



Church Unity

Church Unity

*When should we not
work together?*

Church Separation



Church Unity

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OVER WHAT SHOULD WE
SEPARATE FROM BELIEVERS?

*(In other words, which doctrines must
believers agree upon to serve together?)*



Which doctrines must believers agree upon to serve together?

Would you...

- A. Join together with a Catholic church in opposing abortion?
- B. Join together with a Catholic church in evangelism efforts?
- C. Serve with charismatic churches in evangelism?

Are Denominations Wrong?

135

No—They're OK

Yes—Guard unity

Evangelical groups agree on basic theology

Some divide over minor doctrinal differences

Different languages is a good reason to worship separately

Personal ambition & pride can cause splits that form denominations

ORTHODOX FAITH

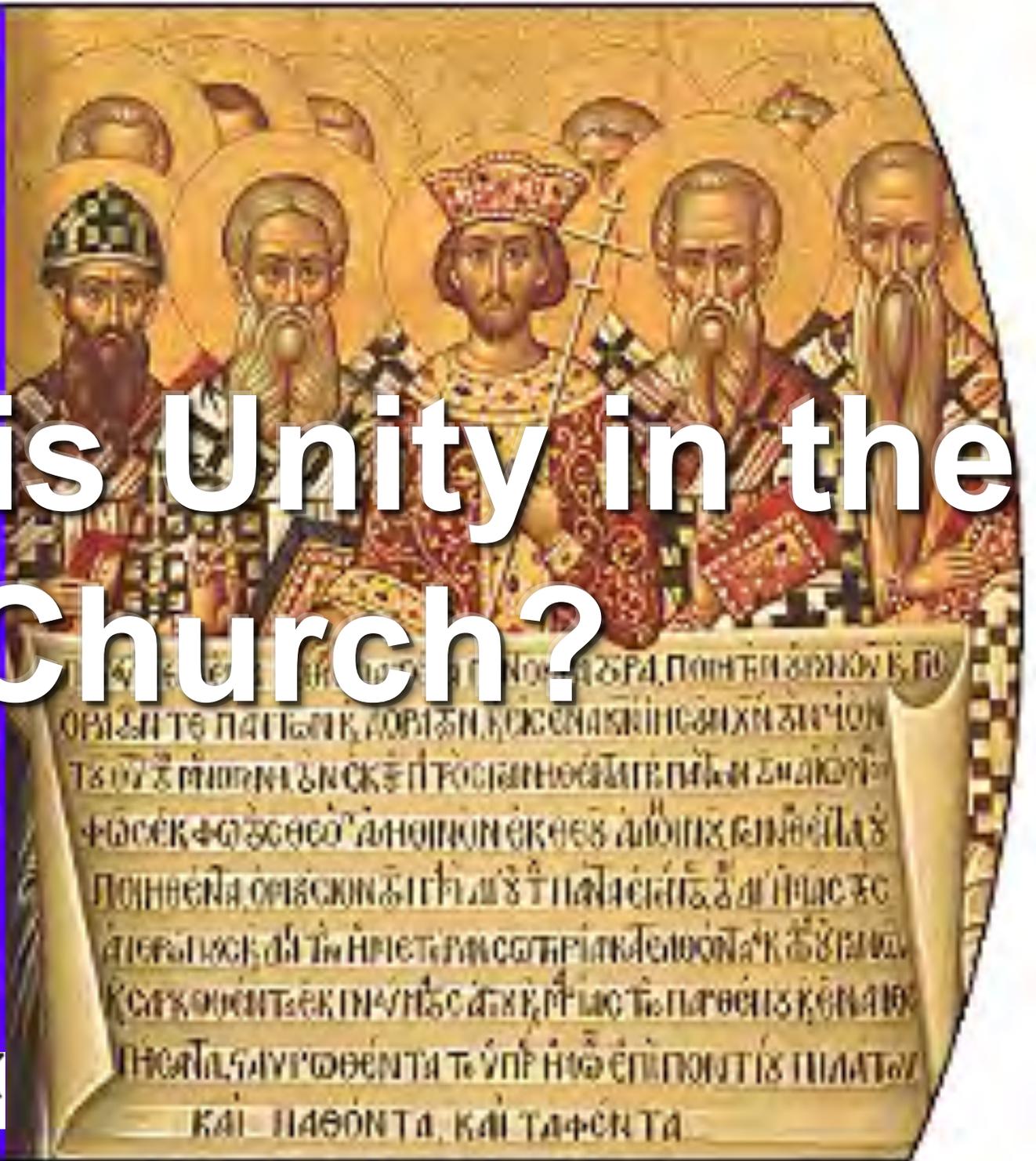


What is Unity in the Church?

