

# Biblical Commands of Love and Unity

## TEXTS:

**Psalm 133:1** Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity [union, unitedness]! 2 *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, *Even* Aaron's beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes. 3 It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing-- life forever.

**Ephesians 4:1** I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 **Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**. 4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility [without arrogance] and gentleness, with **\*\*patience**, **\*\*\*showing tolerance [surrendering to one another]** for one another in love, 3 **being diligent to preserve [guard] the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**. 4 *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, 2 μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραύτητος, μετὰ μακροθυμίας, ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ, 3 σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης. 4 Ἐν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα, καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν. 5 εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἓν βάπτισμα, 6 εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ διὰ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν.

**\*\*μακροθυμέω** = fr. long + passion = to be of a long spirit = patient endurance or self-restraint which does not hastily retaliate a wrong, as opposed to wrath or revenge

**\*\*\*ἀνέχω** = *to hold up* one's hands *in fight*; also in token of defeat:-*to lift up* the hands *in prayer*

**John 13:34** **A new commandment** I give unto you, **That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another**. 35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have **love one to another**.

ἐντολὴν καινὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους, καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους. 35 ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταὶ ἐστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.

**John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.** 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. **17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.**

αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολὴ ἣ ἐμή, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς. 13 μείζονα ταύτης ἀγάπην οὐδεὶς ἔχει, ἵνα τις τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ θῆ ὑπὲρ τῶν φίλων αὐτοῦ. 14 ὑμεῖς φίλοι μου ἐστε ἐὰν ποιῆτε ἃ ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν. **17 ταῦτα ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους.**

## INTRODUCTION

There are two very clear and very important commands in the New Testament:

1. Separation from unbelievers and disobedient believers in local church ministry.
2. Love for and unity with true believers who walk obediently to the clear commands of scripture.

NOTE:

1. These two commands do not in any way contradict one another. (see Sidwell, *Dividing Line*, p. 24)

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### **The Relationship Between Holiness and Love**

Remember that we are exploring whether holiness and love are opposites that we must balance against each other as we formulate our principles of separation. We have defined our terms: holiness is a difference from the world that identifies us with God in opposition to Satan, and love is a self-sacrificing commitment to act in the highest interest of those we love. Once we understand these terms, we can see that there is no reason to limit either of them. Is there a degree of Godlike holiness beyond which it is harmful to go? Can we be too much like God and too little like the world? Regarding love, can we be so willing to sacrifice for the sake of others that we displease God or harm someone? Obviously, there is no limitation to be placed upon these virtues of holiness and love, and we will spend our Christian lives continually growing in our exercise of them. In fact, we really can equate them with sinlessness. To the extent that we are like God, we do not sin. To the extent that we strive unselfishly to press forward to the work of God in people's lives, we do not sin. If holiness and love, properly understood equate with sinlessness, then we can see that we must place no limit on either.

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2. These two commands must be kept in balance.
  - There is a natural tension between them.
  - We breathe out of two lungs at the same time — Balance is not compromise! It is our God-given responsibility.
3. Holiness is the goal – Love is how we get there!

## UNITY DEFINED

**Biblical words and expressions describing unity.**• *Love one another* (15+3)

John 13:34 A new **commandment** I give unto you, That ye **love one another**; as I have loved you, that ye also **love one another**. 35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye **have love one to another**.

ἐντολὴν καινὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους, καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους. 35 ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταὶ ἔστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.

John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye **love one another**, as I have loved you. **17** These things I command you, that ye **love one another**.

αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολὴ ἣ ἐμή, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς. **17** ταῦτα ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους.

Romans 12:10 **Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love**; in honour preferring one another;

**Be devoted to one another in brotherly love**; give preference to one another in honor;

τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι, τῇ τιμῇ ἀλλήλους προηγούμενοι,

Romans 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to **love one another**: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν· ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν.

Galatians 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but **by love serve one another**.

Ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ ἐκλήθητε, ἀδελφοί· μόνον μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῆ σαρκί, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις.

