I would not like to pay money to support such journalism. If we must have religious papers, they should be adequately edited, which, I know, has its problems, but I think these bitter and unbecoming things could be dispensed with. And there is other unsuitable matter which takes time and space which could better be used otherwise. For example, a brother who writes more than a column

doesn't "see why . . . the scriptures should be interpreted," although he can't go ten steps in preaching the word unless he does interpret ("tell the meaning of; explain; expound").

Among "the things which make for peace," unity and hearty co-operation, are the removal of the "middle wall(s) o'f partition" (Eph. 2:14); the use of Biblical phraseology (1 Pet. 4:11); forbearance (Eph. 4:2); speaking the same thing and having the same care (1 Cor. 12:25). An elaborate treatment of matters of such magnitude is impossible in the space at present available, but if a simple cause of divine unity and cure for devilish division is desired, you have it in that one mighty word, love. "Love covereth a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8.) "Love ... is the bond of perfectness." (Col. 3:14.) Why are not more mothers estranged from their wayward sons and erring daughters? Because they love them. It may be said that they are "blind," and so on, but the fact remains that they hold on to their children

100 our savior's prayer for unity

though the children may not hold on to them. It is done because they love them. When brethren truly love each other there is not apt to be much division. We will not lightly throw overboard our brother whom we love, and ride contentedly on without him.

"Factions, divisions, parties" are sinful. (Gal. 5:20-21.) They are directly opposed to that fine and close unity for which Christ prayed. We who believe on the

Son of Man through apostolic teaching should stand shoulder to shoulder in the every-day conflict against the arch enemy of our souls and of our race. "For brethren to dwell together in unity" (Ps. 133:1) is too good and too pleasant to be sacrificed needlessly. In preaching, I will require of the alien no conditions of pardon which God does not require. And in like manner I will deal with the citizen of the kingdom. To promote good fellowship among disciples of Jesus, I will sacrifice my mere preference and co-operate with my brother in his preference, which he is not willing to give up.

UNITY.

By L. E. Johnston.

On the night before Jesus suffered death on the cross he prayed for his disciples, those who were such then, and for those who should believe on him "through their word." That includes us of today, for through their testimony we believe. Read the account of that night, including the seventeenth chapter of John. The especial burden of this prayer seemed to be that his followers "might all be one," for four times is this petition made. More than eighteen centuries have passed since then and today one or the other of two things must be true : Either the most of those who profess to be his followers are not so, or the dying prayer of our Savior remains unanswered. Is it the latter? Let us suppose so.

When our friends leave this world, their parting requests take on a special significance and we make, if necessary, great effort to fulfill them. How is it, then,

that this best friend that any of us have ever had, has had this special dying request so long unanswered?

If traced to the final analysis, I believe we may find that the reasons are two, namely, lack of knowledge and lack of willingness, and that the last is greater than the first. Not that all are unwilling to deny themselves, to give up their preferences, and to be where Jesus wishes them to be and where he prayed that they might be. But some are. For this is a careless and selfish age and the people are, many of them, "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Of those to whom this does not apply, there are many who, with all their ability, wish to do what they can to help answer this prayer; but they are held back by the ones to whom they defer on account of their supposed superior knowledge. And there are some of these latter, who, loving to have the pre-

102 our savior's prayer for unity

eminence, manage with whatever of craft they may possess of their own and with whatever has been learned before time, to keep their flocks where they are instead of where Christ prayed for them to be. For if there were no flocks to have authority over they could have no authority or pre-eminence.

Jesus is the center, and when we are all where he is we will all be together. At present it is not so. Scattered here and there throughout the religious system claiming Jesus as their sun and center are various bodies at various and varying distances from the center and from



each other. Each receives more or less light, but they are separate and can never all be together until they are united in him who is the center of it all. If such a meeting might come there would be light to illumine the universe, and surely all might see and believe.

In times gone by, it used to be said that oneness was not to be desired, that division was better, but it is hard to understand how anyone could ever have believed that in the light of Christ's life, his teaching and his dying words. It is hard to understand how they read. Most now, even of those on the outskirts of this system of religious bodies, admit its desirability, but they question its possibility. And, here again, are those who, instead of leading their flocks aright, stand in the way and keep them from entering the one fold of the Great Shepherd. Jesus said, speaking of the Gentiles, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." If such were his care for the Gentiles and his desire for them that they might be in the "one fold," what must be his feeling today in view of the great number of folds into which his professed followers are divided? In view of the recurring burden of that dying prayer, what must be his feeling as he sees things as they are ? But he is no longer bidding a few followers an earthly farewell ; he is no longer agonizing in Gethsemane, and about to suffer the most terrible death to

UNITY 103

which human ingenuity and human cruelty could subject

him; he is clothed with glory and immortality and is "King of kings and Lord of lords." And it is well to work while the day remains, for some time the opportunity will have gone by.

But these separate religious bodies are made up of individuals and it is the individuals and not the aggregate bodies that are the actual units to be welded into one body. To do the things that should be done there must be knowledge on the part of the rank and file. This knowledge must be obtained by a clear, fair, intelligent study of the Bible, which is our guide book, and is to be followed if we would make the journey safely and gain the heavenly inheritance which is waiting for us. There must be a patient and determined continuance in well-doing, no matter what hindrances and persecutions there may be. There must be warfare against wrong and it is here that the greatest opposition will be aroused, for it is when the adversary's work is attacked and he is in danger of losing ground that his wrath is most fierce and he hurls his most venomous darts. Truly, there is room for more patience and kindness and gentleness than we are likely to possess. But a good deal has been said about these and perhaps not enough about other necessary qualities. There must be strength to "stand fast in the faith" whatever comes ; we must "contend earnestly for the faith," we must fight "the good fight," remembering that the "weapons of warfare are not carnal," but taking the "whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." To do all these things will cost something and may cost much. But the reward is sure.

Some of the things which help to make and keep

division are the numerous more or less elaborate systems that have been worked out for the individuals of different churches to conform to. Contrast with these the simplicity of organization and of work and worship in Christ's church. When elaborations on this simple sys-

104 our savior's prayer for unity

tern begin then differences come in. Christ's system is perfect. It seems presumptuous to try to form a better.

But though the system is perfect the individuals in the church are not. Here, perhaps, lies the greatest difficulty of all. Just how much allowance is to be made on account of lack of knowledge, or of mental or moral strength, or on account of circumstances, is not ours to say further than is written. But nothing short of the highest effort to learn God's will and to do it should be expected of any, and especially of ourselves. We know our own limitations and hindrances best, and so may be inclined to special leniency in this instance. The highest type of uprightness of life should be the standard striven for; the life that stands against wrong, no matter how popular it may be, and for the right, no matter how unpopular the cause. That is, it is God's approval we should work for rather than that of this world whenever there is choice between the two, and it is very often that there is. For it is God's approval that will count when the great day of reckoning comes. The world's approval may help for a little time. That of God will be our help and stay through all eternity.

Just how far God's children may fall short of the requirements laid down and yet be saved by God's mercy is not for us to say. But it does not seem wise to presume on this mercy. It behooves each to live to the highest limit of his knowledge and abilities without leaving anything to God's mercy until he has done all he possibly can. There will be plenty of room for it then. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

When all earnestly study the Bible to find what they shall do, and willingly and earnestly use their best efforts to do it, then the unity for which the dying Savior prayed will not be very far off. And as unity is reached it will be necessary to keep doing continually, earnestly. The momentum of continued earnest work will help to keep

## UNITY 105

the body together. It is not the marching, warring, victorious army that becomes disaffected and divided.

May the day speed when all may be one in name, in faith and doctrine and practice ; when there shall be "unity of the Spirit" in the "one body/" of which all who seek the heavenly land may be members in Christ Jesus.

## THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By E. L. Jorgenson.

In the seventeenth chapter of John, Jesus prays first for himself, then for his immediate followers, and then for all those who should "believe on him through their word." Four times there he pleads for the unity of his disciples, "That they may all be one," actually one in the same measure that He and the Father are one. That prayer was blessedly fulfilled in the early church where "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind" ; but it is far from fulfilled today.

The subject of Christian unity is the most difficult of our times. I used to know all about it! Now I have my doubts and difficulties. It is not these doubts and difficulties, however, that I propose to share with you in this lesson, but some things rather about which I am sure and certain, positive and confident.

1. I am sure that denominationalism is all wrong and sinful in the sight of God. The Bible settles that. I believe that all sectarianism, disunion, non-union, non-co-operation, non-schism and division is sinful in God's sight.

2. I believe there is but one true church. "There is one body." That is an age-long fact. It is not only true that there ought to be, but that, in spite of the rent condition of the church, there is but one body. I do not mean that denominations, as such, constitute that one body ; far from it. They only mar its unity. But one church of which I speak consists of all true children of God in every place; all the regenerate, all the redeemed in the aggregate, those "whose names are enrolled in heaven," members of "the church of the first born," and of the "general assembly." No one is a member of that

body because he is a member of some denomination, but in spite of it.

## THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 107

3. I believe, furthermore, that these children of God, scattered abroad as they are, many of them members of denominations, some in error worse than others, but children of God, nevertheless, because they have once definitely become so. I believe these could and should be gathered together into an outward and visible unity, answering the Savior's prayer, duplicating the New Testament church, restoring and exhibiting original Christianity.

Let us look for a moment into the nature of religious differences. There are first, those differences in belief which directly affect conduct. I mean congregational conduct, not personal. (Personal conduct, important as it is, need not hinder union.) Differences, for example, as to the name, the creed, the method of church control, of administering charity and missions, baptism, music, the Lord's supper, finances. Second, there are differences -which do not directly affect congregational conduct; differences on election, the Holy Spirit, the millennium, and the like.

In regard to the first class of differences, believers need to be united, for these are things which we do, not individually and alone, but congregationally. These stand for action, practice, conduct, in which all believers are involved. And, fortunately, there is a platform upon

which, without argument or discussion, all believers are already united as to these things. Examine the following chart :

Human names — Name — Christ's.  
Westminster, etc. — Creed — The Bible.  
Boards, conferences — Control — Christ the Head.  
Societies — Charity and missions — The church.  
Infant sprinkling — Baptism — Believer's ; burial.  
Instrumental — Music — Singing.  
Monthly, quarterly — Lord's supper — Weekly.  
Socials, etc. — Finances— Free will gifts.

In the middle column are the principal items touch-

108 our savior's prayer for unity

ing congregational conduct. On the left are the things on which believers are disagreed. On the right, things upon which believers are united. Why? Because by a common consent those things on the left are not in the Book, while those listed on the right are in the Book. Fortunately, no one holds the things in the left column essential to salvation or required of God. No one believes that human names and creeds, that sprinkling, that the baptism of infants, that monthly, quarterly or yearly communion, that instrumental music, that socials, fairs, and the like, that central ecclesiastical boards, conferences, etc., that missionary societies, are absolutely necessary. On the other hand, no one believes the wearing of Christ's name, the Bible alone as the creed believer's baptism, baptism by burial, weekly communion, singing,

the church as the society for missions, free will giving, and the independence of each congregation with Christ the head of the church — no one holds these things as sinful. They form, therefore, a true basis of union.

It is true that some Christians hold the things on the left as advantageous to the propagation of Christianity, but would not the advantages of a united church, though it were upon a narrower platform, more than offset the advantages of the things on our left, practiced by a divided church?

In regard to the other class of differences, those that do not directly determine congregational conduct, why should they hinder Christian union and unity? I grant you there are some matters of belief which can not be reduced to practice, such as our Lord's person and nature (John 8:24), His resurrection (Rom. 10:9), that are fundamental. But why should a difference on election, on the Holy Spirit, on the millennium, for instance, affect unity though our differences be freely expressed? For these are not things which we do. My belief and teaching along these lines do not involve you in any wrong act, or act which you believe to be wrong.

I know there are those who say, "Since these are not

#### THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 109

things which we do, they can not be essential ; why not be silent upon them for unity's sake, or at least why not confine ourselves to reading and reciting scripture on these controverted themes for unity's sake?" Now. there



is a very plausible and subtle fallacy right there. We can not be silent upon such themes because God demands a full testimony on all subjects. (Matt. 4:4; 2 Tim. 3:16; 4:1, 2; 2 Pet. 1:19; 3:2; Rev. 2,2:16.) Paul was "pure from the blood of all men." For he "shrank not from declaring . . . the whole counsel of God." Not even when there was dissension on a subject — one, too, which did not directly affect conduct — did Paul cease to teach. (See 1 Cor. 15.)

"Very well," you say, "God demands a full testimony on all subjects; but on controverted subjects which do not affect practice can we not confine ourselves to the reading and recitation of the word for unity's sake? Would you want to be limited to reading God's word on such subjects as repentance and baptism? You answer, "No, these are essentials." Very well ; but whatever motive-testimony is needed to lead men to take those essential steps is also essential to their salvation, is it not? Last week I baptized a man who had gone through nineteen protracted meetings. Never until he heard a discourse on the coming of Christ did he yield. Now, the second coming of Christ is not something that we do, but to him at least that teaching was essential, because by it he was led to take the essential steps. We must distinguish between essential steps and essential scriptures. To preach the essential steps is not preaching what is essential to salvation at all. And if you do not wish to be limited to reading and quoting scripture in presenting the essential steps, for the same reasons I do not wish to be so limited in presenting the essential motives. But you interpose, "I can state, upon occasion, the essential steps in Bible terms." Oh, so can I, thank God, state my belief upon every subject upon occasion in Bible

forms; but if on« can do that, then why should he be

110 our savior's prayer for unity

limited to that? If it is important to illustrate, elucidate, impress and apply, in short, to use human words in setting the essential steps before men, it is just as necessary to be free in the same way in setting the essential motives before men.

I propose, therefore, as a basis for Christian unity the following: (1) In regard to all items of congregational conduct and practice — only such as are found in the New Testament. (See the chart.) Upon these, fortunately, there is already almost universal agreement.

(2) In regard to matters indifferent (things right, but not required), mutual forbearance, giving in and giving up to each other for unity's sake where necessary.

(3) In regard to differences in belief that do not directly determine conduct (as already defined).

(a) Let every believer be able and willing to state, upon occasion or demand, every article of faith for which he would contend in Bible terms, without human addition or subtraction, alteration, explanation or interpretation ; but (b) being thus able and willing to state his faith in Bible terms, let him not be confined to the use of such terms ; but let him be free to impress the truth along any line in human language, because to do so may prove as essential to someone's salvation as the matter of

setting the essential steps before him. (c) Above all, "Let love of the brethren continue" ; "love one another from the heart fervently" ; for love is the "bond of perfectness" and the secret of all true unity. When in doubt as to how hard to press, or just how to speak some truths, remember the rule, speak it in love. (Eph. 4:15.)

UNITY— ONENESS.

By T. H. Kirkman.

Text: John 17:6-11.

"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me ; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me ; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine ; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee, Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

How were they to be one? First, how was Jesus and the Father one? One in purpose, of one mind in respect to man's salvation. In order that the apostles might be one, it was necessary for them to be of the

same mind ; to be of the same mind would prompt them to teach the same thing; had the apostles taught differently they would have ignored the Savior's prayer, thereby becoming unworthy of their position.

The Savior had already shown his love for fallen man by forsaking his place around the throne and coming to earth to bring the message of God to man.

He was so much concerned about the salvation of poor fallen man that when the time drew near for his crucifixion we find him in the garden of Gethsemane, where he gave utterance to this wonderful prayer for unity.

112 our savior's prayer for unity

Second, in order that the disciples or converts all be one, it was absolutely necessary that the apostles all teach the same things. By teaching differently would have been the means of building up rival institutions, thus introducing confusions and division instead of unity, as Christ prayed. The religious division now in existence owes its existence to man's failure in observing the prayer of Jesus the Lord. Could we carry our minds back by an eye of faith to Gethsemane and view the Savior as he pours out his soul to the Father of light in prayer on unity, methinks it would change our indifference to an earnest desire for unity.

We now wish to note Christ's prayer as he prays for those that should hear the words of the apostles. (John

17:20-21). "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." (Why?) "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

We can see the great loving heart of our Master opened up on our behalf in this prayer to his Father just before his crucifixion. In my mind's eye I can see the sweat as it pours from the face of my Lord as great drops of blood; I can see his wonderful concern for me as he pours out his heart's desire to God for the unity of his disciples. If all who claim to love God and believe the Bible to be the Word of God and believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God were all of the same mind, where would the non-professor be today? Echo, where?

We are glad to note a tendency among the leading teachers of all religious denominations toward unity. Instead of thanking God for division that all may have their choice, they have begun the search for a common ground upon which all may be united. It is true they are seeking a human standard instead of divine; human philosophy instead of the Word of God. Our prayer to the great Jehovah is that their eyes may be opened to the divine pattern, to the Word of God as a basis of

## UNITY ONENESS 113

unity; in fact, the only basis upon which all people can unite without a sacrifice of truth or conscience. There is not a human system in existence that can bring about

a complete state of unity. If there were, it would be too low to please God. We are all agreed that the Bible is the Word of God. We are all agreed that it is the best book on earth ; that it contains a perfect system ; that it sets forth a perfect pattern. Then, why not lay aside all these human devices, human systems or patterns, and accept the divine pattern, God's Word? For all the rest are utter failures and could not please God.

See Col. 3:17: "And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Again, Eph. 1 :22, 23: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him which filleth all in all." Again, 1 Pet. 4:11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth ; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." Thus we see that unity outside of or beyond the authority of Christ can not please God.

How, then, can we become one and be in harmony with the Lord's prayer? We answer, by having our wills swallowed up in the will of God. I am willing, yea doubly willing, to meet anyone upon the Word of God, and follow the injunction of the apostle Peter as recorded in 1 Pet. 4:11 : "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" ; or, with Thomas Campbell, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we are silent." We are willing to trample all the doctrines and dogmas of men under our feet and to be governed by the doctrine of Christ, to build according to the divine pattern. Will you meet me on the God-given system? But should you ask me for the sake of unity

to ignore one single divine principle, I answer, no ; no, not to please my father, mother, wife or child. I can not afford it. Heaven, with all its glories, is too sweet to

114 our savior's prayer for unity

me. I value the love of my Savior above all human love. Then, friends, in conclusion, let's keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and thus be in harmony with the Savior's prayer for unity.

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

(John 17.)

By George A. Klingman.

The shadows of Gethsemane and Calvary fell athwart the little company of perplexed disciples who had gathered "in the large upper room" for "The Last Supper/" The Lord and Teacher had washed the disciples' feet, giving us an example of humble service and loving ministry ; but there was one of the number who would betray him, another who would thrice deny him, and all would forsake him and leave him; and as the shadows deepened they were filled with sorrow, and questionings arose in their hearts concerning that which they could not comprehend; there was only one in that company who knew and understood — he was treading the wine-press alone ; the world's sin and sorrow was crushing the

"tender plant," the burden of our woes was breaking the heart that was sinless — and behold, He prays:

First, for himself : "Father, the hour is come ; glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee: even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given him, he should give eternal life. And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ. I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world : thine they were, and thou gavest them to me ; and they have kept thy word. Now they know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are from thee; for the words v/hich thou gavest me I have given unto them ; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came

116 our savior's prayer for unity

forth from thee, and they believed that thou didst send me.

Observe the three essential elements in this petition:

(1) The unity of the Father and the Son (verses 4 and 5) ; (2) this unity manifested to the disciples by the work and teaching of the Son (verses 6 to 8) ; (3) the disciples believed that the Father sent the Son into the world (verse 8).



The Son could pray that the Father might glorify him, because he had glorified the Father by accomplishing the work which the Father had given him to do ; they worked in perfect accord with each other. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5:17.) "I and the Father are one." (John 10:30.) "The word that ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me." (John 14:24.)

vSecondly, for the apostles : "I pray for them : I pray not for the world, but. for those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine : and all things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. While I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given unto me: and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy made full in themselves. I have given them thy word ; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth ; thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."

## Christ's prayer for unity 117

The burden of this petition is that the apostles may be kept in the name which the Father hath given unto the Son, that they may be kept from the evil one, and that they may be sanctified in the truth which is the word of God : "thai they may be one, even as zve are!\*" Just as Jesus took the things of God and give them unto the apostles, so they were to take that which he gave unto them and give his teaching unto the world. For this reason Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." (John 13 :20.) In the light of such a statement from the Lord himself, how false is the doctrine which represents the apostles as preaching different "gospels." The learned talk about the Petrine, Pauline and Johannine gospels is just so much learned infidelity against which we should set our faces as flint. When Paul withstood Peter to the face at Antioch, they were in no disagreement as to doctrine ; Peter's mistake was one of conduct. (Gal. 2 :11-21, especially verse 14.) When Paul separated from Barnabas, they did not go out preaching different doctrines, but the same message was proclaimed by both of those earnest missionaries and their co-laborers. The Lord's prayer for the apostles was answered and they have left us the teaching of God in its purity and blessed unity.

Thirdly, the Lord prays for all his disciples: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word ; that they may all be one ; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us ; that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I

have given unto them ; that they may be one even as we are one ; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me." The Lord looked down through the trials, temptations and triumphs of the centuries and prayed that all those who believe on him may be one, even as he and the

118 our savior's prayer for unity

Father are one. What a blessed unity ! Not a federation

of different churches with clashing and conflicting creeds, but a spiritual unity — a oneness with the Father and the Son. The beloved disciple, who leaned on the Savior's breast at the supper, and who recorded this wonderful prayer, no doubt has it in mind, when he writes in his first epistle: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye may have fellowship with us : yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ ; and these things we write, that our joy may be made full." (1 John 1 :3-4.)