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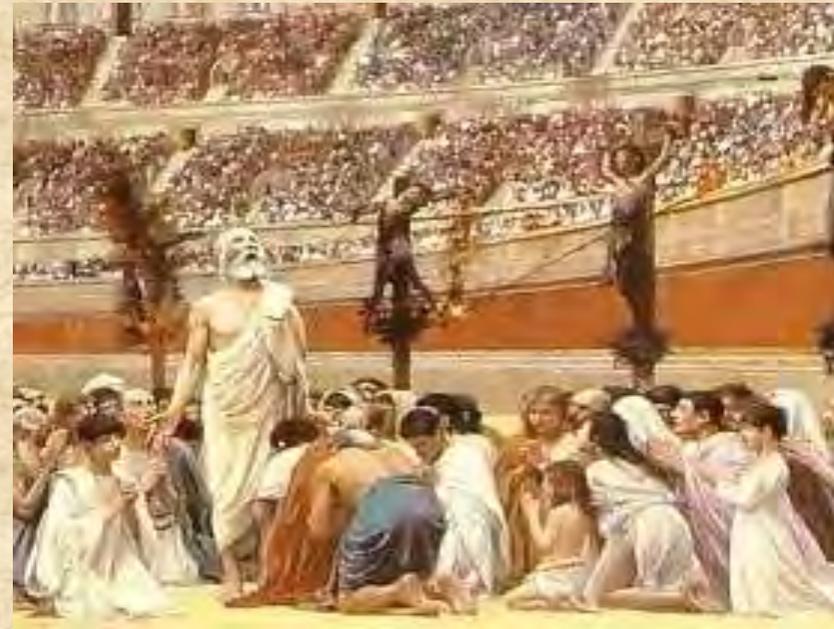
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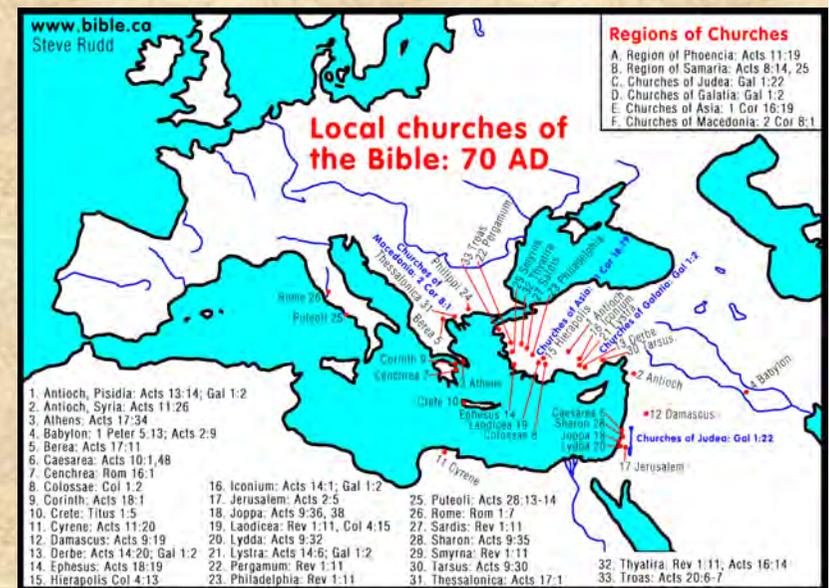


The Invisible/Universal Church

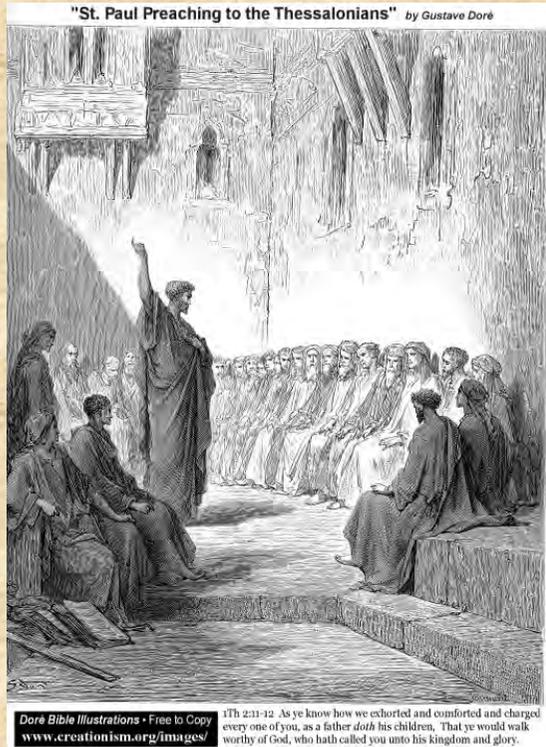
- Every person who has trusted in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
- Visible to God only
(2 Tim 2:19) —only God knows who.