1 Thessalonians 3:12 And the Lord make you to increase and **abound in love one toward another**, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you:

ὑμᾶς δὲ ὁ κύριος πλεονάσαι καὶ περισσεύσαι τῇ ἀγάπῃ εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντας καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς,

1 Thessalonians 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to **love one another**.

Περὶ δὲ τῆς φιλαδελφίας οὐ χρειᾶν ἔχετε γράφειν ὑμῖν, αὐτοὶ γὰρ ὑμεῖς θεοδίδακτοὶ ἔστε εἰς τὸ ἀγαπᾶν ἀλλήλους,

1 Peter 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* **love one another with a pure heart fervently**:

Τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἠγνικότεες ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας εἰς φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον, ἐκ [καθαρᾶς] καρδίας ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε ἐκτενωῶς

1 John 3:11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should **love one another**. **23** And this is his commandment, That we should believe

on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and **love one another**, as he gave us commandment

Ὅτι αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα **ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους**, **23** καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, ἵνα πιστεύσωμεν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ **ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους**, καθὼς ἔδωκεν ἐντολὴν ἡμῖν.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us **love one another**: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to **love one another**. **12** No man hath seen God at any time. If we **love one another**, God dwelleth in us, and his **love** is perfected in us.

Ἀγαπητοί, **ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους**, ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται καὶ γινώσκει τὸν θεόν. **11** Ἀγαπητοί, εἰ οὕτως ὁ θεὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν **ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν**. **12** Θεὸν οὐδεὶς πώποτε τεθέαται. ἂν **ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους**, ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν μένει καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν τετελειωμένη ἐστίν.

2 John 1:5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we **love one another**.

καὶ νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, οὐχ ὡς ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφων σοι ἀλλὰ ἦν εἶχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα **ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους**.

Mark 12:31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt **love thy neighbour** as thyself. There is none other **commandment** greater than these.

δευτέρα αὕτη, **Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν**. μείζων τούτων ἄλλη ἐντολὴ οὐκ ἔστιν.

1 John 4:21 And this **commandment** have we from him, That he who loveth God **love his brother** also.

καὶ ταύτην τὴν ἐντολὴν ἔχομεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ἵνα ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν θεὸν **ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ**.

- *The unity of the spirit* (1)

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring [being diligent] to keep [guard] **the unity [oneness] of the Spirit** in the bond [chains] of peace.

σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν **τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος** ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης·

- *Peace* (4)

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in **the bond of peace**.

σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν **τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης**·

Romans 14:19 Let us **therefore follow [pursue]** after **the things which make for peace**, and things wherewith one may edify another.

ἄρα οὖν **τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης διώκωμεν** καὶ τὰ τῆς οἰκοδομῆς τῆς εἰς ἀλλήλους.

2 Corinthians 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, **live in peace**; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, χαίρετε, καταρτίζεσθε, παρακαλείσθε, τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε, **εἰρηνεύετε**, καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν.

Hebrews 12:14 **Follow [pursue] peace** with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

**Εἰρήνην διώκετε** μετὰ πάντων καὶ τὸν ἁγιασμόν, οὐ χωρὶς οὐδεὶς ὄψεται τὸν κύριον,

- *No divisions (σχίσμα) among you (2)*

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and **that there be no divisions among you**; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες καὶ **μὴ ᾖ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα**, ἦτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ.

1 Corinthians 12:24 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked: 25 That there should be **no schism [division] in the body**; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

τὰ δὲ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχει. ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς συνεκέρασεν τὸ σῶμα τῷ ὑστερουμένῳ περισσοτέραν δοῦς τιμὴν, 25 **ἵνα μὴ ᾖ σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι** ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων μεριμνῶσιν τὰ μέλη.

- *One body (physical), (5)*

Romans 12:4 For as we have many members in **one body**, and all members have not the same office [function]:

καθάπερ γὰρ ἐν **ἐνὶ σώματι** πολλὰ μέλη ἔχομεν, τὰ δὲ μέλη πάντα οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει πράξιν,

Romans 12:5 So we, *being* many, are **one body** in Christ, and every one members one of another.

οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ **ἐν σώμα** ἔσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ, τὸ δὲ καθ' εἰς ἀλλήλων μέλη.

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1 Corinthians 12:12 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.

Καθάπερ γὰρ **τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἔστιν** καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει, **πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος** πολλὰ ὄντα **ἐν ἔστιν σῶμα**, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός·

1 Corinthians 12:20 But now *are they* **many members**, yet but **one body**.

νῦν δὲ **πολλὰ** μὲν **μέλη**, **ἐν δὲ σῶμα**.