Neither did Jesus have in mind a gigantic "religious trust," with politico-ecclesiastical assumption such as the papal hierarchy claims. His one petition is that they may be one even as he and the Father are one — "I in them . . . Thou in Me . . . they in us." This is more than union. We may have union without unity ; but where there is this spiritual unity there will be union of effort for all the practical work of the church; there will be "no schisms in the body" — no factious spirit;

nothing will be done through strife or vainglory ; there will be no sects or denominations. In matters of faith all will "speak the same things" and will be "perfectly joined together with the same mind and judgment." Each disciple who enjoys this spiritual unity with the Father and the Son will "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" and will "follow the things that make for peace, and the things whereby we may edify one another." (Rom. 14:19.) No matter how many congregations there may be in the world, they will all be "of the same faith and order" — the faith which was "once for all delivered unto the saints," and the order which is given in the New Testament scriptures. They will wear the same names, preach the same gospel, have the same ordinances and the same worship — worshipping the Father "in spirit and truth," through our Lord Jesus Christ. In matters of opinion each will grant to the other the liberty he claims for himself. In matters

#### Christ's prayer for unity 119

of indifference, the law of brotherly love will prevail, and what one may deem a mere privilege he will gladly waive whenever the best interests of his brethren may so demand. In matters of expediency all will seek to be governed by the "wisdom that cometh from above," the younger will submit themselves to the elder, the inexperienced to the experienced.

There will be no chronic fault-finding, no hyper-criticism, no backbiting nor tale-bearing. If there is need of opposing certain measures or methods that may be

proposed, the opposition will be based on scripture teaching and that alone. The unity of a congregation may be destroyed as effectively by our opposing that which does not violate the teaching of the scriptures, as by advocating something which is contrary to scripture teaching.

In conclusion, we may ask, Has this prayer been answered? To this we reply in the affirmative. It was answered in the lifetime of the apostles, who promptly rebuked and checked the divisive spirit whenever and wherever it was manifest. It has been answered all along in the lives of those who are "at one" with the Father and the Son, wherever they may be found, and so it is answered today in the blessed experience of all those who are walking "in the light, even as He is in the light," and who, therefore, have "fellowship one with another." It is not answered, however, in the present state of the religious world, which presents a lamentable spectacle. For, "There are large sects and small sects, and smaller sects to fight 'em; and these again have other sects, and so ad infinitum." But let us not become discouraged. We have been warned "that in the last days greivous times shall come" and that "evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." And, while there are more sects today than there were five years ago, let us continue to contend "for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" and be sure that in our own lives Christ's prayer will find an answer, and let us wait patiently for the hope of His blessed

appearance when the Christ himself shall "look upon the travail of his soul and be satisfied "when our redeemed souls and glorified bodies shall rejoice in the full realization of the closing words of the Savior's prayer : "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world knew thee not, but I knew thee ; and these knew that thou didst send me : and I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known ; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them/"

#### OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

(John 17.)

By John A. Klingman.

The scene in the "upper room," when Jesus met with his disciples for the last time before being delivered into the hands of sinful men, is most solemn and impressive. The Savior's language appeared more wonderful and strange than it had ever before to these bewildered and troubled men. He spoke of leaving them, sending a Comforter, going to prepare a place for them, one of them betraying him and all deserting him. Their hearts were filled with amazement and fear. And now, just before going out into the night of sorrow and suffering, the Son of God lifts up his eyes to heaven and pours out his soul in earnest petition. He prays that the Father may glorify him; that the apostles may be faithful in

the hour of trial and remain united with him and the Father, and that all who believe in their inspired writings may, by its influence, become and remain a united people.

The prayer has three logical divisions : The Lord prays for himself, for his apostles and for all disciples.

#### 1. The Savior's petition for himself (1-5).

"The hour is come!" That hour at last arrived for which the Savior came into the world. That hour which meant more to man than any hour since creation. We speak of marked periods in man's history. We refer to great battles which resulted in the revolution of state and society not only of a single nation, but of the world. Yet never was there a time in which a fiercer battle was fought and a more decisive victory won than in that hour which began with the struggle in Gethsemane and ended in triumph over the demons in hell when the angels rolled away the stone from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea.

#### 122 our savior's prayer for unity

"Glorify thy Son." Jesus was glorified by the Father in his sufferings in Gethsemane, before the high priest and before the Roman governor, upon the cruel cross, when he shed his precious blood for the redemption of mankind; but, especially was he glorified when he was raised from the dead and afterwards ascended to the Father, being highly exalted and given a name which is above every name. Here he received the glory which

he had with the Father before the world was.

## 2. The Savior's petition for His Apostles (6-19).

We can not call attention to every item, but this part of the prayer is filled with rich and practical lessons.

"They have kept thy word" (6). Judas was the one exception (12). How comforting was the thought to Jesus that these apostles were faithful ! Can as much be said of us? Have we left our nets of worldly care and followed the Master on his mission of love?

"I am glorified in them" (10). The eleven apostles glorified Christ by obedience and fidelity. They wavered, it is true, that dreadful night of heart-searching and testing. They all fled. Peter fell into the hands of Satan and was sifted as wheat. Let us not judge them too harshly. The test was more severe than any we have had. They again acknowledged their Lord after the resurrection, and even doubting Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (See 11 to 16.) Jesus earnestly prayed that they might be kept in the name of the Father and free from the power of the evil one. He knew that the world hated them and that they would be greatly persecuted. The book of Acts shows how nobly the apostles stood the test while the fires of persecution were kindled about them. This prayer was answered, as is also shown in the epistles and Revelation.

"That they may be one, even as we are" (11). Sup-



pose these apostles had organized separate and distinct bodies, giving them names that would indicate various

©vr savior's prayer for unity 123

and conflicting doctrines? If this could be read in the New Testament, the universal decision would be that they were not inspired since God is not the author of confusion. Thank God, their teaching is not contradictory. They had one message, one gospel, one faith. The church became divided, but it was not the fruit of their work.

"Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth" (17 to 19). The Greek word "sanctify" here denotes a dedication or consecration. Thayer says : "So Christ is said by undergoing death to consecrate himself to God, whose will he in that way fulfills." Bible sanctification, therefore, means a Christ-like consecrated life which has for its guidance the revealed will (truth) of God, and in the consecration offers up the body as a living sacrifice. The apostles were thus sanctified. Not only for his sake were they "killed all the day long" in a life of self-denial, but most of them gave their blood on the altar of service.

"For their sakes I sanctify myself that they themselves may also be sanctified in the truth/" Not only would the trials and persecutions of the apostles have been in vain and the blood of martyrs shed for a meaningless cause but the Christian of today would find no comfort in bearing his cross had not Christ first sanctified himself. He would be, indeed, of all men most pitiable, burdened with a cross without the hope of wearing a

crown.

And now we come to the last division of the prayer:

### 3. The Savior's petition for all Christians (20-26).

Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one/' etc. When we consider that this is the dying request of our Lord, can we possibly be indifferent toward it? When we read the reasons the Savior gives for the unity of his followers, do the excuses for divisions given by man not seem blasphemous? Do we dare to say that Christ prayed for that which is not feasible, practicable or possible? His reasons for unity are: "That the world may believe that thou didst send me"; "that they may

124 our savior's prayer for unity

be perfected into one" ; "that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovest them, even as thou lovest me.

Every attempt to unite Christians upon articles of faith formulated by uninspired men has not only miserably failed, but has caused greater divisions. The only way is the Savior's way — "not only for these do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word."

When the church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching," we find that the disciples "day by day continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple."

Our limited space does not allow us to quote the many passages in the epistles, given in warning and pleading, that call upon Christ's followers to speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among them.

In the spirit of Christ-like love, let us ever labor and pray for the unity of the household of faith.

"Let party names no more

The Christian world o'erspread ;

Gentile and Jew, and bond and free,

Are one in Christ, their Head.

Among the saints on earth

Let mutual love be found ;

Heirs of the same inheritance

With mutual blessings crowned.

Thus will the church below

Resemble that above,

Where streams of pleasure ever flow,

And every heart is love."

OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By J. M. McCaleb.

It was a solemn hour, the last quiet hour of sacred fellowship our Lord ever had with his disciples. They had just finished the passover and had closed it by the observance of the first Lord's supper, an ordinance henceforth to be observed weekly till he should come again. They were still seated around the table, it seems ; all save one. A conversation had been going on, from which they began to understand that they were approaching a crisis; but just what it would prove to be they did not yet comprehend. They were bewildered and sad. "Let not your hearts be troubled/" said the Teacher; "let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me." This was the beginning of a long conversation, covering three chapters, and closing with the words, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Then, lifting up his eyes to heaven (perhaps now standing according to Jewish custom), he begins a talk with God with these significant words : "Father, the hour is come." He talks on in much the same strain as he had been talking with the disciples. It was not merely a silent musing, but he speaks just as he had been doing, in an audible voice, as actually seeing "Him who is invisible" and conscious of being in his presence. As really in God's presence as in the presence of those about him. It must have been even more so since there was nothing that stood between himself and the Father, while between him and them a veil intervened.

He first recounts his own earthly ministry in which he says in triumph. "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do." His words about himself are remarkably brief, however,

and his thoughts soon turn again to his disciples. "I manifested thy name," he says, "unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world. " Then he makes request that those which had been given him should be kept in that name. What name? Was it a name they themselves must wear, and by a unity of name applied to themselves, were they to be one? Or rather was it God's name as Father? Manifestly the latter. Unity of name is taught elsewhere and is not to be overlooked, but the thought of our Lord here is that all be kept in the Father's name. He had just exhorted them a little while ago to trust in God ( 14 :1 ) . Now he says : "Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me that they may be one, even as we are." The English, as it stands here, is liable to mislead. The thought is, Keep those whom thou has given me in thy name. It was the disciples, "the men" whom the Father had given him, not a name ; and that name in which they were to be kept was the name Father. Till now they had known him as El, the Mighty One ; Elohim, the Almighty Creator ; Jehovah, the Self-existent and Ever-living One ; Ely on, the Most High; Shadai, the Almighty; Adonai, Lord, a substitute for Jehovah, which the Jews thought too holy to pronounce ; but as yet they had scarcely ever heard of him as Abba, Father. "Show us the Father," requested Philip, "and we shall be satisfied." "I have shown him to you already, Philip, in my own life, teachings and person." Philip expressed a common longing in the human heart, a longing to see the Father. Jesus now commends them to him.

Keep them in thy name that they may be one, even as we are. Their unity, as a body, depended on their being kept in the name — in thi spirit, protection and guidance — of the Father. Thus, kept they would be — kept from the world and in the Father's love. Kept in the love of the Father, they would be kept in unity with one another as his children. The apostle John never forgot this dedication to the Father. Long years afterward he

our savior's prayer for unity 127

exultingly exclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God ; and such we are." This keeping was, in the deepest affection and the utmost confidence, entrusted to the Father. He had already said as a challenge to his enemies (John 10:29), My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. He knew that within a few hours the Shepherd would be smitten and the sheep would be scattered, but, with a supreme trust in the Father as to the ultimate results, they are offered in sacred trust. In like manner let us walk in his steps, nor lose hope when passing under the clouds.

Were they worth it? These faltering, stumbling, erring peasants of Galilee? What was in them that they should be so precious to Jesus? Whatever estimate we may put upon them, they were of no little value in his sight. In this Jesus was unique. He placed a much higher value on man, the individual man, too, than had ever been done before, or is customary now. This value

inherited in himself : "Without me ye can do nothing."  
"Because I live ye shall live also." We are the ciphers,  
any number of which when alone, stand for nothing.  
He is the figure on the left that gives them value.

About ten years ago, the mother and three children of a missionary family were packing up to return to the home land. The father was to remain in Japan. A number of things, though precious to children, were not considered sufficiently important to carry on the long journey. Picture books, school books, drawings, charts, and what not. And among other things, the little seven-year-old came up with a box packed full of paper dolls. Many a pleasant hour had she spent in cutting them out of the old magazines and placing them all around against chairs, table legs and the wall, till in her little mind they stood out in all their glory as true as life. They were a precious treasure. "Here, papa, keep these for me, please\*, till I come back to Japan." Although papa felt

128 our savior's prayer for unity

that most likely his little girl would care but little for paper dolls by the time she should return to this land, the box of paper dolls was carefully stowed away on the shelf, there to remain as a sacred charge till — well, till eternity dawns, if need be. Not for their own sake, but for the sake of the one who entrusted them. In like manner the disciples may not have been of much intrinsic value, but as a trust committed to the Father by his beloved Son, they are precious, and for his sake, if not for their own, they will certainly be kept in se-

curity.

Neither must we think that this keeping applies only to the eleven ; it is "for them also who believe on me through their word : that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us" This includes you and me. It may be true enough that as to our own merit we are as worthless as a box of paper dolls, but this matters not; we are precious in the Father's care for the sake of his Son. Beloved, "if God so loved us," loved us though often we stumble and fall, "we also ought to love one another."

When considering the question of unity, it has been customary for most writers only to emphasize the forces that bind us together. There is, however, another equally important factor that must not be overlooked, or well-meant effort is liable to defeat its own end. Scientists tell us that what we are accustomed to consider solid is not absolutely so ; that even the substance of lead or granite is not actually touching, but that the smallest particles, known as electrons, contain an "electric charge" that gives them a repellant force which keeps them forever apart. As in nature, so in grace. Absolute unity is neither enjoined nor to be expected. Machinery must have some play to operate, or there will be a break. The little company of eleven were not absolutely one. Thomas was inclined to doubt ; Peter thought more highly of himself than he ought. The whole company were indignant against James and John for seeking the pre-eminence.



They were not all on absolute equality with their Master. Only three were taken into his confidence, and of these only one could actually lean on his bosom. All were largely tinctured with materialism and still expected the restoration of an earthly kingdom. And the Master knew, to his own sorrow, that only a few hours hence the chief among them would deny him and all the rest would scatter and flee. Yet he says in his memorable prayer, "They have kept thy word." How complimentary ! Neither let us be afraid to speak well of one another, and, passing over his errors, to tell of the good the other does. Their ultimate victory may depend in a large measure on the encouragement we give them.

"I sent them forth into the world." Kept busy at a great and worthy task and thus kept in unity. Co-operative work tends to bring us closer together, while argument is almost certain to alienate and divide. No amount of argument can overcome discordant feelings. Without love all else is vain.

From unity to glory. "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them." Here he soars beyond us and we must wait to know what this means, for it is not yet made manifest what we shall be, but we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is when we shall be "raised in glory."

OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

(John 17.)

By N. C. McDougale.

The opening scene of this chapter portrays a most beautiful picture, and that upward look was so indelibly impressed upon that faithful reporter, John, that he could not pass over it. What zealous Christian would not exclaim, "Oh, to have been within hearing of such a prayer as that must have been, which wound up the whole of our Savior's past ministry and formed the point of transition to the dark scenes which immediately followed r

Christ knew that at the passing of this scene his struggles in the world would be over, but those of his disciples would not, and his earnest appeal was to the Holy Father to preserve them from being tainted by the unholy atmosphere of the world they were still in that they might be one. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us." The indwelling spirit of the Father and the Son is the one perfect bond of union, knitting up into a living unity ; first, all believers among themselves ; next, this unity into one still higher, with the Father and the Son. Not merely a formal, mechanical unity of ecclesiastical machinery, for such may, and does exist, to a greater or less degree, in both the western and eastern churches, with little of the spirit of Christ; yea, and much with which the spirit of Christ can not dwell; so, instead of convincing the world of the divinity of the gospel, it generates infidelity to a large extent within its own bosom. But the spirit of Christ, illuminating, transforming and reigning within the hearts of the genuine disciples of Christ, drawing them to each other as members of one family, and prompting to loving co-operation for the

good of the world — this is what, when sufficiently glowing and extended, shall force conviction upon the world that Christianity is divine. Doubtless the more that differences among Christians disappear — the more they can agree even in minor matters — the impression upon the world may be expected to be greater. But it is not dependent upon this ; for living and loving oneness in Christ is sometimes more touchingly seen even amidst and in spite of minor differences than where no such differences exist to try the strength of their deeper unity. Yet till this living brotherhood of Christ shall show itself strong enough to destroy the sectarianism, selfishness, carnality and apathy that eat out the heart of Christianity in all the visible sections if it, in vain shall we expect the world to be overawed by it. It is when "the Sprit shall be poured upon us from on high," as a spirit of truth and love, and upon all parts of the Christian territory alike, melting down differences and heart burnings, kindling astonishment and shame at past unfruitfulness, drawing forth longings of holy affection and yearnings over a world lying in wickedness, embodying themselves in palpable forms and active measures — it is then we may expect the effect here announced to be produced, and then it will be irresistible. Oh, that Christians everywhere would ponder these things !

The lack of unity among Christian people today is the one great cause of the indifference shown by humanity generally as regards Christianity. Christ realized the importance of unity and preached it continually through-

out his ministry, and on this great occasion at the winding up of his earthly career, made the most earnest and eloquent appeal to the Father ever recorded for the unity of His people. This prayer as yet remains unanswered in so far as Christianity generally is concerned, but no doubt in the fulness of time God will bring about his unity among all Christian people, which is so essential to the saving of the world — to the glorification of the Father and of the Son. There are at present in-

### 132 our savior's prayer for unity

dications that the way is opening for the bringing about of this unity among God's people. Christian people everywhere are becoming more tolerant of each other. There is less fighting and backbiting, and an inclination to join hands in furtherance of the great work dependent upon Christianity. There lies a great work to be accomplished along this line, and there is a call for strong leaders to take up this work of unity that the great desire of our Savior in this respect may the sooner be accomplished. Christian ministers everywhere should take up this theme of unity and labor incessantly with this great end in view that the world may be convinced that Christianity is divine. With the accomplishment of this one great purpose surely will come the dawn of the millennium. Let each individual Christian turn the searchlight upon himself, and wherein is found the slightest hindrance to the accomplishment of this unity so desirable, let him forthwith start the fight to rid himself of it. Nor let him stop until he has rid himself entirely of all hindering causes. Look not for the mote in thy brother's eye, but attend

thyself to the removing of the beam from thine own.  
Brethren, the hour has come ! Put your shoulder to  
the wheel. "I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, be-  
seech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye  
were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-  
suffering, forbearing one another in love ; giving diligence  
to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.  
There is one body and one spirit, even as also ye were  
called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith,  
one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all,  
and through all and in all." (Eph. 4:1-6.)

## THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH YET FUTURE AND GLORIOUS.

By Walter McMurry.

Inasmuch as the world has never accepted Jesus Christ  
as the apostle of God, it would seem that the unity for  
which Christ so earnestly prayed, as recorded in the  
seventeenth chapter of John, has never been realized  
among those who believe in him.

The blessings which will come to the world through  
its complete surrender to the authority of God as re-  
vealed in Christ are so many and wonderful that every-  
one should engage with all their power in bringing it to  
the feet of Christ.

Man is largely a creature of circumstances, and in his  
fallen and ignorant state he is so much so that it is im-  
possible for him to do his best under adverse conditions.

As the conditions surrounding man improve, he will be elevated in his thoughts and conduct, and will have a clearer conception of his place in the universe, laboring to make it easier for those following after to surpass him in perfection. So far as man is concerned, perfection is a growth, and has been dishearteningly slow. The Godhead has ever existed in perfection and unity, which has been maintained by the loyalty of Christ to his Father's will in submitting even to the death of the cross. We may fail to grasp the idea of unity through a misapprehension of the import of the word "unity" or "oneness." The idea set forth in the scriptures is harmony. In order to get this clearly fixed in the mind, let us see in what the unity of the Father and Son consists. Christ said: "My Father is greater than I." (John 14:28.) "He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (John 12:49.) Clearly, then, they could not be one in person or original glory, but are in will and works. "Not what I will, but what thou

134 our savior's prayer for unity

wilt." (Mark 14:36.) "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." (John 15:10.) So, then, the unity between them was maintained by the Son's actions always being in harmony with the Father's will.

Before anyone can be one either with the Father or Son, he must be absolutely reconciled to the will of God as expressed through Christ. Thus, he sinks out of self in his thoughts and plans of life and away from the world in conduct into complete harmony with God's will, min-

istering with Christ to the world's needs. To accept Christ as God's Son is not alone sufficient to bring one into unity with the Godhead. Even those who have obeyed the first principles of the gospel of the Son of God need to go on to perfection (Heb. 6:1; Phil. 3:12-14), which they can only do by faithfully striving to keep the commands contained in the gospel. As the gospel is preached more and in greater fulness, men will gradually be brought under its power into fuller harmony with the divine will. Man has the inherent ability to accept whatever course in life promises the greater good. The fact that Satan has so long held men in bondage by his promises of present tranquillity proves that man is capable of deciding his course in life. While we have everything pertaining to life and Godliness in the Bible, yet it seems that its principles can only be indelibly stamped in the thought and life of the masses by revolutions, which come as an outgrowth of a persistent violation of God's precepts, covering the matter over which the strife exists. Example : God said to the Jews : "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3), but their persistent worship of idols led them into a strange land, where they were compelled, by military force, to worship strange gods. They thus saw the folly of their course in departing from God, and when they were permitted to return to their own land, they were so thoroughly cured that they would not permit Christ to set up the claim that he was the Son of God. In our day the civil war settled perhaps forever the question of chattel slavery. While

personal, religious and political freedom are so entrenched in the human heart that it is seemingly secure, there are many other things which must be settled before man will be thoroughly emancipated from the dominion of sin.