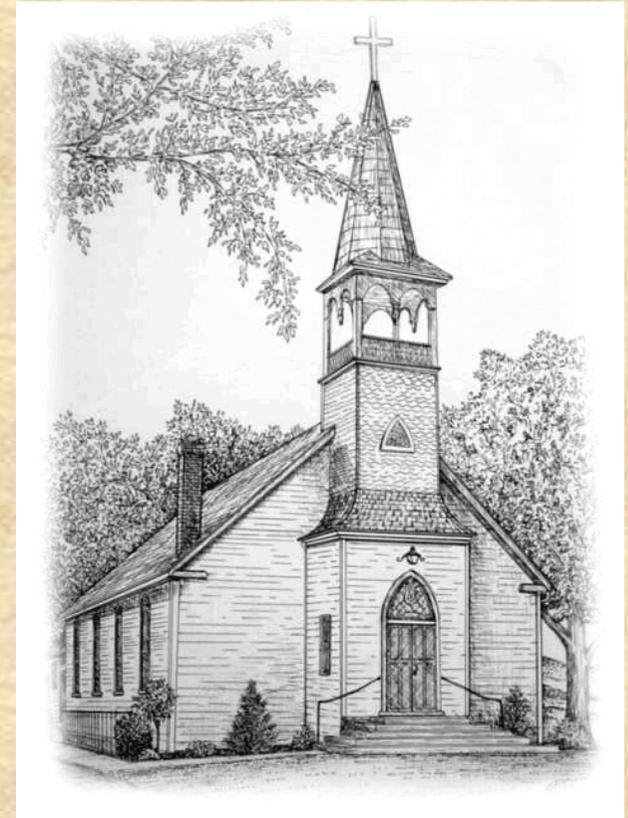
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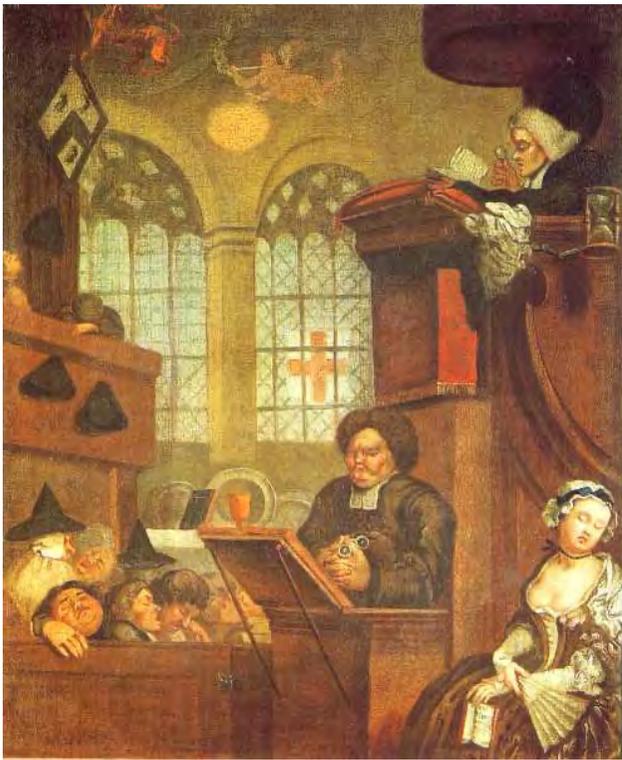
EARTHLY Visible/Local CHURCH



- Manifestation of universal church
- Visible to every Christian and even the world

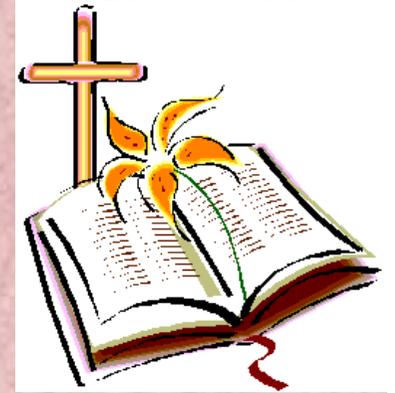


- Community based
1 Cor. 1:12
1 Thess.1:1
Philemon 1-2



<<< True Churches

- Fellowship of "True Christians"



- Faithful to the word of God

- The right use of the sacraments



OTHER TRAITS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH (though less important)

- **Authorized ministry (Acts 14:23; 20:28)**
- **Public worship (Heb. 10:25)**
- **Suffering under the cross (Acts 14:22; 20:29)**
- **Functioning system of discipline (Titus 1:13)**
- **Active ministry of every member (Eph. 4:7-16)**

False Churches

MORMONS...

JEHOVAH'S
WITNESSES...

When should we separate?

What is meant by "separation"?

- a) Biblical
- b) Primary
- c) Secondary



Biblical Separation

Biblical separation "is the separation of the church and its members from unbelief, apostasy, and compromise."

**—Jeffrey Khoo, *Biblical Separation*
(Far Eastern Bible College Press, 1999), 11**

Primary Separation

A believer who does not associate with other believers from another church due to a personal disagreement.



Primary Separation

Mr. Fen, a deacon of Hope church, was not in agreement with a church policy. He proposed a revision of the said policy but his proposal was rejected during a board meeting. As a result, he left the church and established another church.



Acts 15:36-41

A biblical illustration of primary separation was between Barnabas and Paul over John.

Barnabas wanted to take John while Paul did not.

Barnabas and Paul parted ways. Barnabas took John. Paul took Silas.



Secondary Separation

is separation between churches because of associations with other churches.

For example, Church A had been united with Church B in the past, but separates from Church B because Church B associates with Church C.



Primary separation:

"Should we separate from the wrong crowd?"

Secondary separation:

"Should we separate from those who run with the wrong crowd?"

Secondary Separation

Example 1

Separation between **Fundamentalists** with **Bible-believing Christians** or bodies that:

- cooperate with Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Liberal, Modernist, Pentecostal, and Charismatic teachers and churches
- are involved with the World Council of Churches.



Secondary Separation

Example 2

Separation between the Fundamentalists with most Protestant churches that are neither Liberal nor Fundamental, and Para-Church organisations like Campus Crusade for Christ, Navigators, Varsity Christian Fellowship, Scripture Union, Operation Mobilisation, and Youth With a Mission.