- *One soul – One life, ψυχή* (3)

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of **one soul**: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Τοῦ δὲ πλήθους τῶν πιστευσάντων ἦν καρδία καὶ **ψυχή μία**, καὶ οὐδὲ εἷς τι τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτῷ ἔλεγεν ἴδιον εἶναι ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτοῖς ἅπαντα κοινά.

Philippians 2:2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of **one accord**, of one mind.

πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, **σύμψυχοι**, τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες,

Philippians 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with **one mind** striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὼν ἀκούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, **μιᾷ ψυχῇ** συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

- *One mind — understanding (way of thinking, attitude)* (5)

2 Corinthians 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of **one mind**, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί, χαίρετε, καταρτίζεσθε, παρακαλεῖσθε, τὸ **αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε**, εἰρηνεύετε, καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν.

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1 Peter 3:8 Finally, *be* ye all of **one mind [same understanding]**, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous:

Τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες **ὁμόφρονες**, συμπαθεῖς, φιλάδελφοι, εὐσπλαγχοι, ταπεινόφρονες,

Romans 15:5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be **likeminded [the same understanding]** one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως δώη ὑμῖν τὸ **αὐτὸ φρονεῖν** ἐν ἀλλήλοις κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν,

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πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ **αὐτὸ φρονῆτε**, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, **σύμψυχοι**, τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες,

- *One spirit* (1)

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Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἐλθῶν καὶ ἰδῶν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὼν ἀκούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε **ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι**, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

- *One heart* (1) Lit. *heart and soul one*

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were **of one heart** and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Τοῦ δὲ πλήθους τῶν πιστευσάντων ἦν **καρδία** καὶ ψυχὴ **μία**, καὶ οὐδὲ εἷς τι τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτῷ ἔλεγεν ἴδιον εἶναι ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτοῖς ἅπαντα κοινά.

- *One passion* (6)

Acts 1:14 These all continued with **one accord** in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

οὗτοι πάντες ἦσαν προσκαρτεροῦντες **ὁμοθυμαδὸν** τῇ προσευχῇ σὺν γυναιξίν καὶ Μαρίας τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ.

Acts 2:46 And they, continuing daily with **one accord** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

καθ' ἡμέραν τε προσκαρτεροῦντες **ὁμοθυμαδὸν** ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, κλῶντές τε κατ' οἶκον ἄρτον, μετελάμβανον τροφῆς ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει καὶ ἀφελότητι καρδίας

Acts 4:24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with **one accord**, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες **ὁμοθυμαδὸν** ἤραν φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἶπαν, Δέσποτα, σὺ ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς,

Acts 5:12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with **one accord** in Solomon's porch.

Διὰ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγίνετο σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πολλὰ ἐν τῷ λαῷ· καὶ ἦσαν **ὁμοθυμαδὸν** ἅπαντες ἐν τῇ Στοᾷ Σολομῶντος,

Acts 15:25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with **one accord**, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

ἔδοξεν ἡμῖν γενομένοις **ὁμοθυμαδὸν** ἐκλεξαμένοις ἄνδρας πέμψαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς σὺν τοῖς ἀγαπητοῖς ἡμῶν Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Παύλῳ,

Romans 15:6 That ye may with **one mind** and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ἵνα **ὁμοθυμαδὸν** ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι δοξάζητε τὸν θεὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

- *One fold, One Shepherd* (1)

John 10:16 And 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**.

καὶ ἄλλα πρόβατα ἔχω ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ταύτης· καὶ κεῖνα δεῖ με ἀγαγεῖν καὶ τῆς φωνῆς μου ἀκούσουσιν, καὶ γενήσονται **μία ποιμνὴ, εἰς ποιμνὴν**.

- *Speak the same thing* (1)

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **ye all speak the same thing**, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα **τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες** καὶ μὴ ᾖ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα, ἥτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῷ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ.

- *One* (3)

John 17:11 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. **21 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. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; **that they may be one**, even as we are one:

καὶ οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰσὶν, καὶ γὰρ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι. Πάτερ ἅγιε, τήρησον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι, **ἵνα ὦσιν ἓν** καθὼς ἡμεῖς. **21 ἵνα πάντες ἓν ὦσιν**, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ γὰρ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ὦσιν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας. 22 καὶ γὰρ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, **ἵνα ὦσιν ἓν** καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἓν.