All progress of the past has been attained by man's mental enlightenment coupled with his experimental knowledge of good. And as soon as it is scientifically demonstrated that the precepts of God always lead to peace and greatest happiness, every barrier will be removed from the path of advancement in righteousness. As man advances, every plant not planted by the Father will be rooted up. (Matt. 15:13.) Thus, enlightenment will overthrow every form of sectarianism so that the commandments of God will have no opposition through divisions, for the "Watchmen shall lift up the voice . . . together . . . for they shall see eye to eye." (Isa.

52:8.) "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9.)

The word of God is now being given to every race of man in his native language, and as soon as they can learn to use the masterkey of interpretation — "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13) — the strong power of Satan will be broken, and the race, so long led captive by his will, will be liberated. Here is work in which every follower of Christ can be engaged, reaping a bountiful harvest. But they must mind the same thing and walk by the same rule by which the apostles and early Christians were governed.

God's way in the Biblical past was to array one evil against another that they might consume each other until they were so weakened that they largely lost their power for evil. Just so he is dealing with man at the present, and out of all the conflict and strife between



human institutions will be revealed the omnipotent hand of God as he makes the wrath of man to praise him. (Ps. 76:10.) On the ruins of each conflict will be erected a monument proclaiming to all generations the folly of sin and forgetfulness of God. Doubtless, as the ages

136 our savior's prayer for unity

roll on, they will become so numerous and large that none will care to experiment on his own account, but will take it for granted that doing right always brings good accompanied by happiness, while wrong-doing brings only evil and leaves misery and woe in its wake.

As I see it, and as the word of God seems to indicate, nothing but the realization of the superior nature and outworking of God's guidance through the divine scriptures of eternal truth will be able to wean men from worldly systems which can never be perfected, but are manipulated after the slight and cunning of men. As God has said his word shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. (Isa. 55:11.) Our Lord said at the tomb of Lazarus, addressing the Father, "I know that thou always hearest me." (John 11:42; New Testament in modern speech.)

Then, let us take courage and press on in the fight for the unity of God's people (first making sure that we ourselves are in harmony with him), knowing of a truth that "God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labor of love, which we show toward his name, in that

we have ministered to the saints and do minister. (Heb. 6 :10.) "For we are laborers together with God." (1 Cor. 3:9.) And, as such, we will receive a reward according to our works. Also let us be sure if we do not raise up in the power of God's might and carry on this work that he will find others who will. Besides, as we labor for the advancement of the kingdom of heaven, we are hastening the return of our Blessed Lord and Master, who will permit us to ever be with him beholding his glory. Having promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8), "let us go on to perfection" (Heb. 6:1) ; "then shall we be one in Christ, as he is in the Father" (John 17:21), "and all things both in heaven and earth will be in one, and all will know and obey Christ Jesus as the glorious Son of God and Savior of the world."

#### UNITY OF CHURCH YET FUTURE AND GLORIOUS 137

May the Lord grant unto us that ye may ever keep in mind that the greatest contribution we can make for the salvation of the world and the speedy return of Christ to claim his own is a pure, consecrated life, whose every work shall be wrought in God.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By C. C. Merritt.

John, in the seventeenth chapter of his gospel, gives us a record of what is properly called the Lord's prayer.

Many times did He pray, but few of His prayers have been recorded. This prayer is unique. On the day of His betrayal, knowing what Judas had promised to do for thirty pieces of silver, His first concern was for those with whom He had labored and whom He had chosen "out of" the world unto a work which was the burden of His life; just before entering into the garden of sorrows, where He poured out His soul unto God on His own behalf, He prayed for the protection and the glorification of His disciples.

A prayer for unity, indeed ; but of what does unity consist? Not so much as harmony among themselves — agreeableness — as it is of a true character and unity of purpose — the Godgiven purpose — "as Thou hast sent me, even so send I them/"

The Allies, in the great European war, gave much attention unto the unity of their armies, not so much for unity's sake, nor for the armies' sake, as for the result of what otherwise might have meant the downfall or subordination of their country for generations. So it was not for the mere sake of unity that Christ prayed, but, looking forward to the accomplishment of the very purpose for which He came into this world, "He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." So He says, "As Thou hath sent me, even so send I them into the world." "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned." "Every kingdom . . , city . . . house divided against itself can not stand."

So neither can it accomplish the purpose for which it was established.

The Prayer. — Taking it up from the standpoint of our subject, we will consider first the request for oneness: "That they may be one" — "those whom thou hast given me" and "all that shall believe on me through their word." We, the professed followers of Jesus Christ, are the ones for whom this request was made. What does this "one" mean? Jesus says, "As thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they may be one in us." To His disciples, Christ said: "As the branch can not bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in me." Christ is at "one" with God, and we can not "bear fruit" except we are at "one" with Christ, nor will the world believe that we are sent of Christ and Christ of God except we are also at "one" with each other. "Oneness" among ourselves is this: "That ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, each counting the other better than himself." (Phil. 2: 2-3.)

As we have it in John 17, oneness consists of:

(1) Our being Christ's and God's: "I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou hast given me out of the world: thine they were and thou hast given them to me" "Ye were bought with a price." (1 Cor. 6:20.)

Nothing short of our accepting Christ as our Savior and God as our Father (Rom. 8:15) will suffice unto the possibility of our becoming at one with Him. We must con-

sider ourselves as sinners condemned and rush to Him for a refuge to our souls. "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21.)

(2) Kept in the Name of Christ: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are." Peter gave the significance of this when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go ?

140 our savior's prayer for unity

seeing thou hast the words of eternal life." (Acts 4:12.) "And in none other is there salvation : for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men, whereby we must be saved." Neither are we to work under any other name than the name of Christ. (Mark 9 : 41.) "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, because ye are Christ's, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." How awful would it be, then, for us, who are Christ's, to give even a cup of water to drink in the name of any other person or thing than Christ's ! To this request we can add the assurance Paul has given us in the latter part of the eighth chapter of Romans that God does keep us so long as we are "in Christ." Its meaning is this : "While I was with them, I kept them in thy name, which thou hast given me ; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition, that the scriptures might be fulfilled." "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one."

(3) Our not Being "of the World: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." We are "in" the world, but we are not "of" it. And for this reason the world hates us. The writer of the Hebrew letter said (Heb. 11:13-14): "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth ; for they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own." How different is this from those who have become settlers on the earth, who have set their minds upon things on the 'earth! These "settlers" turn a deaf ear to: "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also." Jesus does not want us taken from the world now, for He wants many more to be added unto us ; but the time is coming when He will take us unto himself, as He prayed : "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 141

given me be with me where I am" ("and I am no more in the world," verse 11), "that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world."

(4) Consecration: "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth." "Sanctify" is to be separated from common use and dedicated unto the uncommon, which in this case is the "word of truth." Now, we are to "study . . . rightly dividing the word of truth," while formerly we were interested only in fiction, society, business,

and what not ! Do we want to become righteous and be more worthy the name of Christ? Then study His word, for it is "quick and powerful (living and active), and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12.) Many, many Christians will "have whereof to be ashamed in the last day" because they have refused to be consecrated in the word of truth. Jesus says of those whom God had given him, "and they have kept thy word." This same thing he wishes to be said of those "who shall believe on me through their word." Can this be said of us?

(5) Faith: "For the words which thou hast given me, I have given unto them : and they have received them, and know of a truth that I came forth from thee, and they believe that thou didst send me." Not only are we to receive Christ as a "leader," but we are to believe that He came from God and that God sent Him. This is accepting everything concerning His "conception," "born of a virgin," "death and resurrection" and glorification. He is our "sin-bearer," and that "He knew no sin but was made to be sin on our behalf." Faithful obedience unto all He has said is required of faith. If the "word of faith" is in our hearts, it will find expression in our obedience to that word. "Faith comes by hearing the word of God." "But thanks be unto God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from

the heart unto that form of teaching vvhhereunto we were delivered, and being made free from sin ye became servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6:17-18.)

(6) Love: "I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known ; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them." Indeed, there can be no unity with God without "the love wherewith thou lovedst me." "God so loved the world" that "He was not willing that any should perish." But how say some of us? For we are not willing to be sent in the world by Christ, for some have refused to go. And what about the love we have shown unto those who are "called to be saints?" Yea, there can not be that "biting and devouring" among us except in the absence of that love. "He that saith, I love God, and hateth his brother, is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, can not love God, whom he hath not seen." (1 John 4:20.) Someone has truly said, "Love is the key to heaven."

But has this prayer for unity been answered, is it being answered, or will it ever be answered? Only in a limited sense can it be said that this prayer was answered. In the absolute sense, the prayer has not been answered, and, to judge the future by the past and present, we may say that in this sense it will not be answered.

Paul's letter to the Corinthians shows that as early as the days in which the apostles taught, dissensions and divisions occurred. History reveals to us the fact that up to the present time divisions have been on the increase, and the present shows no mark of a decline in the true sense of the word.



What may be said of the future can only be the re-statement of some predictions we find in the New Testament. I shall give below a few such passages in full, and the reader may see for himself what the future has for a favorable answer to this prayer for unity. "For the Spirit saith expressly, that in the later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY 143

spirits and doctrines of demons/" (1 Tim. 4:1.) "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding the form of Godliness but denying the power thereof : from these also turn away/"

(2 Tim. 3 :1-5.) "In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts." (Jude 18.)

2 Pet. 3 :3-4, says : "Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. " Jesus says, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find (the) faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8.)

Many other passages could be cited to show the general condition at the time which is designated as "the last days," which does not give much encouragement to the idea that "some sweet day we shall all be united on

this earth in one common faith and practice." May God help us all to be one, even as Christ and God are one.

#### OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By C. D. Moore.

It is generally known that this memorable prayer is found in the seventeenth chapter of John. Jesus first prayed that his apostles might be kept in perfect agreement, or oneness, so that the world, which was to hear their testimony, might be convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, because it is well known that if the witnesses in support of that which is alleged are not one, or agreed in their testimony, the court or jury can not believe the allegation. God alleged that this Jesus is "My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Therefore, as the world can not be saved without believing that this Jesus is the Son of God, and as it can not believe that, except the witnesses are agreed in their testimony, it is very apparent that the prayer of Jesus (verses, 11, 22 and 23) for the oneness or agreement of the apostles (the witnesses) is of utmost importance and of unlimited value to the world.

As the testimony of the apostles constitutes the New Testament, and it is in perfect harmony, agreement and oneness in all its declarations, we conclude that the Savior's prayer for the oneness of the apostles was fully answered by the Father. Therefore, so far as the oneness of the apostles' testimony is concerned, the world has no excuse for not believing the allegation or claim

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And it is so important that the world believe this that Jesus said "He that believeth not, shall be damned ; but he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. "

But the unity of the apostles is not all that is necessary in order to convince the world in general that Jesus was sent of God. The ones who hear and believe the testimony of the apostles must also be a unit and agreed,

our savior's prayer for unity 145

"that the world may believe [hat thou hast sent me." Therefore, Jesus prayed "for them also which shall believe on me through their word (the word of the apostles), that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in ihee, that they also may be one in us; that the -acrid may believe lhat'lhou hast sent me" (verses 20 and 21).

At Jerusalem, on the first Pentecost after the death of Christ, the apostles began to "bear witness" that the one whom the world had just recently crucified was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Their testimony was as the voice of one strong and truthful witness. They were a unit in their testimony concerning all the points at issue. They spake as the one spirit gave them the worch to utter. And through the remainder of their lives they continued to thus speak and to write their testimony in perfect unity. There were no discrepancies in what they preached and wrote, as witnesseth the oneness of the New Testimony, which is their testimony.

When they preached and proved at Jerusalem that Jesus was raised from the dead by the Father, and that "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), many of them who heard the testimony believed and were baptized, and their sins were pardoned. "And all that believed were together." They were a unit. This body of baptized and saved people was the church — the one church which Christ had before said He would build. That people was a unit, just as Christ had prayed that His followers might be. And for quite awhile they remained in the oneness for which Jesus had so earnestly prayed; and as a result, "fear came upon every soul," and there was but little to hinder the Lord from adding "to the church daily such as should be saved." As long as the church was a unit, or was in that oneness for which Jesus prayed, there was but little to hinder "the world" from believing that Jesus was sent of God, and that He was the Son of the living God.

#### 146 our savior's prayer for unity

We have seen that the apostles were kept in such perfect unity of mind and mouth that they gave to the world but one gospel, but one plan of salvation, and but one church by that one gospel. And we may see by the New Testament that the one church was established in many localities by this one gospel, and that the church in one locality was like the church in another locality in doctrine, faith, practice, organization, name and spirit. Therefore, we conclude that the Savior's prayer for the oneness of the apostles, and of the church, was answered,

and that the oneness of both apostles and church was established.

But we may see by reading the fifteenth chapter of Acts that certain brethren from Judea went to Antioch and taught some erroneous doctrine. And that they drew Paul into the case, and afterward the other apostles and elders at Jerusalem. It seemed to be their purpose to destroy the oneness of the church, and hence they tried to array Paul and the other apostles against each other. But when these preachers and elders got together at Jerusalem they settled the matter very peaceably and saved the church from dividing, thus preserving the oneness for which the Savior prayed so very earnestly. And how the church at Antioch did rejoice over this restoration of peace and unity !

We may also learn from Paul's letters to the church at Corinth (about twenty-six years after the beginning of the church at Jerusalem) that the brethren there at Corinth became divided in sentiment about some preachers who came there claiming to be apostles of Christ. What all they preached that was wrong, I do not know ; but one can form a right good idea of it by reading Paul's corrections of error in his letters to the church at Corinth.

It is strongly intimated in Paul's corrective replies that those church disturbers, or unity destroyers, were "ministers of Satan transformed into angels of light." However, Paul's letters to the church restored the one-

ness, and the brethren were so disgusted with themselves for being led into the errors that they felt like taking vengeance on themselves. (2 Cor. 7:11.)

It is also intimated that those "false apostles" were trying to build themselves up by tearing Paul down, so that he had to defend his apostleship against their attacks. But he saved the church from dividing. He besought them by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that they all be of the same mind, and of the same judgment, and all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among them : but that they be perfectly joined together. That is the kind of oneness for which Jesus prayed.

Since the death of the apostles, many divisions have come, and the one church has been almost murdered by designing men. Instead of there being but the one church (the kind that Paul and the other apostles were members of), there are hundreds of different kinds besides it. Contrary to the prayer of Jesus, His professed followers are most awfully divided, and do not seem to care for the oneness for which He so earnestly prayed. Had all believers been satisfied to abide in the teaching of the apostles, there would have been but one church or body of believers today. But it appears that some were not satisfied with what was written, and so they began to introduce additional doctrines, of men, and the "one body" has divided again and again over the opinions of men. And all this in spite of our Savior's prayer for unity.

## OUR LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By Ira C. Moore.

Unity among the believers in Christ is the one clear, pathetic note in the prayer of our Lord, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John. The burden upon His soul was great, for He knew the purpose of His mission to earth and His message to men. He knew that the history of man demonstrated that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23), and that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." (Ps. 37:23.) He knew that man, when left to himself, had gone farther and farther into sin, and that in consequence of man's inability to direct his own steps, or "by searching to find out God," that a divine standard must be lifted up for all nations, peoples and tongues, for all time, to follow, and that He was sent "for a light to the Gentiles, that He might be my salvation to the ends of the earth." (Isa. 49:6.) The angel had declared that, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus ; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21.) And he well knew that if man was not saved from his sins here in this life he could not be saved eternally in the heavens. His burden was great because his responsibilities were great. His prayer, therefore, was a fervent one. He did not wish His mission to man to be a failure, and so His invitation is, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28) ; and He declares, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life : no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6.)

There is no dispute or contention over whether Jesus

our Lord prayed earnestly for unity among His followers, but differences arise over the nature of that unity. It was more than union for which He prayed,

our lord's prayer for unity 149

for there can be a union without unity. A wicked boy might tie the tails of two cats together and hang the cats over a clothesline, and they would fight to the death. There would be union but not unity. The numerous divorces granted to men and women show that there can be and are many unions without unity. It was such a union as would produce unity, a oneness; or, using His own description, "that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee," that He desired among them that profess to believe on Him. Not to see the necessity for Christian unity is blindness, and to persist in keeping up divisions and what prevents unity is gross perversity or blindness.

Absolute unity is in Christ's teaching and life, and nothing but unity in his body or among those professing to be his followers can be the answer to his prayer; and that means unity in teaching and practice among them, and that unity will result in the one body, the church. The plea is made in behalf of the present division of the religious forces into denominations that, though thus divided, they "are all one, as the Savior prayed ; for all are worshiping the same God and all are trying to get to the same heaven." The unity for which Jesus prayed has more elements in it than these. If these two points of agreement make all the warring



and rivaling parties one, then the term Protestant has no significance or meaning, for all parties among the Catholics are "worshiping the same God and trying to get to the same heaven," and so are all the Mormon factions. Then, Catholicism and Mormonism are, after all, one with all the denominations! The war that Protestants make upon Catholicism, and that the denominations make upon Mormonism, disproves the veneered allegation that all the denominations constitute but one church and is the fulfillment of the Savior's prayer. His prayer was for such a unity among His followers or friends as exists between him and his Father. If there is not now division existing among religious people, it

150 our savior's prayer for unity

would be impossible to conceive of division. That the professed disciples of Christ should divide into almost innumerable parties or denominations is not the condition for which our Lord prayed. Denominationalism is the defeat of His prayer.

In view of this, there is no denominational basis for Christian unity for which He prayed. The conditions that came into existence under the direct teaching of the apostles whom Jesus sent out to bring about the answer to His prayer, furnish us with a concrete example of the kind of unity for which He prayed. The faith that His disciples then had is the faith to have now. The church they became members of and lived and labored in is the one people should become members of now and live and labor in. The conditions they

complied with then to be saved and to become members of His body, are the conditions of salvation that should be complied with now\ These are necessary to bring about the unity for which Jesus prayed. And just as far as these conditions obtain, either collectively or individually, His prayer is being answered.

By the authority of heaven there is but "one faith" (Eph. 4:5), and that is the one that is made "by hearing the zword of Christ" (Rom. 10:17.) This excludes the doctrines and commandments, decrees and dogmas of men as elements of the faith necessary to the desired unity.

By the authority of the Head of the church there can be but one repentance, and that is a repentance into or according to the divine system that makes the "one faith." It is not a "sorrow for sin," but is that turning away from sin unto righteousness that such a sorrow causes. (2 Cor. 7:10.)

The great Head of the church, Christ Jesus, has authorized but <( one baptism" (Eph. 4:5.) And it is one that requires: (1) Water (Acts 10:47; John 3:5); (2) much water (John 3:23) ; (3) going down into the water (Acts 8:38) ; (4) handling the candidate (Acts 8:

our lord's prayer for unity 151

38; Matt. 28:19); (5) a birth of water (John 3:5); (6) a burial (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12); (7) form of planting (Rom. 6:5); (8) washing the body (Heb. 10:

22; Titus 3:5); (9) form of resurrection (Rom. 6:5; Col. 2:12-13) ; (10) coming up out of the water (Mark 1:10; Acts 8:38).

The place and purpose of this one baptism is indicated by the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16.) When the inquiry was first made about what to do to be saved, the inspired answer was, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38.)

Christ Jesus, the great Head and Lawgiver of the church, authorized and established but one church or body. "On this rock," said he, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18.) "There is one body/" (Eph, 4:5.) "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body." (1 Cor. 12:12.) "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free." (1 Cor. 12:13.) "But now they are many members, but one body!" (Verse 20.) "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." (Verse 27.) "And He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22-23.) "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the Savior of the body. 33 (Eph. 5:23.) And he is the head of the body, the church. 33

(Col. 1 :18.) ". . . for his body's sake, which is the church. 33 (Col. 1:24.) "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in

152 our savior's prayer for unity

one body; and be ye thankful." (Col. 3:15.) This one body is called in scripture "the church" (Acts 8:1), the "church of God" (1 Cor. 1 :2) ; "the church of the First-born" (Heb. 12:23).

Accepting Christ as sole authority in religion, the church of Christ will be restored with all its functions and glory as in the beginning. Of the first Christians it is written : "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul." (Acts 4:32.) This is the kind of unity for which Jesus prayed. It was realized then only to the extent that people yielded to the gospel and became of "one heart and soul" in the "one body, which is the church," and it is being realized now only to the same extent.