Secondary Separation

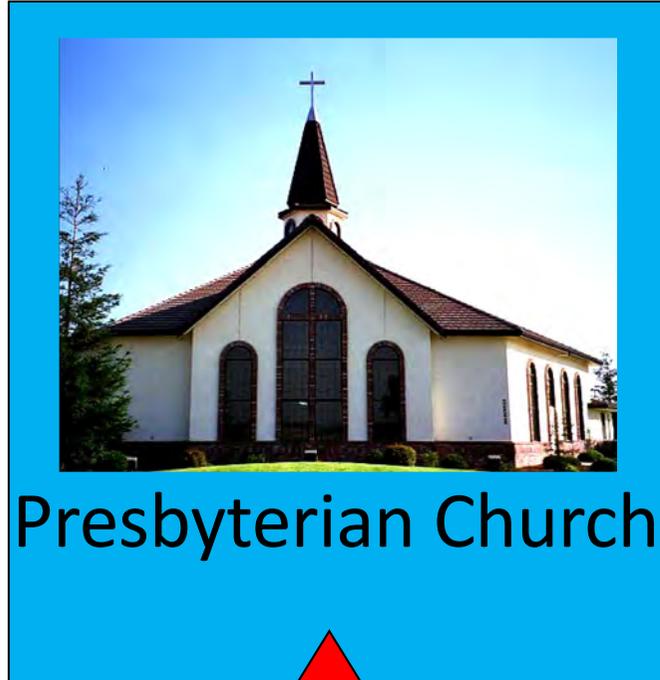
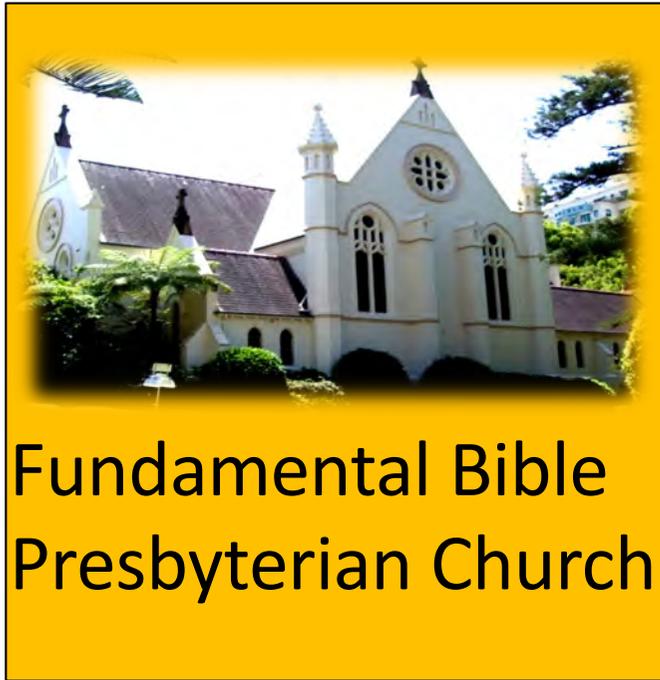
Example 3

The Fundamentalists will not join **the nation-wide gospel campaigns** such as the Billy Graham Crusade and Luis Palau Crusade because in these events all churches are invited to participate in them, including Liberal and Roman Catholic churches.



Secondary Separation

Example 4



Unity Balances Love and Truth



“All you need is love...” (The Beatles)
Do you agree? Why or why not?

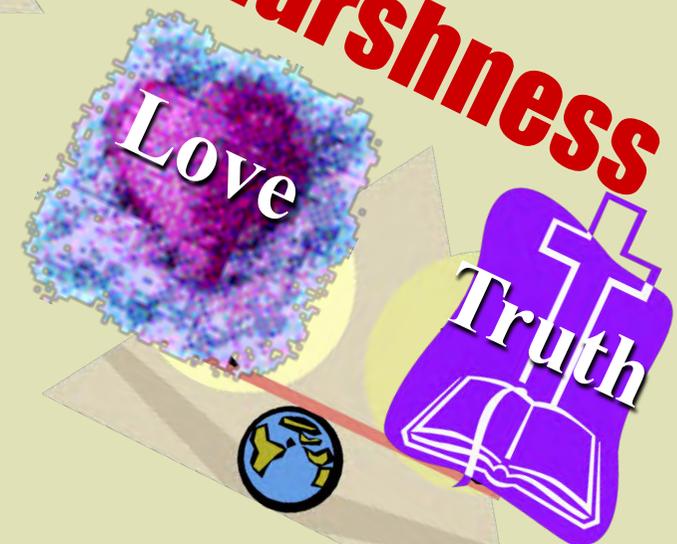


Balance

Mushiness



Harshness



Church Unity

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Problem of disunity

Root Problems:

- **PRIDE**
- **INSECURITY**

The Church in Corinth Example



Problem of disunity

- **The Church in Corinth**
 - **Call to Unity (1:10)**
 - **Presenting Problem (1:11-12)**
 - **Argument (1:13-17)**
 - **Root Problem (1:18–2:5)**
 - **Resolution (2:6-16)**



The Biblical Call for Unity

John 10:16

- "one flock, one shepherd"

John 17:23

- "they may become perfectly one"



The Biblical Call for Unity

1 Cor. 1:10

- "be united in the same mind and same judgment"

Phil. 2:2

- "be of full accord and of one mind"



The Biblical Call for Unity

1 Cor. 10:1; 12:12-26

•"one body"



NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING

The background of the slide is a collage of three images related to church services. The top-left image shows a group of clergy members in various colored vestments (black, red, purple) holding books and looking down, likely during a liturgical ceremony. The top-right image shows a group of people in white robes, possibly a choir or a group of ministers, standing in a church setting. The bottom image shows a group of people in modern attire (men in suits, women in blouses) holding papers and looking towards the front of a church, suggesting a contemporary worship service.