**N.B.** Before oneness, separation is to take place.

- It is the separated ones — sanctified ones who are intended by the Lord Jesus to be one.
- BUT, this oneness is to be true of all who are sanctified in the truth. N.B. It is not to be predicated on perfection!
- This prayer of Christ requesting oneness for those who are truly His own assumes that there will be many things that divide these sanctified brethren which ought **not** to divide them.

John 17:6 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 [τὸν λόγον σου]**. **8 For I have given unto them the words [τὰ ῥήματα] 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. **14 I have given them thy word [τὸν λόγον σου]**; and



the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word [ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς] is truth.** 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, **that they also might be sanctified through the truth.**

6 Ἐφάνέρωσά σου τὸ ὄνομα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὓς ἔδωκάς μοι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. σοὶ ἦσαν κάμοι αὐτοὺς ἔδωκας καὶ **τὸν λόγον σου τετήρηκαν.** 8 ὅτι **τὰ ῥήματα** ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλαβον καὶ ἔγνωσαν ἀληθῶς ὅτι παρὰ σοῦ ἐξήλθον, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας. 14 ἐγὼ δέδωκα αὐτοῖς τὸν **λόγον σου** καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐμίσησεν αὐτούς, ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. **17 ἀγιάσουν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν.** 18 καθὼς ἐμέ ἀπέστειλας εἰς τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπέστειλα αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν κόσμον· 19 καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἀγιάζω ἑμαυτόν, **ἵνα ὦσιν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἡγιασμένοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.**

NOTE: Sanctification takes place only in the sphere of truth. *Truth* is defined as the very utterances [**τὰ ῥήματα**] and the message [**τὸν λόγον σου**] given specifically by Christ.

### What *scriptural* unity is NOT!

1. Scriptural unity is not uniformity. It is harmony (symphony = sum + phonos = many different kinds of instruments sounding together in harmony).
2. Scriptural unity is not a uniting of believer and unbeliever, or a uniting of obedient believers with disobedient believers.
3. Scriptural unity is not a uniting of different religions believing in different gospels — different ways to heaven. It is not *ecumenical*.

## THE BASIS OF BIBLICAL UNITY

### A common life in Jesus Christ.

1. A common life and mission.

Philippians 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind **striving together** for the faith of the gospel;

Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὼν ἀκούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ **συναθλοῦντες** τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

**συναθλέω = to work together as an athletic team.**

## 2. Genuine *spiritual* relationships.

- Relationships based upon carnal considerations are to be a thing of the past. New relationships based on reconciliation (vs. 19) are now to prevail.

2 Corinthians 5:16 Wherefore henceforth **know** we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. 17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

Therefore from now on we **recognize** no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him in this way* no longer. 17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the **old things passed away**; behold, **new things [relationships] have come [become - come into being]**. 18 Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,

Ὡστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα **οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα**· εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν **κατὰ σάρκα** Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν. 17 ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· **τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν**, ἰδοὺ **γέγονεν καινὰ**· 19 ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

- There are differing gifts, personalities, insights, approaches to ministry, and emphases all among God-fearing, Bible-believing, fundamentalist brethren — like the many facets on a gem.
- The mutual need of fundamental brethren one for another is beyond anything most of us recognize!
  - Dr. Issues needs Dr. Soul-winner — Dr. Soul-winner needs Dr. Issues.
  - Dr. Expositor needs Dr. Evangelism — Dr. Evangelism needs Dr. Expositor.
  - Dr. Missions needs Dr. Local Church — Dr. Local Church needs Dr. Missions.
  - Dr. Administrator needs Dr. Orator — Dr. Orator needs Dr. Administrator.
  - Dr. Traditional needs Dr. New Ideas — Dr. New Ideas needs Dr. Traditional.
  - Dr. Theology needs Dr. Practical — Dr. Practical needs Dr. Theology.
  - Dr. Younger needs Dr. Older — Dr. Older needs Dr. Younger.

**The “Christ” Who is defined in the Word of God.**

**The Scriptures themselves.**

1. The Fundamental truths of scripture.

**NOTE:** Fundamentalism is all about biblical integrity in life and ministry and this is defined for us by the Word of God.

2. Not logical conclusions, traditions, spiritual hang-ups, methodology (outside the realm of biblical principles).

Many equate *Methodology* with *Theology* in fundamental importance. There is a decided distinction between *Theology* and *Methodology*. *Methodology* is not fundamental — essential — to our belief and practice in the same sense as *Theology*. The principles for *Methodology* arise out of *Theology*, but they are not one and the same.

