

# Christian Unity

(Pray that all would do this Hand in Hand)

## Why cause Divisions?

“For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:11-13)



According to that passage above, there is to be no divisions within the body of Christ. We are to be the one true Church, and this would include all our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. But unfortunately, we have created so many Denominations and Associations within the body of Christ. And why is that? Could it be because we believe our fellowship is better than those down the road? Paul the apostle summed it up best when he said: *“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”* (1 Corinthians 3:3-6)

Now, it may be true that we love our God from the heart. We may also be totally sincere in our faith as Christians, praying and reaching out to the lost and other believers as well. However, at the same time we are building these invisible walls of separation by labeling ourselves. And the sad part of it all, we do it in plain view of the world who is watching and maybe even mocking. (see Romans 2:23-24) If we would examine most of the early churches in the New Testament, we would see that they were only referred to according to their locality such as a name of the city or of a person who owned the house. So, these types of labeling were not to show a distinction from one another but to aid the reader to understand their locality. (see Romans 16:3-5, 1Corinthians 1:11, 16:19, 2 Thessalonians 1:1, Philemon 1:2)

Therefore, God calls us to be one in Christ and to dwell in unity with fellow believers. Jesus prayed for this Christian unity so that the world may see our love for one another. And not only that, he prayed for oneness so that the world would recognize that he truly came from the Father. For Jesus said: *“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) And this unity can only be accomplished if we obey God by breaking down these dividing walls that we have made. Because let’s face it, if we don’t do it, God may do it in such a way that would surprise us all.

## Learning Unity, the Hard Way

The Syrian Christians were praying for revival and believing that God would do a great work in their land. They like us had their churches along with their different denominations. And then came the war with its bombings and terrorists. Churches were destroyed and down came their denominational barriers that separated believers. Those Syrian Christians groups who at one time may have questioned each other's salvation are now gathering for weekly prayers, asking God to move in their nation and in their churches. Now, these same Christians continue to spread hope in the face of hopelessness, holding high not a political or denominational banner but the banner of Jesus Christ.

And let's not forget what happened when persecution broke out against the early church as described in the book of Acts. For we read that: *"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. (Acts 8:3-4)* So, even though Saul (who later was converted and known as Paul the apostle) caused havoc for these Christians in Acts, it worked out for the good. For we read later that these believers were scattered everywhere, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to the world.

## God doesn't fit in Our Theological Box

We cannot put God in our own little theological box. Yes, sometimes we get up on our little "soap box" and act like we know everything. (see 1 Corinthians 8:2) However, we know that God's ways and thoughts are much higher than ours. For we read: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isaiah 55:8-9) So, instead of causing divisions, let's just humble ourselves before God. Let's quit striving and fighting over disputable things. For we need to come together and pray that God's Holy Spirit would minister to us through God's word. Therefore, let's embrace one another as brothers and sisters in Christ and seek unity in God's Church. Amen.

- Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are accounted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All the nations are as nothing before him; they are accounted by him as less than nothing, and vanity." (Isaiah 40:13-17)
- O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:33-36)

## In Closing

Let's always keep our eyes stayed on the Lord and be led by the Holy Spirit into all truth. And let's remember what God's word says to us: *"Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."* (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 ASV). Therefore, sense neither the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are dived, we his church shouldn't be as well. And let's remember what Jesus said: *"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. 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, 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 17:20-23) Amen, so let it be.

There's a world of people out there who need to hear the gospel. For we are to be salt and a light to them by sharing the love of Jesus. Isn't that what we're called to do? Aren't we supposed to be spreading the good news (the Gospel) to the lost out there in order for them to have eternal life as well? So, let us fulfill the great commission which Jesus told us to do. For he said: *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* (Matthew 28:19-20) Amen

### Reference from article above:

- Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! (Psalm 133:1)
- Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:19-20)
- Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. (Romans 16:3-5)
- And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him. (1 Corinthians 8:2-3)
- For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)
- The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. (1 Corinthians 16:19)
- And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house: (Philemon 1:2)