1. UNITY—is grounded in the worship of one God (Eph. 4:1-6)

- Gathering of like-minded people confessing and worshipping the one God of the Bible.**
- Common worship, even if they may come from different denominations with different emphasis.**
- Example: SBC chapel service**



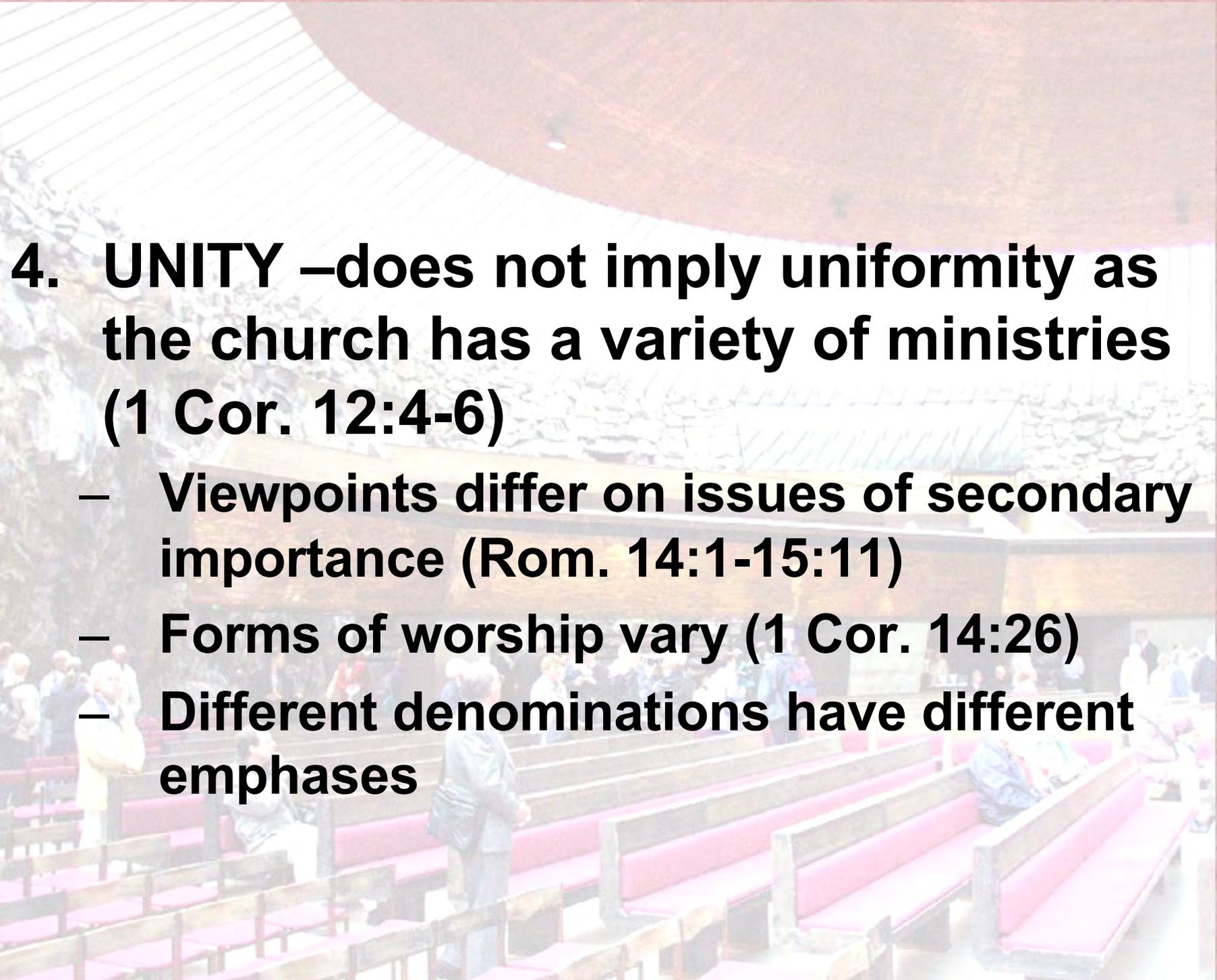
2. UNITY—Based on the Lordship of Christ (1 Cor. 1:2)

- one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all (Eph. 4:4-6)**
- Enables us to identify our fellow Christians as brothers/sisters**

3. UNITY—is already given by the Holy Spirit to the regenerate.

- **Now we must keep this unity (Eph. 4:3).**
- **Jesus' goal in His prayer was for His people to be one (John 17:21).**