**The clear commands of Scripture.**

1. Scriptural unity cannot exist with those who ignore or disobey the clear commands of Scripture.

2. Unity with and love for genuinely obedient brethren is not an option. **IT IS A CLEAR COMMAND OF SCRIPTURE!!!**

3. We are to love the brethren because God loves them! Not because they meet our expectations or because we find them likable or attractive.

**VIOLATIONS OF BIBLICAL UNITY**

**Not only is there a false kind of unity — there is also a false kind of separation!**

**Separation misunderstood and misapplied results in unnecessary fragmentation and division.**

**Factionous, divisive words and deeds done in the name of separation are a direct violation of biblical unity. Those guilty of these words and deeds are to be dealt with according to the instructions of Titus 3:10,11.**

Titus 3:10 A man that is **an heretick** after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

Reject **a factionous man** after a first and second warning, 11 knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

**αἰρετικὸν** ἄνθρωπον μετὰ μίαν καὶ δευτέραν νουθεσίαν παραιτοῦ,  
11 εἰδὼς ὅτι ἐξέστραπται ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ ἀμαρτάνει ὦν  
αὐτοκατάκριτος.

**NOTE:**

- A heretic is one who chooses another way — one who causes divisions or separations contrary to biblical teaching.
- God **hates** the spreading of strife and discord among brethren.

Proverbs 6:16 **These six things doth the LORD hate:** yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and **he that soweth discord [one who spreads strife] among brethren.**

## NOTE THE DANGERS OF PERSONAL AGENDA'S !

- *Agenda* = the *what* or the *how* of something that is important to us.
- Love does not insist on having things its own way!

NASB Romans 12:10 *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;*

ESV 1 Corinthians 13:5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

### Judging others is forbidden.

- Condemnation for personal reasons is forbidden.

Matthew 7:1 **Judge not, that ye be not judged.** 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged. 2 "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. 3 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? 5 "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

**Μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε.** 2 ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίματι κρίνετε κριθήσεσθε, καὶ ἐν ᾧ μέτρῳ μετρεῖτε μετρηθήσεται ὑμῖν.

1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But **he that is spiritual judgeth all things**, yet he himself is judged of no man.

ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ, μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ δύναται γινῶναι, ὅτι πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται. 15 ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς **ἀνακρίνει** [τὰ] πάντα, αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται.

**ἀνακρίνω** = (a) study thoroughly; (b) investigate in court; (c) criticize (d) evaluate carefully

**ἀνακρίνω** = to try to learn the nature or truth of something by the process of careful study, evaluation and judgment - 'to examine carefully, to investigate, to study thoroughly.' καθ' ἡμέραν ἀνακρίνοντες τὰς

γραφὰς εἰ ἔχοι ταῦτα οὕτως 'every day they carefully examined the Scriptures to see if what he said was really true' Ac 17.11.

**Also:** generally of the process of evaluation — *to examine, question, study carefully*; as sifting evidence in judicial hearings *hold a preliminary hearing, cross examine, investigate, interrogate*; as passing judgment on personal behavior *call to account, criticize, judge*.

**A.T. Robertson: 1Co 2:15 - Judgeth all things** (ανακρινει παντα). The spiritual man (ὁ πνευματικος) is qualified to sift, to examine, to decide rightly, because he has the eyes of his heart enlightened (Eph 1:18) and is no longer blinded by the god of this world (2Co 4:4). There is a great lesson for Christians who know by personal experience the things of the Spirit of God. Men of intellectual gifts who are ignorant of the things of Christ talk learnedly and patronizingly about things of which they are grossly ignorant. The spiritual man is superior to all this false knowledge. **He himself is judged of no man** (αυτος δε υπ' ουδενος ανακρινεται). Men will pass judgment on him, but the spiritual man refuses to accept the decision of his ignorant judges. He stands superior to them all as Polycarp did when he preferred to be burnt to saying, "Lord Caesar" in place of "Lord Jesus." He was unwilling to save his earthly life by the worship of Caesar in place of the Lord Jesus. Polycarp was a πνευματικος man.

- Judging of motives is forbidden.