Submitting to the authority of Jesus, and ignoring all other, will bring about the keeping of the ordinances of the church as they were delivered by Christ and His apostles. On the first day of the week, the early disciples assembled together and observed the Lord's supper in memory of their Lord's death and resurrection. To prepare themselves for this, they engaged in teaching and admonishing one another and then giving of their means as they had been prospered for the work of the Lord. They had no "church socials," "bazaars," or

entertainments of any kind for raising funds for church work. Their music was made in the church assembly by the human voice and not upon instruments of music. They recognized Jesus as their Head, Lawgiver, Prophet, Priest and King, and without His authority they ventured not, and in order to preserve unity we are admonished that, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching of Christ, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John, ninth verse). And as there is perfect unity between the Father and the Son, there will be that unity among all those who have the Father and the Son. Just to the extent that people recognize the one God and Father of the one Lord Jesus

our lord's prayer for unity 153

Christ and His universal authority and kingship, have the "one faith," submit to the "one baptism," live and labor in the "one body or church," they are exhibiting the "one spirit" and are "one, even as the Father and the Son are one." May the Lord speed the day when:

"Our Savior's holy prayer,

His tenderest and His last,  
The utterance of His latest care

Ere to the cross He passed ;  
No longer unfulfilled remain,  
The world's offense, the people's stain."

## HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

By J. C. Mosely.

Christ prayed first that they all be one, as He and His father were one. (John 17:21.) Christ has plainly taught us that we must be one in the plan God gave us, and to be one and have God for our Father we must be in His family ; then we can say, "Our Father, who art in heaven" ; but until we are adopted into His family we can not call Him our father. To be His we must be brothers and sisters to Christ by hearing His word and obeying it. (Luke 8:21.) When this is done it puts us all in Christ. We must all be born into the kingdom — born of water and of the Spirit ; whence we are born of water because God's word tells us to. We are born of water and of the Spirit, for Christ says, "My words they are spirit and they are life/" (John 6: 63.) And a man never is in His kingdom, in His body, in His church, in His family, till he is translated out of Satan's kingdom, or kingdom of darkness, into Christ.

Now we take a child in Satan's kingdom. God sent His word, which is His grace or favor, to the sinner ; it must be taught to him, he must hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized into Christ. This puts him into Christ. (Rom. 6.4.) Now he has put on Christ. (Gal. 3:27.) Now that he is planted into Christ's death, he is in Christ's body, where the blood can cleanse him from sin; now that he has obeyed the will of God that saves from past sins he can pray God's will to be done ; now that we are new-born babes in Christ, we must feed on the word that we may grow. (1 Pet. 2:2.) Now we must be one in everything that God commands us,

so we must wear the one name. If we wear any other, we are not one in the will of God. If we are in Christ we are Christians (Acts 11:26 and 26:28, and 1 Pet. 4:

## HOW SHOULD WE PRAY ? 155

16), and there is none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12.) Now that we are married to Christ (Rom. 7:4), let's honor him by wearing his name; if you are going to wear John the Baptist's name, you will have to be saved in his name, and he will sure have to be your savior at the judgment. Well, says someone, wasn't the thief saved without wearing Christ's name, or being baptized, either? The thief could not be baptized into Christ's death till Christ died, and a man had to be in Christ to be a Christian. Christ arose from the grave and left the thieves in the grave, and forty days later Christ said, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The thieves never did hear Christ give this commission. Now, the command is to be baptized into Christ, and until this is done you are not in Christ, and out of Christ you are lost, without hope of a Savior. Now, to be one you must have one guide, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God the father of us all, and one way (Eph. 4:5), one body or church, one spirit, one hope, one calling. (Eph. 4:4.) We must be buried by baptism into his death. (Rom. 6:4.) We must be married to Christ. (Rom. 7:4.) Now, if we can be one in this we are now ready to pray God's will be done. It is God's will for us to meet and break bread and He commands us to not forsake this as the manner of some is. (Heb. 10:25.) Now,

the one time to do this is on the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7.) Not some week, but the week. Now, how often to do this is steadfastly. (Acts 2:42.) What it is for — to remember Christ (1 Cor. 11:24), and to show his death till he comes again. (1 Cor. 11:26.) Unless you do this you have no life in you. (John 6:53.) Now, if you don't do these things, your prayer is not acceptable in the sight of God. You must not pray for God to send you power in secret to do these things, for the gospel is the power of God to save. (Rom. 1:16.) All these commands are from God, for Christ spake as God told him. (John 12:49.) You must not pray for

#### 156 our savior's prayer for unity

the Comforter to come, for Christ prayed for the Comforter and he came on the day of Pentecost, comforted the apostles and brought to their remembrance what Christ had said. (John 14:20.) It guided them. (John 16:13.) It came to bear them witness. (John 15:27.) It came to teach them all things. (John 14:26.) This baptism of the Holy Ghost was Christ's prayer answered. Now, Christ prays for all that are given him through their (the apostles') word. (John 17:20-21.) Now, these apostles have the Spirit to guide them for the first time since Christ prayed for it ; now they stand up and tell the people to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins and they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38), or a gift of this comforting power. The man guided by the Spirit told Saul to arise and be baptized and wash his sins away, calling on the name of the Lord. (Acts 22:16.) Now Paul can



pray according to God's will ; he has obeyed it thus far. These apostles all were baptized with the Holy Ghost, all taught one way to be saved from past sins, and Christ himself said before the Holy Ghost came, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.)

Christ never prayed for the Holy Ghost to come and save us ; he said it would show the apostles what to tell us to do to be saved, and they told it the same day it fell on them. (Acts 2:37-38.) Now, a sinner must not pray for grace, for it has come to all men teaching them. The sinner must not pray for sanctification, for we are sanctified through the truth ; thy word is truth. A sinner must do what God tells him to do to be saved; then he knows God will not lie to him ; he will be saved from past sin, and then if he holds out faithful to the end he will be saved eternally.

Now, you see the prayer of our Savior is for all to be one, and I pray that all children obey him, and if they love him they will keep his commandments. (John 14:15.) All God's blessings are given in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 1 :3.) We must get into Christ and then we are

## HOW SHOULD WE PRAY? 157

ready to pray God's will to be done, and not before. Man must pray lifting up holy hands. This makes him obey the whole law of pardon to the sinner before he can pray lifting up holy hands. Cornelius prayed to God always, and the angel told him to send for Peter. (Acts 10:32.) "He will tell the word what thou and all

thy house can do to be saved." (Acts 11 :14.) Now we see Cornelius prayed always and had to hear words of Peter to be saved. These words were these : "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized?" These were the words Peter spoke to him that were to save him ; he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus. (Acts 10:47-48.) Cornelius was a good man, an alms-giving man, and prayed to God always; and a devout man, and had seen and talked with an angel, but had to be baptized in the water in the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved, for these were the words Peter commanded him. (Acts 10:47-48.) There is no place in the Bible where a sinner is commanded to pray his sins away ; he must be baptized and wash them away. (Acts 22:16.) He must not pray alone to be saved, for Christ said we must be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16:16.) Let us all do what Christ says; he is our Savior; if you do what any man says that is not in God's word, you must look to that man to save you at the judgment.

Dear sinner, obey God's word, wear his one name and partake of the one spiritual food and cling to one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and we will all be one and all be saved in answer to Christ's prayer. Do this. His word teaches us how to pray, what to pray for and when to pray ; and when this is done like Christ taught us, we can rest assured we will meet in that sweet home of rest to dwell forever with our God. May God bless every man that obeys His will. Pray continually.

UNITY.

By J. A. Perry.

One of the most remarkable sermons ever preached by our Savior we find recorded in John 13. This discourse had an audience at the beginning of twelve, but at the close it had only eleven listeners. In this sermon He had promised His apostles the Holy Spirit, telling them what he would do when he came and how they should be witnesses of Him, because they had been with Him from the beginning. In this sermon he had said, "I am the vine, and ye (the apostles) are the branches." Jesus followed this with an equally remarkable prayer. In this prayer He made strong petitions. First for the apostles He prayed, saying, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." . . . "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are/ 5

"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 17:9, 11, 20, 21.) This, then, is the will of God, and with the apostles it was answered — there was this unity. This was also accomplished with the early church by the watchfulness of the apostles, and their earnest instruction and warnings in the first Corinthian and Galatian letters, warning against Judaizing teachers who would blend the law of Moses with the gospel of Christ; warning against divisions over preachers, immoralities and works of carnality, or the following after fleshly desires. This prayer obtained for some three hundred

years, and not until we reach the first Council of Nice,

## UNITY 159

325, do we find formal division. But today we do not find the prayer answered.

During the time when the people who claimed to be followers of Christ were united, the church was overcoming all opposition ; and even if persecution was obtaining, the blood of martyrs was a power in the growth of the church, and Rome trembled.

Had this prayer still continued to be answered before the end of the fourth century the kingdom would have filled the whole earth. But the devil's work is to divide, and as fast as he could he accomplished this ; and by this he has kept up his kingdom. But now he has more division on his hands than he can manage, and his minions are crushing each other. The result of this division is that infidelity has become a great power in the land.

Now, in regard to what this union would accomplish. Mr. H. L. Hastings, a man who did more to meet infidelity in the last century than any other person in my knowledge, presented a question in one of his tracts against infidelity as follows : What would the result be if we could get all the men, women and children old enough to know right from wrong, in a single township or county, to bring every creed, confession and book of discipline (and I will add, as well, every law book),

together, pile them up in a pile, cover them with coal-oil and burn them to ashes and all whole-heartedly take the word of God, rightly divided, as their only rule of faith and practice ? What would be the results ? Answer : Every husband would be a good, true, noble and just husband, and every wife would be gentle, loving and obedient. Every father would be firm and yet kind to his children, and every child would be obedient. Every neighbor would be kind and gentle, and careful of the welfare of every other neighbor. There would be no need of sheriff or judge or constable in the county ; and as far as that county is concerned, the millennium would be here. Such a condition as this could obtain not only

160 our savior's prayer for unity

in a county but in a state ; and not only in a state, but in the nation and in the world.

This prayer of our Savior is not being answered to-day. But people, many of them, are seeing that something is decidedly wrong in the present order of things. Beyond the shadow of a doubt the governments of today are the toes of the image King Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. (Daniel 2.) The mixed and mongrel condition of the people in every county and province of the world, and their lack of union show this; and, more than that, every student of history can see the direct connection with the last one of the four world monarchies — old Rome. The present world-wide war begins to look, indeed, like the grinding to chaff or powder of these toes, so that the wind can blow them away.

Now, the church ought to see the signs of the times and be led to simply do our whole duty, which Solomon said was "to fear God and keep his commandments"; or, as the poet says, "Trust and obey, for there's no other way/"

Will this prayer of our Savior be answered? Yes. God has spoken and has said that the kingdom of heaven, so long a small stone cut out of the mountain without hands, shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. Jesus has said that every plant that our heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. The Holy Spirit has said that the devil shall be bound for one thousand years; Jesus shall rule until all His enemies shall be put under His feet.

Now, the citizens of the kingdom can hasten this day by obeying the positive command, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus"; by our speaking as the oracles of God speak; by coming out of all plants which our heavenly Father has not planted, and we can learn that he has planted only three plants, viz., first, the family ; second, the Hebrew or Israelite nation, and third, the church or kingdom of His Son. Every other organization of men

## UNITY 161

in this world separate from these three is a plan of man's planting and must be rooted up. Then, by our speaking plainly but kindly to the world in regard to Christ as a King having all authority in heaven and on earth in His

hands, and showing them that all other authority, governments and armies are in rebellion against Jesus, and showing that in entrance into His kingdom a person must have humble, trusting faith, repentance, confession and baptism (immersion), into His name, and that when we have taken these steps old things have passed away and all things have become new. That now, while we are in the world we are no longer of the world, but now we are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow-citizens in the kingdom of Christ, and that now the armor we are to wear is the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the sandals of peace, and the helmet the hope of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. When this period comes, and it will come, we will hear no complaint of rich growing richer and poor growing poorer. But we will take God at His word when He commands "avenge not yourselves ; vengeance belongeth unto me; I will repay. If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

"Oh, hasten the day when all of God's people are one."

THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNION.

(John 17:20, 21.)

By C. Petty.

Here is the Savior's prayer for union, and the

greatest prayer that was ever uttered is this one; and yet it has never been answered. Why has not this prayer been answered, and can it be answered? Would the Savior pray for something to be that he knew, at the time he prayed, could not take place? He certainly would not. Therefore, while it has not been answered, it can be answered.

Then, what are the steps to be taken by his followers to bring about the answer to this prayer? There must be some steps that can be taken for this purpose, for the Savior would not pray for an impossibility. The first thing we need is the Spirit of Christ ; that is, the spirit of submission to all the Savior said, just as he was submissive to all his Father said, and he had no will of his own; but whatever the Father's was, was his will. He says : "For I have not spoken of myself ; but the Father which sent me ; he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12:49, 50.) Here it is plainly stated that he said nothing of himself; just what was the Father's will, was his.

Now, if the disciples would be as submissive to the Savior's will in everything as he was to his will, would not this great prayer be answered? If not, why not? For we would have the spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9), and that would be the spirit of submission, and there is no one today that can pray that prayer with any will of



## THE SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNION 163

his own and expect his prayer to be answered. Now, if all of God's people will come to this prayer for union, without any hatred towards anyone, whether saint or sinner, but in its stead have love for everyone in his heart, even love for his enemies like the Savior had for his enemies, and not only pray for union, but bring his life into harmony with the Savior's teaching, with no will of his own just as the Savior's, would not the Savior's prayer be answered soon? If not, why not? The Savior has not required his followers to do things impossible ; therefore, it can be answered if we will follow the directions laid down in the Bible for this great purpose, and strife and dissension among us would cease, and all would be working and praying for all of God's people to be one, even as the Savior and his Father were one.

Now, if there is a single disciple that has any will or wisdom of his own that he is trying to persuade men to follow, that disciple is working against that prayer being answered. So, let's surrender our wills entirely for the will of the Master and say, "Thy will, not mine, be done on earth, as it is in heaven," and all work, preach and pray for all of God's people to be one, as the Father and Son are one. Then the world will be made to believe that the Father sent the Son.

UNITY IN CHRIST.

By John T. Poe.

"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.) Thus prayed Jesus on the last night before his crucifixion. He had just eaten the last Passover supper with his disciples, and had instituted what we now call the Lord's supper, and had gone with them to the park or garden of Gethsemane, about three-quarters of a mile from the walls of Jerusalem. His hour had come — that hour for which he was born ; the hour when a guilty world was about to lay its hand upon his head as its substitute victim — a sacrifice for our sins. He had preached to his apostles his last sermon, and now he prays his last farewell prayer with those he loved. His prevailing desire was that they all might be one. Not only his immediate disciples then with him, but all who should "believe on him through their word." That includes every true disciple of his to the end of time.

Looking down the stream of time he includes all true disciples in that prayer. "That all may be one," "that the world may know thou hast sent me." But, alas ! for the folly of men who have sought to have their own way and have caused schism, strife, separation among those who are striving for a better life. Division has weakened the efforts of those who labor and pray for the conversion of the world to Christ, and we are sure the world can never be converted without an answer to the prayer of Jesus. We all pray for it, but it can never come till God's people become one.

Now, however improbable this may be, it is possible. But where can common ground of union be found? All can not be Baptists, nor can all be Methodists, nor Presbyterians, nor Mormons, etc. But we can all be Christians — brethren in Christ — without the sacrifice of any true principle whatever. That this is true is proven by the first two hundred years of the church's history. They obeyed the law as laid down in the New Testament, became Christians, were one family in the Lord, and were all brethren. No handle to the name Christian to designate them from other Christians. They were all one. And, as a consequence, hundreds obeyed the gospel in a day. They all had one common interest, one Master — Jesus Christ — one faith in him. (See John 20:30, 31.) They preached the same gospel. Those who heard believed the same things. One spirit animated all. The church, in answer to Christ's prayer, was "the church of God at Corinth," the "Church of God at Thessalonica," at Rome, in Samaria, at Jerusalem. Always the church of God. No Baptist church of God, no Methodist church of Christ, no Presbyterian or Roman Catholic church of God; just the church of God. "Father, keep through thine own name them thou has given me," said Jesus, and so far as the inspired record goes the Father was keeping them in his own name. It was many years before men rebelled against this order of things and began to set up churches to suit their own ideas of things. Overlooking the fact that God had made Jesus the Head of the church, men actually assumed the headship and began to legislate where angels would not have dared step in. The teaching of Jesus, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily,

and follow me," was entirely forgotten, and men assumed to be leaders instead of followers. But Jesus said "follow — follow me."

Now, it is clearly evident that God would not build one church and then set up another — or a dozen — to pull down the one he first established. It is unreasonable

146 our savior's prayer for unity

also to think God would confuse his own teaching by setting up «i hundred others and have one crying, lo! hsre, and another lo ! there. We know an all-wise and loving God would do nothing of the kind. Then we are safe in saying that somebody is wrong and Jesus says, "Every tree which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up or destroyed." Every church God did not set up will be destroyed. How vastly important, then, that we be in the true church the Bible speaks of. Of what avail is our faith and our zeal if we will not do what Jesus commands? "Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may enter in through the gates, into the city, and have a right to the tree of life." (Rev. 22:14.) But, says one, "We can't all see alike." Well, now, that is strange ! Why can we not see the printed word just alike? Turn to Matthew 3 and read the first two verses. Now, what do you see in that. "Well, I see that in those days John the Baptist came into the wilderness of Judea preaching." Ah, ha ! so do I, but what more do you see? "I see what he preached: that the kingdom of heaven was at hand and he told them to repent." Ah, precisely, that's what I see. Now turn to

Acts 2:38. Peter is preaching. The Jews cry out and say, "What must we do?" Read the answer (verse 38) : "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Does it say that ? And how do you know it says that ? "Why, can't I see?" Yes, so can I. I see it exactly as you do. Now, what is to hinder all who love the Lord from just taking the New Testament and going by it — doing what it says — no more, no less. Don't you think God will save all who do that? "Of course, he will." Very well, then, we have found a place now where all Christians can see alike and where they can not help seeing alike. What it says to one, it says to all. Then, why not all agree to come together on the New Testament — be Christians — belong to the church God established — be guided alone by what

#### UNITY IN CHRIST 167

the Lord says — follow him and not man? Why not? This is infallibly safe, and nothing else is.

But, now, if a man has a different religion or doctrine from mine, and I am following the word of the Lord, but he is not, of course, for otherwise there could be no difference and we would be brethren in the Lord, would we not? Sure! Then, if I am with the New Testament and he differs with me, is he not wrong? Why is it, then, that men will not see these things and unite to do the will of God? There is no higher ground to stand on in this world. He that takes the Bible alone as his creed — his guide from earth to heaven — has chosen the only

infallible, safe course known to man. No one can get above him ; he occupies the highest ground attainable, and he is safe beyond question in any event. And in doing this we help to answer the Lord's prayer, while we place ourselves on ground infallibly safe.

Then, let us throw away creeds and traditions of men and unite upon the word of the Lord — be Christians only — be. followers of Jesus and not of men. Human creeds are keeping the lovers of God separated in their teaching and in their practice. Human creeds ought to go to the moles and the bats. They were formed in the days of emergence from heathen darkness, when men knew no better than to make them. But in this enlightened age, in a land of Bibles and gospel preaching, we ought to search and see that God built but one church in the world and that all others are wrong and will be rooted up and destroyed ; that only that church that takes the Bible as its guide through the world, and up to glory, can be right and is the only one which can be well-pleasing to God. Even if human creeds could save a sinner, there is perhaps not one in fifty who believe all of their own creed. But they can believe all of the divine creed — the Bible.

Again, if a man is a Christian and follows the teaching of Christ and the apostles, what does he lack yet? Nothing. He is infallibly safe. Then, shall we not take

168 our savior's prayer for unity

that course which no one can doubt, and, by God's grace,

be sure of heaven — make no mistake and feel and know we are doing what we can to answer the prayer of him who loved us and died for us?

Let us hear the wise man in conclusion : "Fear God, and keep his commandments ; for God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. — (Solomon.)

#### OUR LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

(John 17:21.)

By Geo. M. Rance.

The Prayer. — This seventeenth chapter of John contains what is very appropriately called the Lord's prayer. Our Lord pours out His soul to the heavenly Father in behalf of Himself, His disciples and His followers of all time to come. Thus, the prayer is a fitting and sublime climax to a wonderful discourse and the most wonderful life the world has ever known. The prayer falls naturally into three divisions: (1) He prays for Himself (verses 1 to 5) ; (2) He prays for His disciples (verses 6 to 19) ; (3) He prays for His followers who should believe in time to come (verses 20 to 26). In this present time we are concerned with the final part of our Lord's request. We of today are the subjects of this prayer. It must mean something to us that the Son of God in the very shadow of the cross makes such a petition to His Father. Of what interest to us is this final request of our Savior? The most prominent feature is unity.

1. Unity is a fundamental principle in the kingdom of heaven just as it is in nature and the sciences. Our Lord could certainly foresee the necessity of His followers being of "one heart and one soul," and He evidently knew that it was on this vital point that Satan would make his attack and endeavor to scatter the flock. The very nature of the church as the body of Christ, or as the vine and its branches, requires that it must be united to fulfill the will of God. A passing glance at the religious sects of today is sufficient to convince a candid mind that we are not one as God and Christ are one.

2. The Nature of this Union. — It must be evident to all who have given consideration to the subject that

170 our savior's prayer for unity

we can never be one on the basis of a human creed, or a so-called synopsis of the teachings of the scriptures. Man is fallible and "to err is human/\* Hence, every attempt on the part of man to establish a creed to suit all has failed, and such attempts will continue to fail because they are not on the solid rock. Jesus requests "that they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee."