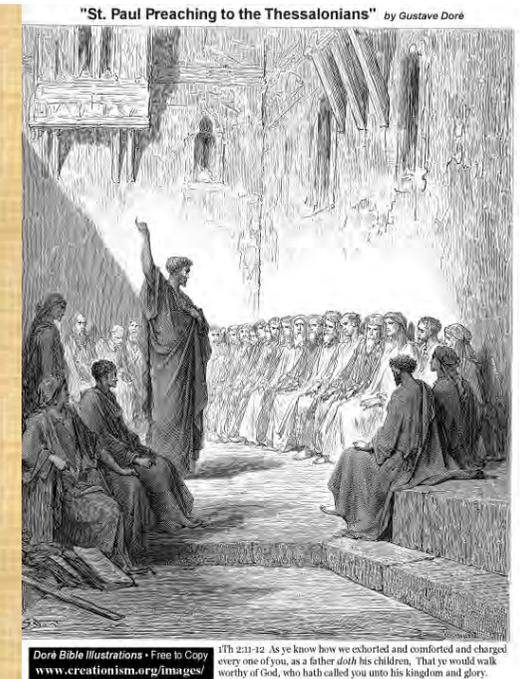


4. UNITY –does not imply uniformity as the church has a variety of ministries (1 Cor. 12:4-6)

- Viewpoints differ on issues of secondary importance (Rom. 14:1-15:11)
- Forms of worship vary (1 Cor. 14:26)
- Different denominations have different emphases

**5. UNITY—can be a reality when
Philippians 2:2 is heeded and
believers are "one in spirit and purpose."**

- **Unity was a powerful testimony to the world (Acts 4:32-33) and the church tends to grow when the witness is united**
- **History has shown negative effects slip in when there are quarrels within a denomination or between churches even though each confesses to belong to the same God and Saviour**





My prayer...
is that all
of them
may be one.

- John 17:20



Ancient Diagram of the Holy trinity



UNITY and DIVISION





EARLY DAYS

- 1st century– Problems in Corinth
 - Church Fathers Era
 - Doctrinal disagreements and schisms

- AD 1054 Eastern Church split away from the Western Church

- Roman Catholic Era

- 500 years
 - Unhealthy form of unity

- Intimidation
 - Ignorance

- Reformation

- "Divided" the church into many denominations



PRESENT DAY >>>

- **20th century– Ecumenical Movement**
 - Discouraging results
 - More bickering and infighting



- **The Real Problem:**
 - Not Intellect
 - Affair of the heart:
 - Pride
 - Lust for Power
 - Greed
 - Intolerance
 - Prejudice

Parties at Corinth

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The Cause and Solution

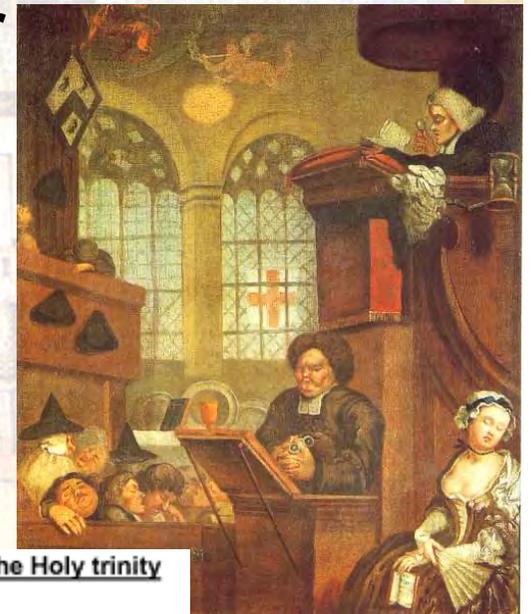
- **The 1 Corinthians 1 Problem**
 - Division resulted from human ideas or personalities displacing Christ as the focus of the church's attention--the "I follow him" attitude.
- **The Way to Overcome Division**
 - 1 Corinthians 1:10: Decide to agree with one another
 - Choose to look for areas of agreement rather than dissent
 - 1 Corinthians 2:2: resolve to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified
 - Keep your attention on the simple truth where all believers agree

...continued

- **1 Corinthians 2:4: Message and preaching not with wise and persuasive words but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power**

– Let the Spirit of God lead us to:

- » Love
- » Grace
- » Mercy

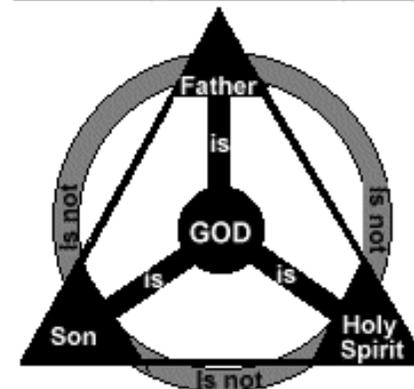


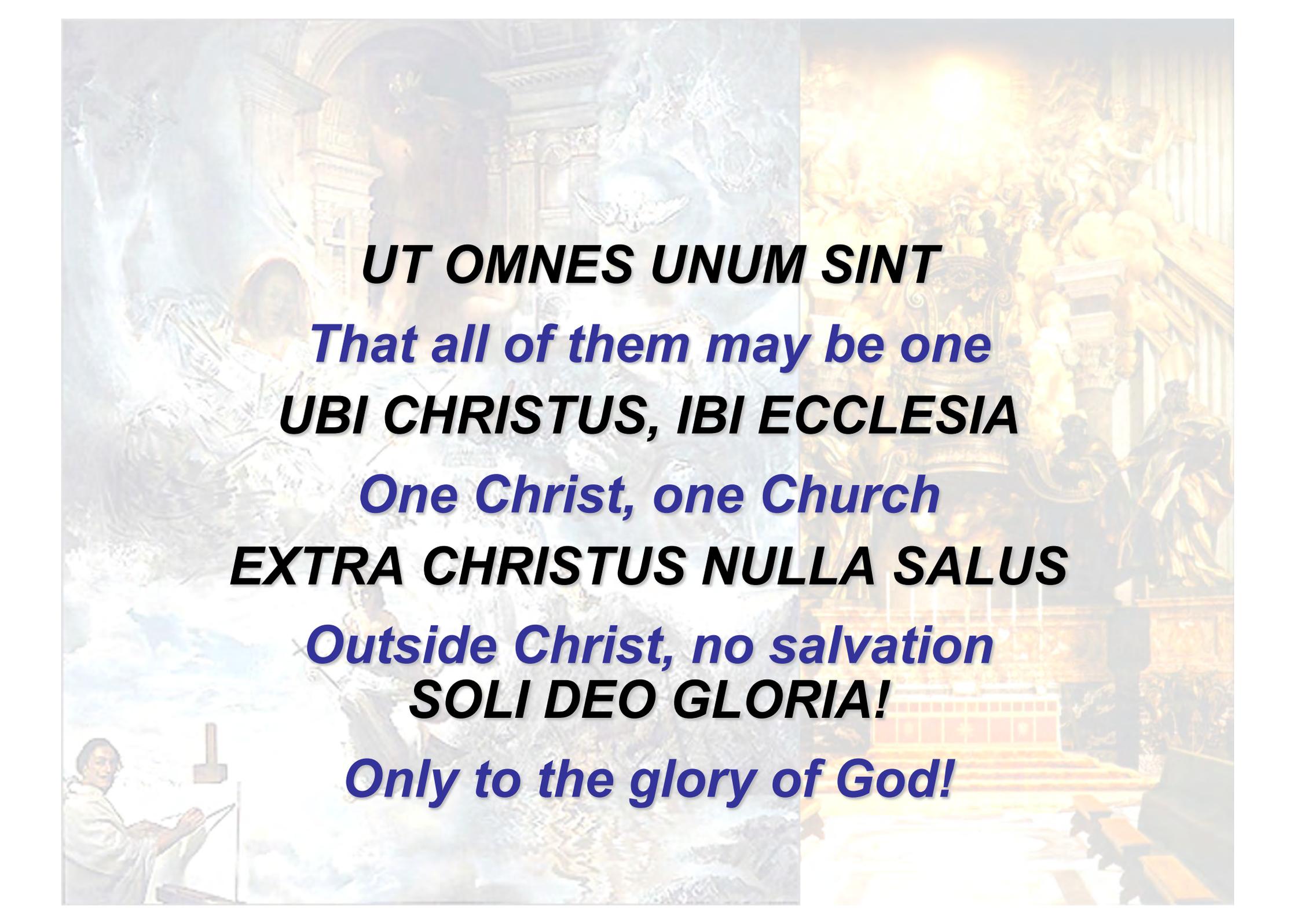
- **VALID REASONS to Separate**

- Doctrine
- Conscience
- Practical Considerations

A Quality Color Scan B
The Orthodox Christian Religious
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Ancient Diagram of the Holy trinity





UT OMNES UNUM SINT

That all of them may be one

UBI CHRISTUS, IBI ECCLESIA

One Christ, one Church

EXTRA CHRISTUS NULLA SALUS

Outside Christ, no salvation

SOLI DEO GLORIA!

Only to the glory of God!

Reasons for Separation

UNEQUALLY YOKED

Giving up of control over one's activities and the loss of freedom to act in obedience to God.

What does 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 mean?

"Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? ¹⁵What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever? ¹⁶And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God."

What does 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 mean?

"As God said:

**'I will live in them
and walk among them.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.**

**¹⁷Therefore, come out from among
unbelievers, and separate yourselves
from them, says the Lord'**

(2 Cor. 6:16-17)

What does 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 mean?

"Don't touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you. ¹⁸And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

¹Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God"

(2 Cor. 6:17–7:1)

Separation Texts

<u>Text</u>	<u>Issue?</u>	<u>Command?</u>
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2 Th 3:6-15	?	?
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Rom 12:1-2	?	?
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Rom 16:17	?	?
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Eph 5:11	?	?
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1 Th 5:21	?	?
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Separation Texts

Text Issue? Command?

1 Tim 6:3-5

?

?

2 Tim 2:16-21

?

?

Titus 3:10

?

?

2 John 7-11

?

?

Jude 3

?

?

ROMANS 15

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written. For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, ye Gentiles; and laud him, all

12 And again, Esai'as saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God who filleth the world with peace, shall be glorified through the power of the Holy Ghost.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able to instruct one another in holiness, and to help one another to love the more bodily unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

15 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

16 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

17 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath wrought by me, to the Gentiles, lest I should be as though I were boasting.