1 Corinthians 4:3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I **judge not** mine own self. 4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by *any* human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. 4 For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. 5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, *but wait* until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

ἐμοὶ δὲ εἰς ἐλάχιστόν ἐστιν, ἵνα ὑφ' ὑμῶν ἀνακριθῶ ἢ ὑπὸ ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἑμαυτὸν ἀνακρίνω. 4 οὐδὲν γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ σύνοιδα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν τούτῳ δεδικαίωμαι, ὃ δὲ ἀνακρίνων με κύριός ἐστιν. 5 ὥστε μὴ πρὸ καιροῦ τι κρίνετε ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ὁ κύριος, ὃς καὶ φωτίσει τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκοτοῦς καὶ φανερώσει τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν· καὶ τότε ὁ ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἐκάστῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ.

**Wrong reasons for separation:**

1. Personal disagreements.

2. Within the bounds of biblical principles — differing decisions on colleges, mission boards, etc..

3. Differing standards. (vs. rejection of biblical principles)

4. Turf wars.

5. Politics within the work of God.

6. Denominational distinctives. Being of another denominational persuasion does not in and of itself constitute one an apostate or heretic.

### There no place for bitterness in the battle.

1. Separation is never to be practiced for personal reasons but for biblical reasons and based upon biblical principles.

2. Much that is done in the name of separation is just plain meanness

### There must be repentance for violations of biblical love and unity!

## PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF LOVE AND UNITY

### There must be a place for reaching out to and restoration of fallen brethren.

2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. 5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. 6 Sufficient to such a man *is* this punishment, which *was inflicted* of many. 7 So that contrariwise ye *ought* rather to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up [overwhelmed] with overmuch sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love toward him.

ἐκ γὰρ πολλῆς θλίψεως καὶ συνοχῆς καρδίας ἔγραψα ὑμῖν διὰ πολλῶν δακρῦων, οὐχ ἵνα λυπηθῆτε ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἵνα γνῶτε ἣν ἔχω περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς. 5 Εἰ δέ τις λελύπηκεν, οὐκ ἐμὲ λελύπηκεν, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ μέρους, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιβαρῶ, πάντας ὑμᾶς. 6 ἱκανὸν τῷ τοιούτῳ ἢ ἐπιτιμία αὕτη ἢ ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων, 7 ὥστε τοῦναντίον μᾶλλον ὑμᾶς χαρίσασθαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι, μή πως τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῆ ὁ τοιοῦτος. 8 διὸ παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς κυρῶσαι εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπην·

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, **restore [supply everything needed] such an one** in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

Ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν καὶ προλημφθῆ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοὶ **καταρτίζετε** τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραύτητος, σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῆς.

2 Thessalonians 3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but **admonish him as a brother**.

εἰ δέ τις οὐχ ὑπακούει τῷ λόγῳ ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, τοῦτον σημειοῦσθε μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι αὐτῷ, ἵνα ἐντραπῆ· 15 καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἡγείσθε, **ἀλλὰ νουθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν**.

- 1 Timothy 5:1 **Rebuke not [=to strike upon with words]** an elder, **but intreat [appeal, plead, request]** him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

**Do not sharply rebuke** an older man, **but rather appeal to him** as a father, to the younger men as brothers, 2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Πρεσβυτέρω μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς ἀλλὰ παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα, νεωτέρους ὡς ἀδελφούς, 2 πρεσβυτέρας ὡς μητέρας, νεωτέρας ὡς ἀδελφὰς ἐν πάσῃ ἀγνεΐᾳ.

### How true Christian love operates.

True Christian love is both *kind* and *correct* at the same time!

2 John 1:5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote **a new commandment** unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, **that we love one another**. 6 And **this is love, that we walk after his commandments**. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

Now I ask you, lady, not as though *I were* writing to you **a new commandment**, but the one which we have had from the beginning, **that we love one another**. 6 And **this is love, that we walk [conduct ourselves] according to His commandments**. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.

καὶ νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, οὐχ ὡς ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω σοι ἀλλὰ ἦν εἶχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, **ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους**. 6 καὶ **αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, ἵνα περιπατῶμεν κατὰ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ**· αὕτη ἡ ἐντολή ἐστίν, καθὼς ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ περιπατήτε.

True Christian love is *merciful* !

Luke 6:31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. 32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. 33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. 34 And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. 36 **Be ye therefore merciful [sensitive, compassionate]**, as your Father also is merciful.

