

first century, as well as, today. This unity which Christ prayed for is commanded of those that follow Christ. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to be of the "same mind and the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10) and he further told the Philippians "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing" (Philippians 3:16).

In order to achieve the unity of which Paul was speaking of and Christ prayed for, we must all use the same standard as our authority in religious matters. We recognize this with regard to other facets of this life. If a man goes to build a house, would he not use the proper standard of measurement? If a lady was cooking a recipe, would she not follow the standard of measurement specified? The answer to the previous two questions is yes, of course. Those in the first century were united because they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). They used the only standard of authority for the things that they practiced in religion. The unity that existed among the Christians in the first century was the result of their being taught by the apostles to be of the same mind and judgment, and their understanding Christ's desire for those who would believe through the inspired word of God, why then do we not use the only divine rule? The answer is that many do not have the proper attitude toward the word of God. Numerous examples are written for our admonition concerning those who thought they could change things to what they desired instead of following the teaching of God. Examples include Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10), Uzzah (2 Samuel 6), the children of Israel wanting a king instead of Judges to rule over them (1 Samuel 8), Naaman (2 Kings 5), etc. These examples resulted in divisions, death, pain, etc. Let us determine that we are not going to allow our attitude toward what the word of God teaches be altered by popularity, family relationships, preconceived ideas, allurements to the things of this world, etc.

Yes, we can have unity! And we can have the kind of unity that God desires us to have. What is taught in the Bible is very important because it teaches us the truth and we will be judged according to it (John 17:17; 12:48). Let us be keenly aware that the Bible is God's inspired revelation to man, and it teaches us what we should do to be pleasing and faithful to God in order to receive the crown of life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Titus 2:15; Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:7,8). The apostle Paul made it clear to the Galatians that they should be able to understand the gospel that was taught and be able to recognize error when it was taught (Galatians 1:6-9). To be able to recognize error, we all should heed the exhortation of Paul to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Let us recognize that when the divine rule is followed, there can be the kind of unity God desires.

~In *Gospel Power*, Anderson, Alabama, 5/30/99.

"I'm Pregnant, Again!"

A worried woman went to her gynecologist and said: 'Doctor, I have a serious problem and desperately need your help! My baby is not even 1 yr. old and I'm pregnant again. I don't want kids so close together.'

So the doctor said: 'Ok, and what do you want me to do?'

She said: 'I want you to end my pregnancy, and I'm counting on your help with this.'

The doctor thought for a little, and after some silence he said to the lady: 'I think I have a better solution for your problem. It's less dangerous for you, too.'

She smiled, thinking that the doctor was going to accept her request. Then he continued: 'You see, in order for you not to have to take care of 2 babies at the same time, let's kill the one in your arms. This way, you could rest some before the other one is born. If we're going to kill one of them, it doesn't matter which one it is. There would be no risk for your body if you chose the one in your arms.'

The lady was horrified and said: 'No doctor! How terrible! It's a crime to kill a child!'

'I agree', the doctor replied. 'But you seemed to be ok with it, so I thought maybe that was the best solution.' The doctor smiled, realizing that he had made his point.

He convinced the mom that there is no difference in killing a child that's already been born and one that's still in the womb. The crime is the same!

"Cut It Down and Forget It!

The Civil War left a tragic aftermath of bitterness, hatred, and resentment in America. The wounds inflicted by the war were deep and painful. Though the guns fell silent, the angry recriminations went on. Many could not forget or forgive what had been done.

One man who refused to participate in or condone this terrible harvest of bitterness was General Robert E. Lee. Lee urged reconciliation between the north and south. He knew that the war was over and that the future of the nation demanded a new attitude for a new day. To the day of his death, the "Gray Knight" was never heard to speak an unkind word about those who had formerly been his enemies. Lee even opposed the erection of Confederate monuments because he thought they would only serve to keep wartime passions alive. On one occasion a lady in Lexington, Virginia, showed him the scarred remains of a tree in her yard. All the limbs had been shot off by Federal artillery during a raid. Thinking the General would share her sense of outrage she waited expectantly for him to comment. Finally, Lee spoke: "Cut it down, my dear Madam, and forget it."

News and Notes:

Remember the sick both with visits and prayer.

Terry Czirr, the brother of Linda Foster continues to receive treatment for cancer of the liver. Carole Wyrick is improving and we are encouraged by answered prayer on her behalf.

Ann Hurd is recovering from surgery. Please remember to call and encourage and be of any help you can. Bob Brandenburg will have cataract surgery 5/20. Beverly Blackstock is in Cushing Hospital.

Remember the Ladies Bible Class Monday Evenings at 7:00 P.M

.James 3:14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.



May 17, 2009

Can We Be United? David A. Cox

Often, in the religious world people will lament the fact that there is so much division. The division is often excused by people saying that the Bible cannot be understood alike, but such an attitude eliminates any hope of true biblical unity. In seeing the need for unity and Christ's desire for it (1 Corinthians 1:10; John 17:20-21), religious groups believing entirely different things will gather together, agree not to discuss the points of division and will have a so-called "unity meeting". The question is, "If this is not unity (which it is not) can Biblical unity be achieved?" I believe that the Bible teaches that we can be and are expected to be united and the Bible can be understood alike (Ephesians 4:3; 5:17).

The religious division that exists today is a result of men following what men say through their creeds, confessions of faith, disciplines, manuals, etc. rather than what the word of God has said. The truth is determined in many cases, by what conventions, and synods, proclaim as truth, rather than what the Scriptures say. Biblical unity is impossible to obtain while there are denominational bodies which teach conflicting doctrines from the various creed books, but claim to be followers of Christ. Jesus in His prayer to the Father for unity among the believers said, "Sanctify them with thy truth, thy word is truth" (John 17:17). As Jesus continues His prayer we see the result of this was so all the believers would be united. "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 may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21). Christ prayed that His disciples and those that are taught, by the word, would be one. The unity Christ prayed for was for those in the

Lenexa church of Christ 7845 Cottonwood Lenexa KS 66216 913-631-6519. Evangelist: Jim Stauffer. MEETING TIMES: Sunday - Bible Classes: 9:30AM, Worship Services 10:20AM & 6:00PM, Wednesday - Bible Classes 7:00PM. Send a Copy to a Friend. Map showing location near Cottonwood, 79th, Lackman, Mill Creek Elementary School, Pflum, 87th, 95th, 435, and 35.