(1) This union is vital. It is likened to various unions in nature, such as, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." (John 15 :5.) "We, being many, are one body in Christ." (Rom. 12:5.) "Ye are God's husbandry, we are God's building." (1 Cor. 3 :9.) "Ye are the temple of God." (1 Cor. 3:16.)



(2) This union is real. It is none the less real because it is represented in figurative language. It must be such that God will recognize and the world may see.

(3) This union is visible. The trouble with most so-called Christian unions of today is that the world can not see them. Our Savior prays for a union that the world may see.

(4) This union is eternal. We form associations, orders and unions of various kinds, but they are of an earthly nature, and must eventually perish with the earth. But the union of Christians is as much above all these as heaven is higher than the earth.

It must be closer than a mere compromise of sects and denominations. It is true that "blood is thicker than water," but our Lord here enjoins a union even closer than blood ties. Blood relations and earthly ties are known only in this life, but those accounted worthy to attain the next world neither marry nor are given in marriage. (Luke 20 :35.) Hence, they do not know these earthly relations, but "they are equal unto the angels." We can see from the foregoing that our Savior is contemplating a union for eternity; or, in other words, the marriage of the Lamb and His bride, the church. Such a union is not only possible, but it is certain to be fulfilled

our lord's prayer for unity 171

in the particular class for which Jesus prayed. This class was made up of the faithful followers of the Lamb. "These

are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." (Rev. 14:4.) They have been called unto the marriage of the Lamb. (Rev. 19 :7-9.) They also have been chosen and they have made themselves ready. (Rev. 19:7; 21:2.)

3. Purpose of this Union. — The great purpose of our Lord in thus having His people united is "that the world may believe/" There is no greater hindrance today to the cause of Christianity than divisions among the professors of Christianity. Many men, otherwise intelligent and successful, meet us with the objection: "How am I to know the true church, seeing they all profess to be right ? But we see they have very little respect for each other and can not agree among themselves, and we know the Bible says, 'Love one another' ; 'Love your enemies,' and 'Do good to them that hate you/ Now, they all profess to be following Christ, so what are we to do about it?" I think this is the best excuse men have to offer for not becoming Christians. But what is God going to do about it ? Will He answer the prayer of His beloved Son? I believe He will. Not that all the world will eventually believe unto the salvation of the soul, because some believe and are yet condemned. "The devils believe and tremble." (Jas. 2:19.) However, when the followers of the meek Man of Galilee are united in one body, as the scriptures clearly teach they should be (1 Cor. 12:12-13) ; Eph. 4:4; 2:22-23; Col. 1:24; Rom. 12:4-5), the world will evidently be brought to a realization of the claims of Jesus, viz.: (1) That he is the Son of God; (2) that God sent Him; (3) and that He is the world's only and true Savior.

## OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By W. L. Reeves.

Our Savior's prayer for unity is, I am persuaded, the greatest prayer ever prayed in behalf of the human family. In praying for those who believe on Christ, He said this : "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them that believe on me through their word ; that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us : that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given unto them ; that they may be one, even as we are one/' (John 17:20-22.)

In the beginning of this lesson on Christian unity, I wish to lay down a proposition for the careful consideration of all who read this :

Proposition: (1) The testimony and specific acts contained in the New Testament scriptures is the only means necessary to unite all people in their religious faith and practice.

(2) The unity of all religious people upon the testimony and specific acts contained in the New Testament is required as a very necessary means to the conversion of the world.

From this proposition it is evident that the salvation of the world depends largely upon Christian unity, and that this unity is to be found only in the New Testament scriptures.

No matter what we may think about the subject, no

matter if we can not see the possibility of Christian unity resulting in the conversion of the world, Christ desired and prayed for unity and stated that He thus prayed in order that this unity or oneness might result in the world believing that God did send Him, and it certainly is invincible evidence to the heart of faith that such

our savior's prayer for unity 173

would be the case if all who claim to be believers in Christ were one as God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are one.

Our inability to comprehend beforehand how it is possible for such unity to bring about the conversion of the world does not signify in the least that it is unreasonable : therefore, impossible.

We, from a human viewpoint, can not see how washing blind eyes in the pool of Siloam at one time could be a means of opening them, and the same thing done now will not do so. Again, we can not see how being baptized in water can do any good in any way as a religious act to bring us to the promise of salvation in Christ, which says : "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16 :16.) To my mind, it is more reasonable to see how the unity of all who profess to believe in Christ can be the means of converting the world than to see, in my own way of thinking, how that being buried in baptism can be a means unto the salvation of man's soul from alien sins ; but I see this just as I see the other. I see each by faith. Christ said both, and that is sufficient ground for me to

believe one as strongly as I do the other.

There are different members of the human body, and unity must obtain in it in order that it, as a whole, fill the mission marked out for it by the wise Creator. All of the members of the body must be in harmony with and act according to the instructions given by the head if the desired results are reached. When the head does its part — commands — and the other members do their part — obey — the work will most certainly be done, and the end purposed by the head will be reached provided the commandments given are all that is necessary to reach this end.

If my head desires that a certain piece of timber be cut from the land on which it is standing, and my feet and legs are willing to do their part — take me to the wood — but my hands refuse to do their part — seize and wield the axe — when my head tells them to do so, the

174 our savior's prayer for unity

timber remains standing on the land, and the end desired is not reached simply because unity does not exist in the members of my body.

Such is the case in the church of Christ. The great work which God ordained for it to do can not be done until that unity which is necessary prevails among all professed believers in Christ.

"Christ is the head of the body, the church/" (Col.

1 :18.) The members of the church are subject to the head, Christ (Eph. 5:25), and He gives us commandments, every one of which is in absolute harmony with all other commandments required of these members, which shows clearly what the basis for Christian unity is. "There is one lawgiver" (Jas. 4:12) ; hence, we can expect harmony in the things which He requires. "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." (Acts 10:34, 35.) Righteousness is of faith. By obedience Noah became the heir of the righteousness which is of faith. (Heb. 11 :7.) Unity of faith is necessary, so it is required. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." (Eph. 4:13.) Notice that this requires unity of knowledge, too. And Paul says : "Now I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing . . . and that ye all be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.) Peter forever settles the question as to what we are to speak in this language : "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.) James tells us why we should speak the same things : "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." (Jas. 2 :12.) Paul says : "Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. 5 :9-10.)

From the foregoing we have seen that Christ requires

unity of faith, unity of knowledge, unity of speech or teaching and unity in what we do, and the only way -it is possible to have Christian unity is to believe and do no more nor less than what we find written in the New Testament — just that and no more.

Take your pencil and draw a circle, which let represent all that is contained and required of us in the New Testament scriptures — the scriptures, of course, contain the word of God. Now, let this circle represent inside its bounds all the acts of faith. I here and now conceive that all men who believe and practice any number of the statements in this circle are in unity on each and every such statement. From this circle is also shown where divisions and departures from God's will begin. They begin just outside the circle, at the very moment men cross the line and enter into the realm of human thought and human opinions, which they lug into the worship, thus entering into the condemnation of Christ, as per such statements as this : "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15 :9.) By crossing the line they launch out at sea without chart or compass ; with no limitations as to what they shall teach, and having no bounds relative to their practices, it is entirely out of the question for any set of men to be united according to Christ's prayer and upon the basis for this unity which He gave in the New Testament scriptures. By so doing they set aside the only fixed law for unity, for there is nothing fixed in the opinions of men.

But Paul teaches us that there is one who endureth.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Heb. 13:8.) James says: "There is one law-giver." (Jas. 4:12.) He has given to us "the law of the spirit of life." (Rom. 8:2.) "Christ is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1:18.)

Christ's teachings believed and obeyed is the only way to be saved, and since He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35), it follows that the same things are required of

176 our savior's prayer for unity

all men to be saved from alien sins, and the same acts of worship, and the same Godly, daily walk in the Christian life is required in order to eternal life hereafter. All these requirements are taught in the New Testament and not in the Old. (Rom. 6:14.)

With these facts before us we can all see that in the New Testament alone can be found the bonds of Christian unity, for in it alone we find the things we must teach and practice as religious work and worship.

There are a number of reasons which necessitate unity in religious matters. First, there is strength in the combination of forces. If a congregation would be strong in knowledge, the members should have a thorough knowledge of the holy scriptures. Unity in singing makes it better, makes it more impressive, consequently more instructive. If some in the assembly sing one song and others sing another at the same time, there is confusion instead of instructions. Second, Christian unity saves



money, material, time and labor, which division necessitates being spent in building church edifices in which to worship and in maintaining more preachers than are needed in any given locality. Third, unity among religious people awakens the admiration of others, because the human heart is so constructed that it admires peace and unity in the family, among neighbors, and, above all, among those who claim to be followers of the things which make for peace. Christ realized this, hence His prayer that all believers may be one in order that the world might believe that God truly sent Him. Since it is a fact that those who claim to be followers of Christ are divided up into factions, it has brought about a state of affairs which militates against faith in Christ's claims to be the Prince of Peace. Fourth, one other reason unity should prevail is because Christ requires it. Besides praying for it, He commands us to : "Endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." (Eph. 4:1-3.) Again, Paul says : "That ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor.

our savior's prayer for unity 177

1 :10.) He forbids divisions. "That there shall be no divisions in the body.' , (1 Cor. 12:25.) The body is the church. (Col. 1:18.)

We are commanded to teach the same things. This is required because it is absolutely necessary to unity in faith and practice. If all teach just what Christ taught, we will teach the same; and if we believe and do just what He taught we will certainly believe and do the same

things, for it is impossible for it to be otherwise ; so away goes the old idea that people are divided on what Christ teaches. The divisions are not on what He teaches, but on opinions about what He teaches. In actual faith all are alike, for if we believe Christ's teachings at all, we believe alike. To illustrate : His teachings say that He is the Son of God. All who believe this are one on this point ; so it is with every other point, on every other sentence in the New Testament, for they all say the same to all men everywhere.

The real faith of all men is the same on the subject of baptism. All that men think or teach on baptism that is not plainly taught in the scriptures is not what they believe ; it is not of faith, but it is just their opinions. Faith on the subject of baptism, as on any other subject of Christianity, comes from God's word. (Rom. 10:17.) Now, let us see if this is not correct. God's word says we are buried in baptism and raised up to walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-4.) All who believe this at all, believe that baptism is a burial. We see unity here again. Let us see another one : "And they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." (Acts 8:38.) Any man who believes what Paul says when he says we are buried by baptism, also believes that in this case Philip buried or immersed the eunuch in water, for they were both in water when the baptizing or burying was done. Compare Col. 2:12 and Acts 8:38. That man does not live who can see sprinkling or pouring in these passages. How is it possible for two men to be in water and one bury the other and raise him up and

178 our savior's prayer for unity

not immerse him? Is it not sensible for any man to say he can not see immersion in such a course? All men see immersion in the case of the eunuch ; therefore, unity prevails here.

Christ said : "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) Peter said: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38.) Paul was given this commandment : "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22:16.) "The Lord adds the saved to the church." (Acts 2:47.) Of the church, Paul said : "Christ gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5 :26.) Salvation is in Christ, and Paul says we are "baptized into Christ." (Rom. 6: 3-4.)

Kind reader, do you believe these passages of scripture? If you do, we are in perfect unity on what baptism is, and what it is for. Such is the case relative to all else written in the Bible. We all do see alike if we see just what the Bible says. Our opinions is where we are divided.

Christ is the Great Physician, and His prescription for divisions will banish them and maintain unity. The remedy is this : Teach and do just what Christ and the apostles taught people to do and the victory is won. Divisions will certainly die, and peace, harmony and unity will prevail among all, everywhere.

## CHRISTIAN UNITY— ITS IMPORTANCE, NATURE AND BASIS.

By C. R. Rice.

"That They May All Be One/" — Jesus.

1. Its Importance. — Jesus has "set his face steadfastly toward Jerusalem," but before entering the city of life-taking and tragedy, he pours forth in prayer what is dear to his heart — the unity of his followers. His loving heart throbs with burning desire and master passion for the unity of his disciples after the suffering and death-cry of the cross ; after light and warmth are left in the grave of the sympathetic Joseph; after his ascension and coronation and the inauguration of his reign on Pentecost; after the first, fifteenth and twentieth centuries — until the close of time and the dawn of the perfect day. The Christians of the first and second centuries gave answer to this prayer, but his followers in later centuries became "traitor to his purpose and a pain in his heart forever." Read the seventeenth chapter of John and let its beauty and pathos grip your heart-strings. Let it arouse in you the "spirit of Christ," without which you are "none of His." Let it be to you an argument, a passion, a life.

The time at which a thing is said or done adds emphasis and lends significance to the thing said or done. Here it is the nearness of Gethsemane with its anguish and angel, and Calvary with its pierced hands and drooped head. It was late Thursday evening when this prayer was offered. The next morning is His crucifixion. In a few hours suffering will force the words, "It is finished,"

from between His lips. Yes, the end is near, and His life in the world is practically over. The light of the torches is in his face, the betrayal kiss is upon his cheek, th«

## 180 our savior's prayer for unity

scourge, thorn and nail wounds are upon His body. He reveals His bursting heart with this tender prayer, and steps across the threshold of Gethsemane, on whose floor no light lay, and in whose roof no star shines. This prayer was uttered just before the sentence supplication of the garden, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done." Once, twice, He prays, but the heavens seem brass and the disciples sleep. He suffers alone. The third time he pleads and the heavens open and the angel comes and strengthens Him. "That they all may be one," he reverently requests just before His outstretched arms are nailed to the cross, His heart breaks, and His red, warm blood drips from his veins and pours from his arteries. Four times in the three hundred tragic words, "that they all may be one," trembles upon his lips ; four times they go quivering to the depths of our hearts.

## 2. Its Nature.

(T) Negatively.

(a) Not federation. Federation is to unity what mix is to combination. Segregation into groups or denominations due to distinctive differentiation in doctrine was unknown to the first Christian century. The fol-

lowers of Christ constituted one great Christian unit.

(b) Not union. There can be union without unity.

Illustrations: (1) A number of nuggets of gold brought from a number of states and countries and placed together — this represents union. Place these in a fire and the several nuggets are made one. This represents unity.

(2) Marriage is a union. It is the being together of two persons ; all married persons, however, though united, do not live together in unity. If unity were a fact in every home, there never would be an application for divorce. Union is the state of being one; unity is the state of having but one feeling or sentiment.

f c) Not co-operation. Mere co-operation is unity in weak dilution.

(2) Affirmatively.

## CHRISTIAN UNITY 181

(a) Such as exists between God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son. (John 17:21.)

(b) Such as is found in the illustrations of Christ and apostles. Paul compares the unity of Christians to the unity of the human body. (Rom. 12:4-5.) Christ illustrates the unity of the church by a sheepfold. (John 10:16.)

(c) Such as is described by David: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell to-

gether in unity." (Ps. 133 :1.)

(d) Such as existed among the primitive Christians  
w T hen heathen lips were constrained to utter truth : "Behold how these Christians love one another/"

(e) Such as existed among the apostles and seventy  
who became charter members of the church of Christ:  
"They were all with one accord in one place." (Acts  
2:!.)"

(f) Such as existed in the apostolic church: "The  
multitude of them that believed were of one heart and  
of one soul." (Acts 4:32.)

(g) Such as was reported by Luke of the church in  
Palestine : "The church throughout all Judea and Galilee  
and Samaria had peace, being edified." (Acts 9:31, Re-  
vised Version.)

(h) Such as is indicated by the following words:  
"Likeminded" ; "one mind" ; "same mind" ; "same love" ;  
"same rule" and "same thing."

God has erected a number of sign boards along the  
road of the righteous with their pronouncements of con-  
demnation of division and exhortations to unity. (Rom.  
12:10, 16: 15:5-6; 14:9: 1 Cor. 1:10:2 Cor. 13:11; Phil.  
1:27: 2:2; 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:8; 1 Cor. 3:1-23.)

To listen to these inspired sentences is never to travel  
in the way of denominationalists and sectarians. To heed  
the message of Christ and His apostles is never to be  
found on the side of division and disunion. The man

w T hose party cry is, "I am of Luther," "I am of Wesley," "I am of Calvin," which are modern names placed in the

## 1\*2 OUR SAVIOR^ PRAYER for unity

Corinthian party cries, "I am of Paul/" "I am of Apollos" or "I am of Cephas," is possessed of that spirit which is diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christ in which he prayed : "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 17:21.) The condition that obtained at Corinth permeates Christendom. It was the crowning evil of the church at Corinth. Now it is the scandal of Christianity and the blackest sin of Christendom.

## 3. Its Basis.

There are many human bases upon which, if the Christian world were to unite, they would disregard the divine basis. Eph. 4:4-6 presents a sevenfold basis. So long as these seven unities were maintained there were no divisions. If unity is to ever sway the hearts of Christians, it will be through the recognition and acceptance of the unities enumerated by Paul.

1. "One God." There is one God from whom all things emanate. "One God" is opposed to idolatry.

2. "One Lord." Since there is one Lord, there is just one who speaks with authority. He said: "All authority in heaven and in earth is given to me." He



shares or divides his authority with no one. Popes and creed-makers, who are responsible for all the divisions in the religious world, have no authority. Theirs is ill-gotten. Shall we listen to creed or Christ? Christ is an infallible lawgiver. "Hear ye Him."

3. "One Faith." There was only one faith for more than a hundred years after Christ's church was established. That one faith is now being preached by the church of Christ. Paul gives admonition concerning the faith : "Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints." He makes "faith" and "gospel" synonymous and says : "Though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1 : 8.) "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation."

#### CHRISTIAN UNITY 183

(Rom. 1 :16.) There must be unity in the word preached. The "one faith"\* can only be perpetuated upon the earth by ministers preaching with "one mouth" — preaching the "one faith."

4. "One body." The church is nine times called "body." Paul says : "He is head over all things to the church which is his body." (Eph. 1:22-23.) There is one church. "Upon this rock I will build my church," not churches. There is just one church to make supreme. The apostolic church was possessed of unity of organization. The first step in apostasy was when the local congregation expanded into a diocese and this destroyed the

New Testament unity of organization.

5. "One baptism." The apostle next gives emphasis to the oneness of baptism. "Keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you." So speaks Paul. What is Paul's teaching concerning the practice of baptism? How was he baptized? "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism." (Rom. 6:3.) Since there was but one faith preached in New Testament times, Paul must have taught all congregations the same thing as the congregations of the different countries was a great unit. (Acts 9:31.) If he and the members of the church at Rome were "buried by baptism," all others elsewhere must have been. Is immersion the "one baptism?" The New Testament answers that question by a description of what the persons did. Penitent believers went to the water (Acts 8:38) ; where there was much water (John 3:23) ; down into it (Acts 8:38) ; were buried in it (Rom. 6:4) ; were planted (Rom. 6:5) ; were raised (Col. 2:12) ; came up out of the water (Acts 8:39) ; had their bodies washed (Heb. 10:22). There is one baptism and should be one universal practice.

6. One spirit." This spirit does not inspire contradictory messages, because there is one spirit. "He will guide you (the apostles) into all the truth." There is just one spirit to , animate the Christian world. It animates the one body — the church.

1\*1 our savior's prayer for unity

7. "One hope." Not many hopes, as the hope of

universal salvation by the Universalist ; the hope of annihilation by the wicked, as inspired by Russellism; but the one hope of the gospel. This one hope inspires Christians.

These are the seven elements of an unadulterated gospel. Carnality will bring division, but these seven elements will bring unity. There are primary and non-vital causes for division, but carnality is the primary cause of all division. Soul-sleeping, wearing jewelry, etc., would be considered secondary or non-vital causes for division.

Conclusion. — Opposition to denominationalism may be an unpopular course with the world. It was unpopular in Christ's day. He said: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10:16.) He taught unity and brotherhood and was met with Sadducean hate, Pharasaic opposition, Essenic scorn and pagan indifference. His teaching antagonized Jewish traditions, prejudices and antipathies, and for it he was rejected, cursed and crucified. If the division of God's people were ever right, if denominationalism were ever excusable, it certainly would have been during Christ's personal ministry, and he certainly would have been the first to give them recognition as denominationalists, if right, or excusable. He taught that he was "the way, the truth and the life," and lived a faultless life; but they were angered by his teaching, and enraged by his living, and they hounded him to his death — "dragged him to the cross, nailed him there and cursed him while he died."

Can you live and worship in utter disregard of the

prayer of your Lord delivered under such solemn circumstances? Can you impugn the sincerity of Christ when he prayed "that they all may be one?" Can you impeach his wisdom when he assigns the reason, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me?" Will you not do your part to "stop the pain in his heart?"

©UR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By E. G. Rockliff.

"That They May All Be One." — Jesus.

Wickliffe, grasping God's true Word, arose,  
And Huss, who would not yield it though the flames  
Hissed round him ; and the mighty Luther rose  
And hurled the Bible at the papal throne,  
And set it shaking to its fall. A host  
Came after them, enamored of the truth,  
And through the wizard press the Word was sow\*  
In many lands, and day began to dawn.  
Last in the land of Knox, the Haldanes rose,  
And in their line the Campbell,s who, across

The blue Atlantic to the virgin west  
Bore the bright torch, and kindled a great flame,  
Uplifting mighty voices in the wild,  
Inhospitable wilderness, they cried:  
"Prepare the way, for lo ! the Word appears ;  
Make plain a highway for the Lord ; lift up  
The lowly valleys of the sunken Truth ;  
Bring down the hills of proud sectarianism;  
Straighten the crooked doctrine by the Book;  
Smooth the rough places of debate and strife,  
And all flesh shall behold the way of God."