18 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jeru-

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salem and round about unto Illyr'ium, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not with offence, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

21 But as it is written, Whom he was not spoken of, shall see: and they that have heard shall understand.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if somewhat called with the gospel.

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Acha'ia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily, and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's

Paul sendeth divers salutations

sake, and for the love of the spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

That I may be delivered from them that do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and with you be refreshed.

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

CHAPTER 16

COMMEND unto you Phē'bē my sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrē'a: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

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 so all the churches of the Gentiles.

Likewise greet the church that is in their house: Salute my wellbeloved Epē'terus, who is the firstfruits of Acha'ia unto Christ.

Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

Salute Andron'icus and Junia, my kinsmen, and fellow-labourers, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stach'ys my beloved.

ROMANS 16

10 Salute Apel'les approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobū'lus' household.

11 Salute Hērō'dion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Philemon, and of Nymphodora, and of Tryphēna, and of Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord.

Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Salute Asyn'critus, Phlegon, Hermas, Pat'rōbas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philol'ogus, and Julia, Nē'reus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

21 Timoth'cus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosip'ater, my kinsmen, salute you.

What does 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 mean?

"The direct commands to *separate* from other people are always commands to separate *from unbelievers*, not from Christians with whom one disagrees... There are no direct New Testament commands to separate from Christians with whom one has doctrinal differences (unless those differences involve such serious heresies that the Christian faith itself is denied)."

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 877



U N I T Y

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

—Ephesians 4:3

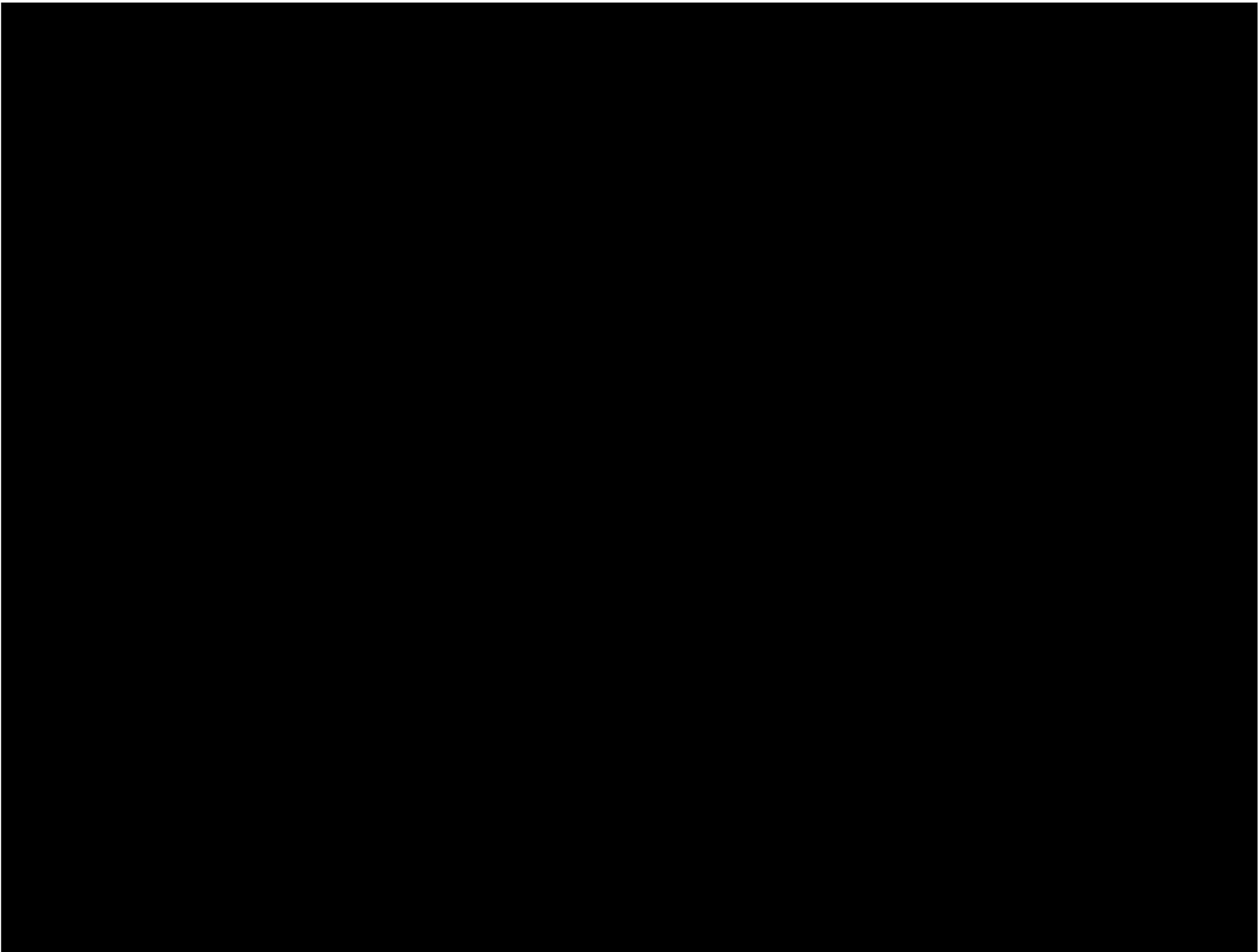


Any questions?



Church Unity





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