

Coming Together

Introduction

Many songs and phrases have been written about coming together or supporting unity. They describe how we are to live, treat, and fellowship with one another, just to name a few. We strive for unity in our homes, workplace, neighborhoods (communities), and governments.

In our society, it is tough to find complete unity unless it comes from a group that all believe in the same cause. Arguments, disagreement, and strife make their way in because other groups feel offended and they want to voice their opinions. Remember, God, called us to peace with one another (1 Corinthians 7:15).

In my experience, this happens in churches. It seems that with larger congregations, you have people forming groups that have their own opinions and beliefs that differ from others in the church. Sometimes, these groups will break off from the main church and form another church based on their beliefs.

The problem is that there is no unity, spiritual, scriptural, and doctrinal, within churches today. The apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesian church on this very same subject. As he sat in prison and heard about issues within the church, he grew concerned that they needed a “pep talk” to straighten them out and come together in unity. If you have your Bible, turn with me to Ephesians 4:12-16.

Spiritual Unity

After hearing these reports, Paul started to look at the church on two different levels:

- He saw the body of Christ, made up of true believers that were growing gradually.
- He also saw them ministering to each other, growing together, and experiencing spiritual unity.

Look at verse twelve, “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” The congregation does not call or hire a pastor and pay him to do the work. We are to follow his leadership, through the Word of God, which equips us to complete our tasks (**2 Timothy 3:13-17**).

Within the body of Christ, we can see four pieces of evidence of spiritual unity:

1. **Christ-likeness.** We have heard that term many times. Basically, the term means to prepare yourself spiritually.
2. **Stability.** We do not need to be tossed around by every religious novelty that comes our way. We need to stand firm on God’s Word, which will help us to build and live on a firm foundation (**Matthew 7:24-27**).

3. **Truth joined in love.** Look at verse fifteen, “speaking the truth in love.” It has always been said that truth without love is brutality, but love without truth is hypocrisy. It is a mark of a faithful Christian that we share the truth with other believers and non-believers in love. “Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy” (**Proverbs 27:6 NLT**).
4. **Cooperation.** We are members of one body. We belong to each other, we affect each other, and we need each other. As the body grows, members grow, and we grow as we feed on the Word of God and minister to each other. Again, the emphasis is on love. We bear with one another (v. 2), speak the truth in love (v. 15), and we edify (instruct or improve) ourselves in love (v.16). Love is the circulatory system of the body.

The key verse in this segment is Ephesians 4:13, “**Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.**”

Scriptural Unity

If you know how to listen to the voice of God, you can hear Him calling throughout the Body of Christ today. He is calling for unity, to lay down our disagreements and come together in preparation for Jesus' return. Many believers feel, "How can I unify with someone from another denomination? And I'm not going to give up my doctrines and agree with theirs just for unity's sake!"

What they don't realize is scriptural unity isn't based on doctrine. Winds of doctrine, according to Ephesians 4:14, are childish. Winds of doctrine don't unify. They divide and blow people in every direction. The Word doesn't say anything about us coming into the unity of our doctrines. It says we'll come into the unity of the *faith*.

Doctrinal Unity

In the past, we've failed to understand that and tried to demand doctrinal unity from each other anyway. Some of the arguments include, "If you don't agree with me on the issue of tongues, or on the timing of the Rapture, or on the proper depth for baptismal waters, I won't accept you as a brother in the Lord. I'll break fellowship with you."

That is not God's way of doing things. He doesn't have a long list of doctrinal demands for us to meet. His requirements are simple as 1 John 3:23 tells us **to believe on the Name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another**. Once we all come to a place where we keep those requirements and quit worrying about the rest, we'll be able to forget our denominational squabbles and come together in the unity of faith. We'll grow so strong together that the winds of doctrine won't be able to drive us apart.

Conclusion

When that happens, the devil's going to panic because the unity of the faith of God's people is a staggering thing. It's the most unlimited, powerful thing on earth. Right now all over the world, the Spirit is calling the Church of the living God to unite. Hear Him and obey, and you can be a part of one of the most magnificent moves of God this world has ever seen, Amen!

I am Dale Van De Bogart and I approve of this message!

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