—From G. P. Pittman's "The Break of Day."

Has the last wish and prayer of our Savior been answered? No. Is it being answered? Yes. Will it be fully answered? That depends upon us. Christian unity is exercising the minds of religious people all over the world in an unprecedented manner. Division is at last seen to be a barrier to progress. Those of us who are old-fashioned enough to believe that the remedy lies in

getting back to the faith and practice of the church as perfected by the apostles would do well to feed the disquiet that is spreading and pray that out of all this confusion may evolve the answer to our Lord's prayer.

When we read Acts 2 we are filled with admiration at that wonderful brotherhood, that union of hearts, that great company that could truly sing:

"We are not divided, all one body we;  
One in heart and doctrine, one in charity. "

It looked as though that for which our Savior prayed was soon to be — men of every kindred, tribe and tongue were, by the preaching of the gospel, welded into one great family. These were of one heart and one mind. What the gospel did then it can do again. Our Master desired this union because of the moral power it would confer upon the church. Nothing would so speedily convince the world of the claims of Jesus as would an united Christendom. (John 17:21.) Nothing hinders so much the progress of the old gospel chariot as division. On every hand today union is allowed to be a "consummation devoutly to be wished." This was not always so, and is a sign of the times. Let us thank God and take courage.

Notice, however, that it was Christian union for which our Lord prayed. The Christian is the unit, and the word Christian is to be understood as met, and only met, in such disciples of Christ as were so called at Antioch and elsewhere. The union of such as these in the One Body is the only Christian union recognized in the word of God.

Many today are just playing at Christian union. They are spending their strength for nought.

Someone has well said that Christian union is not the result of the vote of some conference, but of the Spirit's indwelling. "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." It is human manipulation that has made what was so clearly understood in the first cen-

OUR savior<sup>1\*</sup> prayer for unity W

tury hard to understand in the twentieth. When we lead men away from the commentary to the sacred text we bring them to that mould of instruction that makes free from sin and makes servants of righteousness. (Rom. 6:17.)

A bonfire of books, as at Ephesus, would help some. Let us use the divine mould out of which we can make Christians only; with which we can reproduce a brotherhood like the one in Acts 2. What an anomaly, one Head, many bodies. The way of Balaam is the way of many : "They have forsaken the right way and are gone astray." The result is Christless churches and a progress minus God.

Marcus Dods in his exposition of First Corinthians : "The church was intended to be the grand uniter of the race. Distinctions were to be obliterated. Men alienated were to be united. The opposite has resulted ; the church has alienated neighbors and friends. Thus the church has lost a large part of her strength. Had the kingdom

of Christ been visibly one, it would have been supreme and without a rival in the world. Had there been union where there has been division, the rule and influence of Christ would have so far surpassed every other influence that peace and truth, right and justice, godliness and mercy would have everywhere reigned. But instead of this, the strength of the church has been frittered away in civil strife and party warfare, her ablest men have spent themselves in controversy, and, through division, her influence has become insignificant. "

Brethren, let us have clean hands in this matter. Now that the awakening has come, let us help heal divisions and weld together the forces that make for righteousness. Let us reiterate our Lord's prayer; cry out in clarion tones how Paul besought his brethren not to be divided, but to all speak the same thing. Let us ring the changes upon the oneness pleaded for in the New Testament. Our cry, "Back to Jerusalem," must be heard. Back to the purity and simplicity of the message that pro-

188 \*ur savior's prayer for unity

duc\*d the first church. Nothing else will reproduce it.

They did not want to be Wesleyans, Lutherans or Calvinists at Corinth, but they did want to be Paulites, Appollosites, Cephasites and Christians. It is the same thing.

Paul, in effect, said to them: If you can divide the one Christ crucified for you, and if one church can live



on one part and another church on another part, then go ahead. But if there be one Christ indivisible, then is there but one church indivisible. The Bible, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, is the common peace ground. Its plain, unvarnished instruction will produce an army that will shatter the forces of evil. That God in heaven will speed the time when his Son's prayer shall be answered (when names and sects and parties fall and Jesus Christ is all in all) is the prayer of one of the million in the firing line opposing division and faction.

G. P. Pittman in "The Break of Day" writes :

"A million hearts

Unite in one resolve — to cast away  
All things that have no warrant in the word,  
And to do all things written in the Book —  
So shall the church be one.

We, who were cloven asunder in a hundred camps,  
Have found indissoluble union in the truth.  
This, also, shall the sundered millions find,  
If we but do our part and play the man.  
For, as the sun uprisen, gathers strength,  
And climbs to the meridian in a blaze  
Of glory no man dares to look upon,  
And the blue heavens, pale with excess of light,  
And hills and plains are white and shimmering,  
The wide, wild seas shine in a molten mass,  
And the great world is one bright orb of day,  
And all the universe is one in light —  
So is the glory of the day to be  
The destiny of union in the truth."

UNION.

By T. Short.

The above chart illustrates how party names and doctrines vanish away as we approach Christ, and in our nearness to Him how an illumination of truth shines upon us and the rays of His love mould our hearts into one till we can see that a delusion has been preached to men. See that "another gospel, which is not another gospel," has been preached to men. See a gospel made by man.

But hear Paul in regard to the true gospel : "The gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by revelation of Christ. I conferred not with flesh and blood."

Hear Peter : "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

How was the gospel perverted? The Galatians "returned to the weak and beggarly elements" of the world, became in bondage to the flesh. They observed days, months, times and years as the world. They walked not in the spirit, "but did bite and devour one another."

Does God change? Some will say, did God change in that He made a new spiritual religion? No. God designed this new religion before the foundation of the world. Notice His promise to Abraham that in the fullness of time, "in his seed all nations of the earth would

be blessed."

Cause of Perversions and Divisions. — Following the church down the ages, you may detect these perversions and their results — divisions. Divisions (falsely so called) are caused by this delusion : We (people generally) consider as belonging to the church the following :

1. Opinions in regard to the mysteries. Th«s« opixx-

190 our savior's prayer for unity

ions are imaginative. The first great division was caused by a debate, one party holding that the Holy Ghost was begotten from God through Christ ; the other that He proceeded from God.

2. Things that are of this world. The church as seen by God is essentially the regenerated spirits of men. "My kingdom is not of this world." "They (my disciples) are not of this world." "Religion (of Christ) is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Hence, Paul says: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink or in respect of an holy day or of the new moon or of the sabbath, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body (substance) is of Christ." For membership, therefore, there is only one test — Christianity. Should you be judged by man in respect to the squareness of the earth or wearing of uniform, or preaching in a heathen temple, provided your liberty in so doing

does not offend — that is weakening a brother in the faith, provided you worship in the spirit of Christ.

Foolishness. — From the above we can see that the debate — Science Versus Religion — is foolish, that state churches are perversions and that war is the insanity of carnality. There were no Christian soldiers till the church was perverted.

The above chart is more fully explained in "Gideon's Band," a book published by T. Short, Guilford, Kansas, at 50 cents, postpaid. This book represents the church as not made by man. This we hold is important. Why? Suppose, during a revival, infidels prove that the church originated by man and you could not contradict them, how many joiners would you get? If you admit that the church was made by man or partly made by man, you have placed the church on a level with idols of heathens.

Iron and clay church. When you say that the church is partly terrestrial, you have mixed the world and church together; you have desecrated the church. If terrestrial things are considered as part of the church and they

## UNION 191

become venerable by age, and it is proven that they are against science and all reason, then this iron and clay church will perish. For instance, you hold as a church, that the earth is square, and science proves the earth to be round. Suppose you hold to any tenet (not given by divine revelation) as being part of the church, and in

time this tenet is shown to be false, don't you see that a church built on terrestrial things has a sandy foundation ? But the church of Ghrist, founded on the stone of inspiration and upon which is built ("Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house") a spiritual super-structure will stand. The gates of hell can not prevail against her.

This stone celestial some time will strike the iron and clay church and grind it to powder. That is, it will be divided till, like powder, it can and will be carried by the wind and will have no lodging place in the hearts of men. And that flame from heaven, which lit the sacrifice of Elijah, will burn it up. And the illumination therefrom will spread over the world even to the darkest jungles of heathendom. But the stone celestial, cut out of the mountains without hands (not made by man), will roll on till it fills the whole earth.

Hymn on Union.

Tune, "How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints of the Lord."

1.

How firm a foundation, for faith and union,

Built on inspiration, she is celestial.

Whom say ye that I am? Thou art Christ, the Lamb.

Sent, troubled hearts to calm; promised Son of God.

2.

Blessed art thou, Simon ; by inspiration  
Came this firm foundation, this stone celestial ;  
How sandy foundations, for all divisions,  
They're built on delusions of carnality.

192 our savior's prayer for unity

Celestial Feast.

Tune, "Fill Me Now."

Waiting, waiting altogether  
For more of thy wondrous power;  
For unison like that first meeting,  
When they all, with one accord,  
Faithful were in one place waiting  
For the spirit of their Lord.

CHORUS.

Fill us full, fill us full, full of thy spirit;  
Jesus, come and fill us now.

OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

By H. C. Shoulders.

The above subject we find contained in the prayer  
of our Savior which He uttered on behalf of His dis-

ciples and those believing on Him through the words of the apostles. This, to my mind, is, and was then, the sweetest prayer our Savior prayed while on earth. It should be the desire of every person trying to walk in the footprints of Jesus to so live and conduct themselves that a union of the professed followers of Christ would be brought about and many souls be saved. Jesus says : "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one ; even 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 didst send me." (John 17:20-21.)

(1) Jesus prayed for His disciples. (2) He prayed for all that believe on Him through the words of the disciples, that they might all be one, united, joined together. Jesus and the Father are one, even so are the followers to be one, that the world may believe in the Christ, the Savior of men.

One great cause why so many people do not believe or have faith is because of the confusing doctrines being taught by the different religious teachers of the various denominations that exist in the world today. They claim to follow Christ and yet they are divided among themselves, which, of course, is confusing to the person who does not study the Bible for himself and see just what is taught in the scriptures ; consequently, many of the people do not believe anything and thus they become infidels and full of all kinds of skepticism. Every person must admit that the professed followers of Christ should be united. In union there is strength and power, but in division there is weakness.

The Bible is the word of God, and is, therefore, the only basis upon which we can have union. The Bible reveals the will of God to man, but what does the apostle claim for the Bible? Listen to his words: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness : that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work. ,, (2 Tim. 3: 16-17.) The Bible furnishes people with very good work. Therefore, if they do anything not revealed in the Bible it is not, and can not be a good work. "And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified." (Acts 20:32.) The word of God's grace, which is the Bible, is able to build us up and give us an inheritance among the sanctified, which are the saved. Then, people are saved through the word of God. "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. " ( Jas. 1 : 21.)

"Now, I beseech you, brethren, through 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 perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1 :10.) The only way we can speak the same things is to speak the things God has revealed to us in his word. If every person would do and teach just what is revealed in the Bible, all would be united, would be of the same mind and the same judgment.



Paul says : "Giving diligence to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3.) God, Christ and the apostles have all clearly taught that the professed Christians are to be one, and the person who does not do all in his power to bring about this union is not striving as directed in the scriptures. Disciples should stand together firm, with one purpose in view ; yea, the propagation of the gospel and the saving of Souls. Paul says :

our savior's prayer for unity 195

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ : that whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel." (Phil. 1 :27.) "The bonds of peace." Bond, that which binds or ties together; a cord, a chain. Certainly followers of Christ are to be bound together and be at peace one with another, working for the salvation of the souls of men and women everywhere.

The prayer of Jesus while in Gethsemane just before His cruel death on the cross is a good example of submission to the will of the Father. "And he was parted from them about a stone's cast ; and he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." (Luke 22:41-42.) Jesus prayed, if it was the Father's will, let this cup (cup of suffering) pass from me. He submitted to the will of the Father even under the most trying circumstances ; even so should we submit to His will, obey it and be saved. Wherever you see

division, you may know at once God's authority has not been recognized, because when God's will and authority has been submitted to and obeyed, union and harmony prevails in the church and the community.

In what are we to be one ? The apostle Paul teaches we are to be one in faith. He says in Eph. 4:5 that there is "one faith." Since there is one faith and only one, we must all have the same kind of faith in order to be one, united together. Hence, the question, what must we believe? "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God: and without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." (Heb. 11:5-6.) "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples.

196 our savior's prayer for unity

which are not written in this book : but these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God : and that believing ye may have life in his name." (John 20:30-31.) "And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. 2:4-5.) From the above scriptures, we can see there are just three things for us all to believe: (1) Believe in the one God and that he rewards all who

diligently seek after him; (2) believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and that life comes through His name; (3) that our faith is to be in the gospel of Christ, which is God's power to save, and not in man's wisdom. The person that really believes all of these things as he should is ready and anxious to obey the gospel to be saved. (Rom. 1 :16 ; 2 Thess. 1 :7-9.) All that believe or have this kind of faith have the kind of which Paul speaks.

We are to be one in that c\\\ are members of one body, the church. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye were called in one hope of your calling. . (Eph. 4:4.) This one body is the church. (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1 :18, 24.) We are to be one in name, and we can be if we will take the word of God and be guided by that and that alone. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." (Eph. 3 :14-15.) We are to be one in mind. "If there is any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any tender mercies and compassion, make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. . . ." (Phil. 2:1-2.) "Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded : not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrarywise blessing ; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing." (1 Pet. 3:8-9.) If people are all in the same church, wearing the same name and have the

same kind of faith, being of the same mind and speaking the same things, they will also practice the same things and will have the one hope of eternal life. Paul declares : "Ye were called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4: 4.) When people obey the gospel and live as directed in God's word, they then have the one hope of eternal life. Paul then tells us this hope is an anchor to the soul. (Heb. 6:17-20.)

The last question I wish to consider is this, what has and does now destroy union among God's people? Answer: Peace, union and harmony are and have been destroyed among disciples by false teachers. "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock : and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Wherefore watch you, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:29-31.) "For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." (Jas. 3 :16.) Self-importance and pre-eminence among brethren and religious teachers will cause confusion and division. "I wrote somewhat unto the church : but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not. Therefore, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he doeth, prating against us with wicked words : and not content therewith, neither doeth he himself receive the brethren, and them that would he forbiddeth and casteth them out of the church." (3 John 1:9-10.)

With these lessons before us, let everyone study the Bible, be simply a Christian, a member of the one body,

the church, working for the salvation of the souls of men and women.

## UNITY OF THE SPIRIT.

By J. F. Tomson.

Texts : "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Ps. 133:1.)  
"There is one body." (Eph. 4:4; John 17:20-21.)

The subject before us is one of vast importance as it relates to spiritual matters and the oneness of God's people. Many discourses have been delivered upon the subject of "Christian Union," which phrase is not found in the book of God. Of course, the word unity is from the word unit, which means one, and where unity exists there will be union. Many prayers have been made for the unity of the religious world, yet we have division, parties, factions and much strife and contention. Whole communities and sometimes families are divided religiously. Who is to blame for these religious parties or factions ? Not the God of the Bible, for He is not the "author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 14:33.)

To accomplish any work, great or small, by any number of persons, there must be unity of action. A divided army can not expect victory. It is only when they are united and follow the one leader that they can hope for success. Long ago it was said: "In union there is strength." "United, we stand; divided, we fall." Our Savior said of a kingdom and house : "If a kingdom

be divided against itself that kingdom can not stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house can not stand." (Mark 3 :24-25.)

It is clear to be seen by all thinking persons that the religious world is divided into warring factions or parties, and that each party is working for its own advancement to the downfall of the others. Even the church of Christ has been wrecked by uninspired men, who have no

#### UNITY OF THE SPIRIT 199

regard for our Savior's prayer ; who prayed for the unity of his disciples. "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.)

In this memorial prayer of our Savior, He prays for the unity (oneness) of His disciples. In this prayer He shows the intimate relationship existing between Himself and His Father, and that they have no separate wills or kingdoms. But such a union as He prays for can not exist as long as uninspired men meet in councils, conventions and associations to legislate or formulate by-laws, creeds or disciplines in disregard to Christ as the great lawgiver. Then, who is to blame for the divided state of the religious world? There is only one answer: Men who are not willing to "speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent."

The whole tenor of the New Testament writers is against division and in behalf of unity. (See Board Diagrams, Nos. 1 and 2.)

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (a) that ye all speak the same thing and (b) that there be no divisions among you; but (c) that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and (d) the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.) "Fulfill ye my joy (a) that ye be likeminded; (b) having the same love; (c) being of one accord; (d) of one mind." (Phil. 2:2.)

We have itemized the thoughts of these texts to show what it takes to promote the unity of the body of Christ, which is His church, that all may dwell together in love and be of the same mind and judgment. If men would speak as the oracles of God, and submit to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, there would be no division, and the Lord's prayer would be answered. "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name (by the

200 OUR savior's prayer for unity

authority) of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Col. 3:17.) When He was exalted at the right hand of the Father, all authority in heaven and earth was given unto Him that He might put all enemies under His feet. (See Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 1:15-23.)

If we obey His teaching faithfully there will be no

factions or discord, but perfect unity and love in the body of Christ. It is the will of the Father that we hear Him, as He is "the way, the truth and the life, and no one can come unto the Father but through Him." (Matt. 17:5; John 14 ;6.)

Carnality has brought about the division in the religious world today, until we are divided and subdivided into near twelve hundred denominations, all working harmoniously together to overthrow the church of Christ. Carnality divided the church at Corinth. ( 1 Cor. 3 :3-5 ; 1 Cor. 1:11-14.)

Explanation of Our Diagram. — The large diagram represents the kingdom of God, or church of Christ. Inside of the large, we place three smaller diagrams, representing three of the most prominent denominations of this country — granting them, for the sake of the argument, what they claim to be, branches of the true church. Now, show what they teach about the establishment of the church. Then show the Bible teaching. (Matt. 16: 13-19.) If the church was established before Pentecost (a) it was a church without a foundation; therefore, a sandy foundation, as the foundation had to be tried. (Isa. 28:16.) The foundation was tried when Jesus was crucified. (Acts 4:10-12.) (b) A body without a head ; therefore, a headless body — a dead body — as the spirit was not given until Pentecost. (Col. 1:18; Jas. 2: 26.) (c) A church without the purchase price paid. (Acts 20:28.)

On Pentecost, the law of induction was announced and the prophecy of Daniel (2:44) was fulfilled. The history of the case shows the prediction to have been ful-



## UNITY OF THE SPIRIT 201

tilled- "I will build my church," Jesus. The "law was to go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2 :3 ; Luke 24 :46-49.)

Make an argument upon the name as applied to the term church in a local and catholic sense and as applied to individual members. (Isa. 62:2; Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16; Jas. 2:7.) Show Methodist and Baptist teaching on entering the kingdom, but not into the fellowship of the church until after baptism. Mark out F. and R. F., also M. E. and Baptist, S. P. and B. standing for sprinkling, pouring and baptism. Show that the terms free and close communion are unscriptural terms. (1 Cor. 10: 16.)

Next, show the divisive work of creeds, marking everything that divides Christians, after asking the audience to give chapter and verse authorizing them. Creed is from credo and means "I believe." All organic bodies have their creed. The creed of the Methodist Episcopal church is the Discipline. All the organic laws of the Methodist Episcopal church are based on the twenty-five articles of faith found in the Discipline. The creed of the Baptist church is the American Confession of Faith, Pen Manual or Phil. Confession of Faith. All the organic laws of the Baptists are based on the eighteen articles of faith found therein. Destroy a creed and you will destroy the sect holding to it. The church of Christ is a divine institution. It has a divine lawgiver, and, therefore, its laws are divine. A divine institution, divine

head and divine creed. Webster says : "A creed is a definite truth to be believed." What definite truth did God submit to the world as the object of men's faith? We read from the sacred pages : "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

When the pagan jailer cried out at the midnight hour, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas answered : "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou

202 our savior's prayer for unity

•halt be saved and thy house." (Acts 16:30-31.) Philip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts 8:37.) In all these scriptures and many others Christ is made the object of men's faith. Faith in the divinity of Christ as the Son of the living God was the creed of the apostolic church and the only creed. Then, back to Jerusalem and let our motto ever be, "Where the Bible speaks, we will speak," or be as silent as the hills. Show the divisive work of the Christian church. Make an argument against societies and instrumental music, marking out as you proceed everything that divides.

Homily.

Unity. — The word unity is from unit and means one, which word occurs three times in the Bible, one time in

Ps. 133.1 and in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, third and thirteenth verses. (See Eph. 4:1-6; see Diagram No. 4.)

When the relation existing between the followers of Christ is mentioned in the Bible it is unity. It implies a state that can not exist without all the elements or principles mentioned by Paul are present. (Illustrate by the seven primitive colors.)

Therefore, if we add a new principle or element than the seven named by Paul, the unity of the spirit is destroyed. If unity consists of these, neither more or less, it is well to understand them in the order given us by inspiration. Therefore, necessary to this unity we have: (1) The one body. That is, one church — the body is the church. "And he is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1:18.) "And there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10:16; 1 Cor. 12:13.) What is the body of which Christ is head? It is the church that He built upon the rock. He calls it my church. (Matt. 16: 18.) We call it the church of Christ, or Christ's church; the church of the first-born, church of God, etc. How

#### UNITY OF THE SPIRIT 20i

may the one body, or the church of Christ, be identified?  
(a) By its name; (b) by the foundation upon which it is built; (c) by its officers, worship and discipline.