καὶ καθὼς θέλετε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς ὁμοίως. 32 καὶ εἰ ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστίν; καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας αὐτοὺς ἀγαπῶσιν. 33 καὶ [γὰρ] ἐὰν ἀγαθοποιήτε τοὺς ἀγαθοποιῶντας ὑμᾶς, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστίν; καὶ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιῶσιν. 34 καὶ ἐὰν δανίσητε παρ' ὧν ἐλπίζετε λαβεῖν, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις [ἐστίν]; καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἁμαρτωλοῖς δανίζουσιν ἵνα ἀπολάβωσιν τὰ ἴσα. 35 πλὴν ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ

ἀγαθοποιεῖτε καὶ δανίζετε μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες· καὶ ἔσται ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς, καὶ ἔσεσθε υἱοὶ ὑψίστου, ὅτι αὐτὸς χρηστὸς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηροὺς. 36 **Γίνεσθε οἰκτίρμονες** καθὼς [καὶ] ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν οἰκτίρμων ἐστίν.

**QUESTION?** If we are to behave in this spirit toward those who are sinners and enemies, in what spirit should we behave toward those who are our brothers in Christ?

### **The teaching of Matthew 18:15-17**

Matthew 18:15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 "But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

Ἐὰν δὲ ἀμαρτήσῃ [εἰς σὲ] ὁ ἀδελφός σου, ὑπάγε ἔλεγξον αὐτὸν μεταξύ σοῦ καὶ αὐτοῦ μόνου. ἂν σου ἀκούσῃ, ἐκέρδησας τὸν ἀδελφόν σου· 16 ἂν δὲ μὴ ἀκούσῃ, παράλαβε μετὰ σοῦ ἔτι ἓνα ἢ δύο, ἵνα ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων ἢ τριῶν σταθῇ πᾶν ῥῆμα· 17 ἂν δὲ παρακούσῃ αὐτῶν, εἰπὲ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ· ἂν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρακούσῃ, ἔστω σοι ὡσπερ ὁ ἐθνικὸς καὶ ὁ τελώνης.

- Matthew 18 is not a procedure to deal with public sins.
- Matters of ecclesiastical separation are not personal matters between two individuals within the context of a local church.
- Matters of ecclesiastical separation are not a matter of a personal, unreconciled condition between differing brethren. They are a matter of discipline and accountability to the clear commands of Scripture.
- In Matthew 18, no matter of church discipline is involved. Even if it were a matter of discipline, the first party has already put the matter before the public — before the church and the world. Ecclesiastical separation is not therefore a private matter of personal offence.

NOTE: Our response must appropriately be as public as the original statement or action. Otherwise, the church will be hurt.

### **More basic axioms:**

- You can have discipline without love, but you cannot have love without discipline.



- You can have separation without love, but you cannot have love without separation.
- You can have unity without love, but you cannot have love without unity.
- You can have doctrinal correctness without love, but you cannot have love without doctrinal correctness.
- You can have truth without love, but you cannot have love without the truth.

#### Further clarifications:

- It is wrong **not to separate from unbelievers** in matters of religious endeavor. **To unite** ecclesiastically with *unbelievers* is wrong!
- It is wrong **not to separate from believers** when clear basic principles of Scripture have been violated.
- It is wrong **to separate from obedient brethren**, as we would separate from unbelievers — on matters that clearly are not basic and fundamental to a Biblical belief and practice.

#### KEEPING UNITY AND SEPARATION IN BALANCE

NOTE: The practice of Love and Unity must be done with Integrity!

1. **It is very important to keep a *cutting edge* on your ministry. If you do not, you will ultimately surround yourself with people who do not necessarily share your convictions, but who enjoy the success of what you are doing. In so doing, you will build an organization that will ultimately repudiate your convictions.**

2. Failure to separate where the Scriptures require us to do so will result in serious offenses against God and His Word! The following important issues are at stake:

- **Identity** — assuming an identity in common with those who dishonor God — lending the good auspices of your name to that which dishonors God.
- **Morality** — abandoning biblical moral and social principles.
- **Commonality** — leaving biblical teachings and principles in order to establish common ground with others.
- **Credibility** — giving credibility to that which ought to be rejected — giving your personal approval to disobedience. **It is always wrong to add numbers, credibility, or strength to an apostasy!**
- **Culpability** — failure to reject wrong doctrine, conduct, morals and practices.

**cul•pa•ble** ME *coupable*, fr. MF, fr. L *culpabilis*, fr. *culpare* to blame, fr. *culpa* guilt

1 *archaic* : GUILTY, CRIMINAL

2 meriting condemnation or blame esp. as wrong or harmful <*culpable negligence*> **syn** see BLAMEWORTHY