When men learn to set aside their own wisdom and submit to the wisdom of God and take God at his word,

they will cease to multiply denominations and our Savior's prayer will be answered.

(2) The One Spirit. — The Holy Spirit to dwell in and animate the one body. (John 14:15.) The temple of God in which the Holy Spirit dwells is the building of God, the one body.

(3) The One Hope. — The one hope is composed of desire and expectation. As Christians we hope to be delivered from the power of death and be resurrected from the grave. As Christians we hope to see our God face to face, and our Redeemer as he is. Oh, yes ! We hope to meet and to mingle with the ransomed host of God and join in the song to the Lamb of God forever and ever. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure/" (1 John 3:3.) All who do not possess this hope can not keep the "unity of the spirit." and with such we can have no spiritual union.

(4) One Lord. — He who is King of king and Lord of lords. The only recognized Lord and lawgiver on the "unity of the spirit" can never be obtained. If we acknowledge any other Lord or head we can not unite with the people of God.

(5) One Faith. — The one faith founded upon the divine testimony is necessary to "unity of the spirit." (Heb. 11:6.) He who possesses faith founded upon dreams can not keep the "unity of the spirit." (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37; John 3:16.)'

(6) The One Baptism, — Not four or five, but the one baptism. One baptism is as necessary as the one

body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord and one faith.  
(Press the argument.)

(7) One God. — The Father of all, the author of being, self-existent and eternal. "He who made us and not

204 our savior's prayer for unity

we ourselves/" "In whom we live and move and have our being." "From whom we receive our life and breath and all things." "The creator of the heavens and the earth and all things therein." "Who art from everlasting to everlasting." "The King eternal, immortal, invisible; the only wise God." Amen.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." These things observed, and our Savior's prayer will be answered and the world converted. All true believers are now one in Christ. Men are saved in the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the church. (Col. 1:18.) "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.)

May God help us to plant our feet on the immovable Rock of Ages, that even in death we shall not fall, but rise to fairer worlds on high. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

(Has It Been Answered, Is It Being Answered, or Will It Be Answered?)

By George W. Varner.

In the first place, I wish to notice carefully the wording of the prayer. In verse 6, he says : "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word." Verse 11, he prays the Father to "keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one."

From the scripture cited it is evidently clear that in order to preserve the unity prayed for they be kept in the one name and keep the word. "While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name." Thus, we see it was necessary to keep them in the one name and that they (the disciples) keep the word he gave them in order that unity might be preserved.

Luke 12 :32 : "Fear not, little flock ; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Thus, we have one flock, one father and one kingdom. They had received the word he gave them, and kept the word, and been kept in the one name, and were of one mind. They had the mind of Christ. See 1 Cor. 2:16: "We (the apostles) have the mind of Christ." One mind and all preached the same thing. (1 Cor. 15:11.)

Thus we see that the prayer for the unity of the apostles was answered when he prayed and was preserved throughout the life of the apostles by keeping

them in the one name and by abiding in the word.

Now we come to notice his prayer for those who believe on him through the preaching of the apostles.

206 our savior's prayer for unity

"Neither pray I for these (apostles) alone, but for all them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one in us, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:20-21.)

Commencing with the twentieth verse, this portion of his prayer looked to the future. He prays for those which shall believe on him through the apostles' word, and the preaching and teaching were still in the future, and the believers were to be made in the future. This portion was not answered at the time he offered the prayer, but we will have to look into the future for the answer. Christ said to those apostles : "I am the vine, ye are the branches/" (John 15:5.) Christ here teaches the close relationship that existed between him and the apostles, the same relationship that exists between the vine and the branches. The branch partakes of the nature of the vine. Christ said to those branches (apostles) : "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." (John 15:16.)

Christ said in that prayer, "For I have given them (apostles) the words which thou gavest me, and they

have received them." Now, it was through the reception and the keeping of those words that this unity was brought about, and when he sends them forth to preach, he sends them the Holy Spirit to bring those words to their remembrance and guide them into all truth. Now, if those words received by the apostles resulted in uniting them in one body and uniting them to the Father and the Son, would not the same word preached by the apostles, received by those that hear and obey it, bring the same results? Unite them in one body in fellowship with one another and into fellowship with the Father and the Son. "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3.)

the lord's prayer 207

Now we will notice the apostles' teaching, commencing with Acts 2. Here we find them preaching Christ to those Jews, and the word preached was believed by a goodly number of them. They were cut to the heart and cried out to know what to do. They were told to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ, for the remission of their sins. And as many as gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day there were added to them (apostles) about three thousand souls — added to the one body. And they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles and in fellowship. Here we find the first cluster of fruit. It partakes of the nature of the vine and the branches that produced it — unity, oneness.



The portion of the prayer that looked to the future was answered on the day of Pentecost, after Jesus ascended to the Father. Next, we find Peter and John preaching to the multitude in Solomon's porch. And about five thousand believed and showed their deeds (obeyed). (Acts, chapters 3 and 4.) And in Acts 4.32, we learned that the multitude of them that believed were of one heart (mind).

Next we find Philip down in Samaria preaching the same word, and the Samaritans believed the preaching and were baptized, both men and women. Thus they were brought into fellowship with the saints. United in one body.

Next we notice Peter preaching to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. (Acts, 10:42, to close of chapter.) They heard the word, believed and obeyed, and thus were brought into the one fold. These were the other sheep Christ spoke of in John 10:16. He said he would bring and there should be one fold and one shepherd. Thus we see that the prayer of Christ was answered wherever the word was preached, believed and obeyed.

Next we notice Paul at Ephesus. Here he finds twelve disciples that had been taught wrong. They, no doubt, were sincere, and had been baptized in full assur-

208 our savior's prayer for unity

ance that they were obeying God, whole-heartedly. Now,

just imagine you hear Paul say to them: "Are you satisfied with your baptism?" They answer that they are. "Well," Paul says, "come, give me your hand and we will receive you into our fellowship, into the one body." Would the prayer of Jesus have been answered in their case? No, emphatically no. But Paul preached the word to them and they believed and obeyed and were brought into the one fold. Thus we see wherever the pure, unadulterated word was preached, believed and obeyed, the prayer of Christ was answered, and so it is now. When the pure word is preached, believed and obeyed, the obedient one is brought into the one fold, into the one name. And so I understand that the prayer is being answered every time the gospel is preached, believed and obeyed. And the prayer will be answered in full when the last gospel sermon is preached, believed and obeyed. But a perverted gospel preached, a perverted gospel believed, and a perverted gospel obeyed will not put the obedient one into the one fold, the one body, the one name, but put the obedient one into Babylon. Therefore, it does not bring the answer. "But," says one, "God has a people in Babylon and invites them to come out and they have been baptized?" I admit it, but how did they get into Babylon? They heard a perverted gospel, believed a perverted gospel, had a perverted faith, and were baptized out of the world into Babylon, just as those twelve that Paul found at Ephesus. They had been taught wrong, believed wrong and had been baptized out of the world into Babylon, a state of confusion. And Paul preached to them the word, taught them the truth. They believed the truth, which is to free those that receive it. And when they believed the truth, he baptized them out of Babylon into Christ. And thus the Lord's prayer was answered.

Brethren, we get too anxious to count names, and we go out into Babylon, meet them half way, shake hands with them and leave them in Babylon. There are

## THE LORD'S PRAYER 209

too many Babylonish garments among us. That's one great reason there are so many loose-walking members and so much contention among us.

We are admonished to run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. (Heb. 12:1-2.) And, again, we are admonished to contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. (Jude 3.) Now, if we heed those admonitions and insist on implicit and whole-hearted obedience to the faith as Paul did at Ephesus, it will bring the answer, as it did at Ephesus.

Now, brethren, in conclusion, I commend you to God and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and keep you from falling, and finally give us an inheritance among the saints at God's right hand. May God bless us, one and all, in doing his whole will. Amen.

## SHADES OF INFIDELITY NOT A BASIS FOR UNITY.

By J. J. Vanhoutin.

An atheist is a person who denies the existence of an intelligent first cause "God." I do not know how a man can obtain any consolation from such a theory, for it does not offer any hope beyond this life. An agnostic will neither affirm nor deny that there is a God. I do not see how that theory can profit any man. A deist is one who admits that there is a God, yet must have his own views as to what God is. There is no comfort in that, for the man is liable to be mistaken. Infidelity never saved a single soul. It is a little like the author of "Atheism" said of his doctrine. He said: "Atheism will not make a wicked man good," and I never knew of it reforming anyone. Its author never intended it for that purpose. He was an obstructionist from his first work.

Another sprout from the roots of atheism is "skepticism." Among religious people "skepticism" is the greatest "ism." It appears to be the corner sandbar of all sectism in the world ! They can twirl the scriptures and toss the sword of the Spirit with as much precision and assumption as a Japanese juggler in twirling a half dozen butcher knives. They can throw the scripture to any desirable spot, rejecting or accepting, just as their frail judgment desires, doubting everything that does not suit their fancy. While Christians live by faith, and walk by faith, skeptics live in doubt, and walk in doubt, and in place of knowing the import of the teachings of the New Testament, it appears like they do not know anything about it for sure. An "infidel" is one who disbelieves in Christianity or the truthfulness of the scriptures. They profess to have examined the scrip-

tures and found out that they are not reliable. All infidels are unbelievers, but all unbelievers are not infidels. Many unbelievers never knew but very little about Christ or the scriptures, and are ready, willing, yes, anxious, to hear the gospel. And I know of some who greatly desired to hear the gospel but were deprived of the opportunity by designing men, and died without that privilege.

But as long as people are resting under the dark shade of infidelity, unconcerned, the "Son of Righteousness, with healing in his wings/" will not reach their benighted heart. God was here first, but "Mirebaud" came afterwards and tried to get people to deny the existence of a God, and the world would not unite upon nonentity. Neither did Jesus pray for that kind of a unity. The Bible was here first, "Trypho," and then Celsus, the first Gentile writer against Christianity, came and tried to get the people to unite against Christ and the unity for which he prayed, but they could not form any basis for a unity against the union for which Christ prayed. So they and a number of others just drifted along. But after a while the various teachers became so divided over their unbelief of the scriptures, that a very great many of the people became more divided than ever and the division became very popular. Then a great many concluded that division was better than union, and by such division every man could be suited. In this way "skepticism" and "infidelity" prevailed over faith in the word of God. Jesus prayed for his apostles, and then for them also which would believe on him through their word. True faith in Christ is obtained through the testi-

mony, or words of the apostles. And as the apostles all preached the same gospel, and testified to the same facts in regard to the resurrection of Christ, the faith of all believers was the same, and it is still that way.

Paul said: "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should

212 our lord's prayer for unity

come; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." (Act\* 26:22, 23.) Again: "To whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets." (Acts 28:23.) The above show just what Paul preached. It was, "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3, 4.) The law and the prophecies in the Old Testament scriptures was preached by the apostles, the people who believed were embraced in the prayer of Jesus, and they all believed the same preaching. And if all of our preaching was like Paul's, every believer would be one in faith, one in mind, and one in judgment. Please read 1 Cor. 1 :10. Then inquire if any man in this, our day, ever heard a man preach the way Paul said he did. I find 476 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Christ, and many times have I quoted and explained from twenty to sixty verses

of the law and the prophecies in about thirty or fifty minutes' time. The right kind of preaching, if it is believed, produces faith in Christ. Then there is a unity in faith, but speculative theories and hobbies will cause division and a divided faith. The Lord's people and church yet obtain faith in Christ through the apostles' word and are united in faith, and are embraced in the prayer of Jesus, while those who obtain a faith of some kind, in some other way, are divided. The apostles' teaching is the only basis for unity.

If the veil of death and mortality was removed from the true, humble, devoted, praying man while praying, he would then be in the immediate presence of God. But now the veil of death and mortality stands as a dividing line between the worshiper and God. This ought to encourage the Christian man to visit the house of prayer. There is another place where the true Chris-

#### INFIDELITY NOT A BASIS 214

tn i\* brought face to face with Jesus except for the veil of death and mortality, and that place is where he meets with even two or three at the Lord's supper, Jesus having passed through death and is over on the other side of the death line ; but his followers are yet on this side. And the man who professes to be a Christian, and does not pray, surely does not understand how to worship "the Lord in the beauty of holiness. " And the man who refuses to pray publicly, or preside at the Lord's table because he has not been appointed "elder" or "deacon" is the man whom the Lord says to not appoint.

Elders and deacons must be tried and have some experience in the work before they are permitted by the Lord to take the responsibility of the office of elder or deacon.

Since the days of Joshua, the river Jordan has been typical of death, and perhaps longer; for when he crossed the Jordan in order to enter the land of promise, which was typical of heaven, the river opened and that below the dividing line ran on down to the dead sea, while the water above was stayed and backed up as far as to the city of "Adam," which city (supposed to be the first after the flood) was soon destroyed, which appears to show that death reaches back to the first man, "Adam," but will soon be destroyed. After Abraham's victorious battle, as he returned, he was met by the greatest man on earth, "Melchisedec," who was prince, king and priest of God, and communed with him by the side of the river. They used bread and wine. This certainly is typical of the Christians' warfare, and then at the close of the week's work, upon the first day of the week, meet with our Prince of life and peace, our King and our great High Priest and commune, using bread and the fruit of the vine. This brings us to the death line. Our priest, having passed through death, at this holy communion there is only the veil of death and mortality between Christ and his followers, to whom he gives the blessing.

214 our lord's prayer for unity

I memorized the Savior's prayer over fifty years



ago, yet I have no set memorized prayer of my own. Much having been written about the prayer of Jesus, I think it in place to present our request to God after the following words : "Our Father, who art in heaven" : Thou, the great author of life, and the Father of our spirits, we lift our voices in thanksgiving and praise to Thee for Thy goodness, loving-kindness and tender mercies. And in the name of Jesus we ask Thy kind forgiveness of all our sins. We thank Thee for all earthly blessing, and specially for all the spiritual blessing the Church of Christ affords. And we praise Thy name for the hope of immortality and eternal life. We ask Thy blessings upon thy church and people. May they be animated by Thy love, directed through life by Thy wisdom, that the world may be bettered by their having lived in it. We pray Thy blessings and protecting care upon our nation, and upon our rulers. May they be as God-fearing men, enacting such laws as may redound to the good of Thy people, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life. May unity, peace and brotherly love prevail. Lead us all in the path of righteousness, and when we come down to die, may we so have lived that we may depart in peace with Thee, and finally be saved in thine everlasting kingdom. We ask in the name of Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

By L. S. White.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Ps. 133 :1.) There are some things good, but not pleasant, while there are other things

pleasant but not good. The above Scripture tells us unity is both good and pleasant.

We have but to look around us to see the deplorable condition brought about by division among the Lord's people. The principle of strife, division, contention and party spirit among religious people is the greatest hindrance in the spread of the gospel. If religious people would unite among themselves, live as the Bible directs, be full of zeal, teach and practice the same things, and stop party spirit, it would not take long to convert the world to Christ, and peace and good will would soon be on earth.

The divisions in the religious world are not over what the Bible says, but over things it says nothing about. I am glad to know it is possible for all people to teach and practice the same things, religiously, and everybody be doing what all will say is right, and no one's conscience be violated.

Christ Prayed For Union.

Please read His great prayer in 17th chapter of John. In praying for his disciples, He said : '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. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me.' We will let our Savior tell us, in this prayer, the object of his people

being united : "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me . . . that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me." Thus you see our Savior teaches if there was union among his followers the world would soon be led to Christ.

#### The Extent of the Union.

Christ teaches we are to be "one as he and his Father are one." God and Christ are not one person, but one in purpose, desire and love, and work together for the salvation of the human family. But you might ask : "Does not the Bible say they are one?" Yes, and the same Bible says : "The husband and wife are one," but we know they are two distinct persons, yet one in love and desire.

#### Christ Broke Down the Wall of Division.

"He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances ; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace ; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus

Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord : in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2:14-22.) As Christ died to break down the "middle wall of partition," and to "make peace," what right have we to build walls of partition and create division?

union or god's piofli 217

The Cost of Union.

From Acts 20:28 we learn Christ "purchased the church with his own blood. " In it he proposes to reconcile the world to himself (2 Cor. 5 :17-20), and thus unite his people. If Christ made such a great sacrifice for union, ought we not to practice it?

The One Body.

"Christ is the head of the body which is the church/" (Eph. 1 :22, 23.) "And he is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1:18.) "But now are they many members, yet but one body." (1 Cor. 12:20.) This "one body" is the church of the living God, and the one spirit of God dwells in this one body. Let us see how Paul urges unity in this one body : "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." (Eph. 4 :3-6.) Here are seven items of unity.

How is it possible for persons to be prompted by the same spirit, and be divided? The spirit of God will not lead people into different parties, and each one of these parties opposed to the other. Two persons can not differ and both be right. They may differ and both be wrong, but it is impossible to differ and both be right.

Union Commended, Division Condemned.

Paul says : "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 division among you ; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.) He says again:

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus ; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify

218 our savior's prayer for unity

God." (Rom. 15 :5, 6.) How can people glorify God with one mind and mouth, and be divided? It can not be done. In naming the different things God hates, Solomon says : "The Lord hates him that soweth discord among brethren. " (Prov. 6:19.) Paul says: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." (Rom. 16:17.)

Grounds For Union.

Man can not frame the conditions of union. That be-

longs to God. Every time there is a convention of men to frame the conditions of union, they are certain to make the division greater. It is not a union of denominations, but an individual union with God. Where two or more persons are united with God, they are united with each other, for the same thing that unites people to God unites them to each other. It is impossible to have union with each other without union with God. Paul says : "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ... Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3 :27, 28.) How can we all be "one in Christ Jesus" and yet be divided ?

How God's People Are to Be Governed.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16,17.) There is no division over the fact that the word of God is sufficient for the government of God's people. The division is over things man has brought in which supplants the authority of the word of God. Man has made creeds, confessions of faith, and books of discipline for government of God's people, and these things supplant the authority of the word of God. Why not lay aside all these human creeds, and follow the

UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE 219

word of God? We can not have union on the government of the church without this.

## The Name of the Church.

To the elders of the church Paul says : "Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20 :28.) "The church of God which is the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3 :15.) No one objects to any name God has given the church. The division is over names not found in the Bible. Take, for instance, the names God gave his followers. They are called in the Bible, "saints," "believers," "children of God," "followers of Christ," "disciples," and "Christians." No one objects to any of these names, and there is no division over them, because they are authorized in the word of God. But the divisions over the name are all brought about by human names being given to the church and to many of the professed followers of Christ. It is important that we lay aside all human names in religion and only wear the names authorized in the word of God.

## Justification.

We are agreed that we must be justified in the sight of God to be saved. We are also agreed that the love of God is the moving cause of salvation, the blood of Christ is the procuring cause of salvation, and faith is the principle upon which we are justified. The division on justification is brought about because man has added to the word of God, and said: "We are justified by faith only," when the Bible positively says, "We are not justified by faith only." The Bible says we are justified by "faith," "knowledge," "works," "Spirit of God," and a number of other things. It takes them all to enter into our justification.

## Baptism.

When Christ was baptized, "he went up straightway out of the water." (Matt. 3:16.) It is an impossibility to "go up out of" anything without first "going down into" it. When we were baptized, unless we "came up out" of the water, we were not baptized like Christ was baptized. John the Baptist baptized people "with water" by baptizing- them "in the river Jordan." (Mark 1:5.) Paul says: "We are buried with him (Christ) in baptism." (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.) We all know one must be completely covered up in order to be buried. Then, when we were baptized, if we were not "buried in baptism," we are not "with Christ in baptism."

Everybody says it is right to immerse people, and that people are baptized when they are immersed; but millions of good people say that one who has not been immersed is not baptized at all. Then, why not do the very thing everybody says is right, and stop all this division over the "mode of baptism?"

Take, for instance, the "design of baptism." We start out to follow Christ. We find the first public act of his life was to be baptized himself, and the last command he gave before leaving this earth was that other people should be baptized. If we are fully determined to follow Christ, we will not stop at baptism, for Christ says : "If a man love me he will keep my words."



## The Lord's Supper.

This is an institution the Lord gave to his people. The ancient Christians met on the "first day of the week" to worship God, and this worship included the Lord's supper. We all agree it is right to take the Lord's supper on the "first day of the week." Even Seventh Day Adventists admit it is right to take the Lord's supper on the "first day of the week." If it is right to do this on the first day of one week, it is right to do so on the first day of every week.

UNION of god's people 221

## The Worship of God.

We all agree the Bible teaches us to sing, pray, study the word of God, take the Lord's supper, and to contribute our means as the Lord has prospered us. There is no division over these things, because the Bible teaches them. But there is great division among God's people over the use of instrumental music in the worship. Why is this? Just because God never authorized instrumental music in his church. I have two reasons for opposing instrumental music in the church : First, God never put instrumental music in the church, and second, instrumental music in the church causes division, and the Bible condemns division.

A few years ago there were peace and harmony among Christian people. But today you see the church in many places torn to pieces because someone put an organ in the church.

The people who are introducing these things are responsible for the division. But we are told that "David used an organ." If we must use an organ because David did, then we are authorized to have a plurality of wives, burn incense, practice circumcision, and do many other such things. David lived many centuries before the Christian era. We are to follow Christ, and Christ never authorized instrumental music.

But we are told we have instrumental music in our homes, and if it is right to have instrumental music in the home, it is right to have it in church. To which I reply : It is right to have pound-cake and ice cream in the home, but they would not be suitable at all to spread on the Lord's table for the Lord's supper. Many things are very suitable in the home that would not do at all in the worship of God.

All people can endorse singing in the worship, but many good people can not endorse instrumental music, or even worship where it is. Then why not do the very thing that everybody can endorse? We can never have full union till we follow the Bible as our pattern.

222 our savior's prayer for unity

Christian Life and Character.

I am glad there has never been any division over the life and character all God's people should have. All agree it is a life that must be shaped by the divine pattern — the Bible.

"Blessed Bible, how I love it,  
How it doth my bosom cheer !  
What hath earth like this to covet?  
Oh, what stores of wealth are here !

Man was lost and doomed to sorrow ;

Not one ray of light or bliss  
Could he from earth's treasures borrow,

Till his way was cheered by this."

## CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Lesson Text: Jno. 17:1-23.

Proof Texts: Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Cor. 1:10-12;  
Rom. 12:4,5; 15:5,6.

By C. E. Wooldridge.

Although the unity of Christians, the children of God, is a subject as old as the New Testament, it is one but little considered and appreciated until recent years. Since the days of Luther and the Reformation much more effort and talent seems to have been devoted to building up parties among Protestants than to restoring the church

of apostolic days in its doctrine, practice, worship, name and unity. As a result, denominations and human creeds have multiplied ; and, until a few years ago, were defended, stoutly, against every effort made by real Bible students and teachers pointing in the direction of unity. About one hundred years ago a number of godly men took a determined stand for the unity of God's people as set forth in the New Testament. They sought the causes for division and soon had a number of doctrines and practices marked as divisive and unscriptural. These they determined to reject and refute, upon the strength of such passages as 2 Tim. 3:16,17, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching (doctrine), for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness ; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every- good work." Also, 1 Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth : that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever."

From these and kindred passages the following motto

224 our savior's prayer for unity

was evolved: "Where the Bible speaks we will speak, and where the Bible is silent we will be silent." These workers and teachers purposed and hoped to rally men and women to the Christ and his gospel on the simple basis of New Testament teaching and free from the partisan and distracting elements of denominationalism.

Party names and man-made creeds were soon found to be in the way of the work proposed. In making the plea for the New Testament as the Christian's only creed, and that Bible things shall be called by Bible names, a direct hit was made at two of the strongholds of sectarianism. For around creeds and names men were most ready to rally when their religious position was questioned in the least. But the two-fold plea for a restoration of the church to the inspired pattern given in the New Testament and for the unity of all Christians in such a divinely ordered and approved body, found thousands of ready and responsive listeners among the earnest souls who had grown tired of the selfishness and unfruitfulness of sectarianism. Many were ready and gladly exchanged their churchianity for Christianity. For many years there was open hostility to the Unity idea. Preachers were ready to apologize for and defend division — even commend divisions as useful and convenient. Moreover, they were ready to contend for the use of humanly-devised creeds. Today many of the denominations who formerly held tenaciously to their creeds have either repudiated them or relegated them to the background. Few teachers of denominational churches nowadays would consent to be tried by the creed which was formerly accepted as the standard of doctrine and practice, but would demand that his case be brought to the Bible. Likewise there are few teachers and preachers who will now undertake to present and defend parties and sects as desirable, useful and scriptural. While the plea for unity has much yet to accomplish, it has already, in about one hundred years, wrought wonders.

I btg to here offer some testimonies of great men,

## CHRISTIAN UNITY 225

many of them leaders, bearing upon questions involved in subject.

The Name "Christian/"

"Let me speak to you in the language of heaven and call you Christians." — Henry Ward Beecher.

"These divisions should be merged into the holy name, 'Christian/' — Albert Barnes.

"I pray you leave my name alone. Do not call yourselves Lutherans but Christians." — Martin Luther {Life of Luther, by Michelet, p. 262}.

John Wesley said, "Would to God that all party names were forgot, and that we, as humble, loving brethren, might sit down together at the Master's feet, read his Holy Word, imbibe his Spirit, and transcribe his life in our own." Again, "I wish the name 'Methodist' might never be mentioned more but lost in eternal oblivion/" {Univer. Knowl., Vol. 9, p. 540}.

"I sometimes feel sorry that the word 'Baptist/' which was flung at us by our enemies and stuck, should be our name, for often its accent of an act obscures to others our great mission in the world. Perhaps yet we will go back to the name 'Christian'." — {Dr. P. S. Henson (Baptist), in General Convention of Baptist Churches at Cleveland, Ohio, May, 1904}.

Concerning Divisions and Unity.

"The work of Christianizing the world can only be done by a united church" — Norman McLean, Scotland.

"I would do little to make a man a Baptist and much to make him a Christian." — E. T. Ruth {Baptist}, Liverpool, Eng.

"The body of Christ, torn and bleeding, is the shame of the church. It is our duty to put an end to divisions." — Dr. Hunter {Congregationalist}, Glasgow, Scotland.

"Denominationalism has done all the good it can do. Let it fade and pass away." — John R. Mott.

"The value of Christian union is great at home, but ten-fold greater in the mission field, where divisions sug-

226 our savior's prayer for unity

gest other prophets besides Jesus." — Former President Harrison.

"The Missionary problem is not a Methodist problem, Episcopalian problem, nor a Baptist problem ; it is a problem for united Christendom." — Dr. Gracey, Ecumenical Missionary Convention.

"In the missionary work, above all other kinds of Christian work, it is imperative to remember that a divided Christendom can only imperfectly bear witness to

the essential unity of Christians." — T. Roosevelt.

"The most pitiable sight I saw in the foreign lands was that of churches that had been gathered out of Heathenism, rent in twain by sectarian jealousy which had been introduced from the so-called Christian lands." — Francis E. Clark.

"The greatest weakness of Protestantism is division. The demand of the hour is Christian union. Saintship is not sectarian. Union would give us strength. A united church in New Albany would give us the power to destroy the saloon, revolutionize amusements and relieve suffering." — Frank Orman Beck (M. E.), New Albany, Ind.

"The time has come in the history of the church when God says, 'Unite, unite.' God is calling us to 'unite, unite.' I would not for the world forsake my denomination (Baptist), but for Christ's sake I would gladly give it up forever." — Russell Conwell, Endeavor Convention, New York City.

"As soon as Porto Rico came under our flag we began to parcel out the territory. This was comity. Our denominational banners should have been left behind us. I like not the word 'comity' ; it is veneered selfishness. It is wrong in principle and unworkable in practice. Our ritual and creeds must not stand in the way of massing our Christian forces for the redemption of the world." — A. J. F. Behrends (Congregationalist) , Brooklyn, N. Y.

"The division of the church into sects is a distinct and flagrant sin. M — Ian Maclaren {Rev. John Watson, Pres.



## CHRISTIAN UNIT\* 227

Min., Liverpool) y "The Bonnie Briar Bush," p. 270.

"It is a pleasure to join with you in your tribute to John Wesley. The more we study of him and his life the nearer we shall come together. I never think of Wesley, the attitude of the English church toward him, and the action of those who broke away from the mother church, without feeling anew that it is the self-will of man and not the will of God that separates and keeps his family apart. The supreme duty of all Christian churches is to place unity, actual and real, as the unity of an army, in the forefront of every prayer and of every effort that God in His good time may bring them to subordinate individual will to His purpose for His church/" — Silas McBee {Protestant Episcopal), editor "Churchman."

"In the beginning, we are told, the Christian church was 'all with one accord in one place/ but if Peter and Paul were to come to New York, or to New Orleans, or to San Francisco, or to Boston, they would find the members of this one church in 169 different places, with a practical man named James leading one group of disciples, an emotional Peter leading another group, an esthetic John leading still another group, and the philosophic Paul guiding his own band. The cross of Christ stands in the center, but each regiment, with its back toward that cross, marching away from his fellows, while his denominational leader beats time. Yet unity, co-operation, could combine these scattered regiments

into a solid army marching on to victory/' — Newell Dwight Hillis, in "Everybody's" April, 1904.

From the foregoing it may be seen how broad and deep and intelligent and strong is "union sentiment" among representative men of the various denominations. To the above may be added the many societies and associations, some of them, as the Christian Endeavor and Y. M. C. A., in and through which members of almost all denominations work in a unity which knows no denominational restrictions or limitations. So much

228 our savior's prayer for unity

for the favor the plea for unity has won. That sentiment must be cherished and cultivated, but more, it must be directed to the "True Basis for Christian UNITY. ,, Churches and church people must be made to realize that the oneness of God's people can only be realized in a return of the model and ideals he gave through the inspired apostles and recorded in the New Testament. All the figures there indicate unity : One fold, one shepherd. The way, the truth, the life. The true vine. One body. The church. My church. The house of God. The household of faith. The church of God. The kingdom of God's dear Son. An holy nation. A royal priesthood. A peculiar people. The gospel. The gospel of Christ. The New Testament. Such expressions might be multiplied many times, all indicating perfect unity, unity in organization, faith, practice, motives, objects, worship, hopes — "perfectly joined together." The religious world now entertains favorably a plea for closer relations.

Many decry and condemn divisions as weakening and distressing. Co-operations, associations and unions are many and are multiplying in favor, but there is a vast difference in these and the unity for which our Savior prayed. The doctrines, practices, names and organizations which have caused and fostered division and sectarianism must be done away with and destroyed and men must become one in the faith and life and church of our Father and Savior.

Brethren, elders and preachers in particular, let me urge that this subject be stressed at all times. It was a popular and winning theme in the pioneer days of the Restoration, the days when the splendid churches we now have were being carved out of the wilderness of denominationalism, and it will win today. Moreover, the continued life and prosperity of our congregations require that unity be urged whatever be the cost to parties and creeds of men.

The time was never more favorable. Men are thinking and talking and working at unity along all useful

## CHRISTIAN UNITY 229

lines. The tasks of today are seen to be too large for parties. Nations are leagued together for their tasks and are strengthening their ties. The "relief work" required in this time of almost world-wide distress, required such unity and efficiency as the Red Cross has shown. But a united church, the whole family of God united in Him and under His orders, His army at His

command bearing the "weapons which are not carnal/" will be greater and equal to greater tasks than that of the Red Cross. It would destroy autocracy and plutocracy and militarism and every other evil, and make the world safe and delightful for mankind.

Let us study and teach and work and pray that God hasten the day when divisions shall cease and we shall all be one.

"THOU IN ME AND I IN THEE."

By F. L. Rowe.

In order that the church might be all that Christ hoped and prayed for, there had to be absolute oneness of purpose and oneness of action. The Greek word makes this meaning clear. Kind feeling one toward another is not Christian unity. That may exist where unity of the faith is torn into shreds. Christian union can exist without love, as the mere organic association of good people does not necessarily carry with it the unity for which Christ prayed. A man might be a firm, consistent Presbyterian and meet cordially and even "brother" a member of the Church of Christ. They may visit in each other's homes ; they might even attend each other's prayer meetings, and to all appearances there would be Christian union between them, but their harmony does not make Christian unity. There is a popular opinion that Christian union consists of the common communion of all sects at the Lord's table as one amalgamated mass of believers ; but this demonstration is outward and is not necessarily that union of hearts that

the Savior had in mind when he prayed that his chosen ones might be one. Communion at the Lord's table is not in any sense sure proof of Christian unity, for that is all still outward.

Perhaps we can get a little better insight into the Savior's heart when we recall the words of Paul, "Of one accord, of one mind." Now we are getting inside. With this thought before us, we begin to see the heart of the Savior, "Thou in me and I in thee." Now it is getting closer.

The nearness of Christ's disciples to himself can only be appreciated when we try to understand the depth of his meaning, "Thou in me and I in thee." We see a

#### "THOU IN ME AND I IN THEE" 231

oneness that can be represented only by thinking of one liberal body. We, as his followers, can only grasp the force of his prayer by the most intensive concentration of thought. Use the illustration of a true husband and wife — this is not strong enough nor deep enough, but it will help. You see them start out in life filled with the noblest purposes, actuated with common thoughts, determined to live for each other absolutely, interested solely in each other's welfare, happiest when in each other's company, planning for each other's good, anticipating each other's wishes, and in every way Irving a life in perfect harmony one with the other. That life is ideal ; but how many are there who continue that way ? The same is true regarding Christ's followers. Their

purposes are good and the Savior's prayer shows his bleeding heart filled with deep anxiety for the preservation of this people. The Savior was in earnest, and his sincere desire on their behalf would compel them to recognize that the model is absolute perfection. But if we, through weakness or deliberate purpose, neglect or lose the benefits and the blessings that should be ours, it is no fault of the model, of the perfect one, Christ, but simply the fault of our own neglect and disregard of Christ's commands. The husband and wife drift apart because they lose interest in each other; the once happy home becomes a place of turmoil; the confidence that was once there is turned into suspicion and doubt; the love looks that used to be exchanged are missing, the clasp of the hand that used to thrill has ceased to have its power, and why? Simply because pure love has been cast out. The church today suffers because there is not perfect harmony — oneness — in all its members of the body. We will never understand our Savior's prayer until we feel the force of the meaning that the Savior uses when he described the church as a body fitly joined together. The weakness or defect of any one member of the body is conveyed through the nerve centers to the seat of knowledge, the head. The weakness

232 our savior's prayer for unity

of the spiritual body is made known to the head, Christ. Any weakness distresses him and will distress him so long as the church is not a harmonious body.

Peter was made to feel the sweetness and charity

of Christ's heart. He denied the Savior ; he blasphemed him. He was impulsive and said many things hastily, and yet the Savior could see right down into his heart and knew that his heart was good. Peter received the special privilege of holding the keys of the kingdom, and the Savior had also tested him when he tenderly and forgivingly told him to feed his lambs. Why did Christ give him this special instruction and recognition when there were others of the apostles who had shown no shadow of turning? It was because Christ recognized his heart; and it is right there, I believe, the Savior wanted to impress his followers with the truth that "the kingdom of heaven is within you," and in his prayer I believe it was his purpose to bring out the fact that as members of his family we are to judge each other by the purpose of our hearts, by the pure thought that we all know we have for each other, which are so much stronger than outward demonstration that are sometimes merely for effect. Christ wanted his followers to be one in heart and one in purpose, and he wanted them to be forgiving. He knew their weak natures, and yet he meant that the real church should be made up of those whose real heart-purpose was known to him and known by spiritual intuition to others in the same family.

In the Savior's prayer he mentioned that his chosen ones were not of the world, even as he was not of the world. This statement enforces the fact that the citizenship of the Christian, who is one inwardly, is not in this physical world, but in a spiritual world. Christ did not mean that his Father should take them out of the world ; we are all here and must continue here until the Lord sees fit to remove us. We can be in the world

but not necessarily of the world. We make our living

"thou in me and i in thee" 233

by the sweat of our brow, and we have our families to provide for, and we have our obligations to Caesar to render according to the instructions of our Lord; but these matters are only incidental to our existence as members of Christ's spiritual family. We must have money to pay our necessary bills or expenses. We have taxes that the government requires us to pay, and we must have money for food and raiment, and shelter for our bodies. The true Christian is not anxiously concerned about food or raiment; sufficient as Paul says that we have food and raiment, and having that we should "therewith be content."

Being not of the world clearly indicates that as Christians our lives, or our thoughts, are not of the world and that we are here as on a period of probation, learning here how to enjoy life there. The sorrows that we experience in this world are not to be compared with the joys that shall be ours, and so none of these things move us because our hearts are in tune with the heavenly music which makes us think of the good things to come. With our citizenship in another world we can appreciate in a small degree the anxiety of the Savior that his followers should not be concerned about the affairs of this life, but, having their mind upon the eternal life, think of those things and associate with those people that would keep our minds free from the temptations of this world and fit us to enjoy the blessing of the better and



higher life to come.

Christ's prayer was that his Father should keep them from evil. He knew the danger that would follow ; and, while he himself knew no evil, nevertheless he was tempted in all points like as we are. He knew the meaning of temptation, for the devil himself had tested him. He knew how alluring the things of this world could be made and he knew how attractive the devil could paint the things of this world that please. He knew how easy it was for the weak to be led off by things that could be seen rather than trust to the enjoyment of things that

234 our savior's prayer for unit\*

would be theirs through faith. There was intense anxiety in the heart and mind of the Savior when he prayed that his followers should be kept from the evil. He knew the hearts of many who were following him. Did he not forgive Peter, with his impulsive nature? And he knew there would be thousands, yea millions, whose hearts would be as good as Peter's and yet who would prove perhaps as weak or weaker. Therefore, he wanted them kept from evil and the power of the evil one. He prayed with all the earnestness and tenderness of a father praying for his happy and loving family when he starts upon a long journey.

Note, also, the intimate oneness that characterized the Jerusalem congregation. "Continuing daily with one accord and singleness of heart." The language brings out again the answered prayer of our Savior as exhibited in

the early life of the young church. We know that singleness of heart shows that they were happy in each other's company, their "breaking bread from house to house" was to praise God, and because of their devotion they were in "favor with all the people." This oneness made an impression upon the people, so much so, that "the Lord added to the church daily." This same condition should maintain and the same result would follow in the church of God today if there were the same accord (or oneness) and the same singleness of heart that made up the primitive congregation. If man today was actuated out of a desire to see Jesus, with the purpose of making him the center of their thoughts, the model of their conduct, the idol of their existence, the church of today would have the same growth, and for the same reason. Too often today a man will preach in an effort to justify his own conduct, will lose sight entirely of his high calling as a leader of the flock, and will deliberately plan the destruction of a congregation if thereby he may appear justified before some ; and a man will try to have his own way rather than yield to the spirit of the Lord, which teaches us to endure all things for Christ's sake.

"THOU IN MK AND 1 IN THM^' 235

The true man of God, evangelist or elder, whose purpose is to truly exemplify the teaching of the Holy Spirit is willing and ready to surrender himself and to drop out, if thereby peace and harmony, or the oneness or singleness of heart, can remain in the life of the local congregation. The elder whose heart almost literally bleeds with deep concern for members of the spiritual family

is the one whose prayer, day and night, is that no division shall mar the beauty and serenity of the family, with every thought for the preservation, intact, of the souls over whom the Holy Spirit has made him protector. He is willing to suffer imprisonment, injustice, hardships and all manner of persecution, if only his little flock can know and feel his deep love for them. Such a congregation does not need to be told that he careth for them. They know it and they have seen it; they have felt it ; they will stand by him against division because they have realized his high and eternal responsibility. There can be no division in a congregation with such a godly man. The true sheep know the voice of their shepherd, and woe to him who tries to break into the flock and scatter the sheep.

I can meet with a faithful band of disciples who have known me for years, who have known my life, and who know my disposition, and they are the ones who can judge me far better than those who know me by my work or by my writings. They are the ones with whom I can be absolutely one in the way Christ wanted his followers to be one. They are the ones who would appreciate my efforts, my intentions; they are the ones who would know my purpose, and they are the ones who would stand by me and fight for me to the very last. They are the ones who would protect me against injustice, against treachery, against false brethren, against those who are spiritually weak. Why? Because they have been with me, they have known my walk and conversation, they are my life-bound members of a great and beautiful family, whose hearts are knit together in

love, and who are made to rejoice when I rejoice, and who are made to weep when I weep; that is the family I enjoy being a member of. There is the oneness between us much like that which the Savior prayed for when he asked the Father that his people might be one — "I in thee and thou in me."

The purpose in Christ's mind on behalf of his disciples was "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Unless he could leave some unanswerable argument for the people to perpetuate his doctrine, he would be laughed at and forgotten after his departure; but if his disciples could not apprehend the real purpose that Christ wished to unfold in their lives, they would fail in everything that he was concerned about; namely, of being the example before the world, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" ; and if the disciples are, as we believe the apostles were, filled with pure love one to another, there is bound to be that oneness, that intimate association; their lives literally linked together so that it is hard to distinguish the human from the divine. They would make the impression on the people that would convince them that the doctrine of Christ was satisfying, enduring, comforting and perfect. The great mass of the church today are a blot upon the fair name of our Savior because we have lost sight of the prime purpose of the church and that oneness that should possess the hearts and lives of our brethren. Too often the Adam nature asserts itself ; the impulse to distrust others; the effort to justify one's personal conduct, or an unwillingness to admit our own mistakes and shortcomings. Those are all blemishes that destroy the per-

fect body, that alienate the affections of God's family with discord and strife, where there should be perfect peace and love and trust and confidence. These human weaknesses make the church a stumbling-block and cause it to be a hiss, a by-word or reproach, all because we have lost sight of the prayer of our Savior. "For whom Christ died" is too often allowed to refer to the other

"thou in me and i in thee" 237

fellow. We all need more quiet, prayerful meditation and contemplation on that agonizing scene in the garden. We need more self-searching and we need to pray more for God to "be merciful to me, a sinner." We need to overlook our brother's weakness ; we need the spirit of forgiveness ; yea, even seventy times seven, if our brother has erred through weakness. "Herein is our Father glorified that we love one another."

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Nov. 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION  
111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724)779-2111

