

Why Am I A Member Of The Church Of Christ?

(Part 8)
John 17:20-23

1

Why Am I A Member Of The Church Of Christ?

- ▶ Built on the right foundation.
- ▶ Recognizes Christ as its only head and source of authority.
- ▶ Organized according to the divine pattern.
- ▶ Accepts only the gospel of Christ as its creed.

2

Why Am I A Member Of The Church Of Christ?

- ▶ Refuses all human names and recognizes only the divinely given name of Christ.
- ▶ No human requirements that must be met.
- ▶ In the church of Christ, I can worship the Lord, each Lord's day without the innovations of men and yet be able to do everything early Christians did in their public worship of God.
- ▶ **Makes a consistent plea for unity.**

3

Basic Outline For Study:

1. Importance of unity and sin of division.
2. God's plan for unity as revealed in the prayer of Jesus. John 17. A prospective of unity in the future.
3. A study of Acts 2. How unity became a reality.

4

Importance Of Unity

Jesus prayed for unity. John 17:20-23

- ▶ Jesus prayed for that which is possible.
- cf. Mark 3:24, *"And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand."*
- cf. Luke 11:17, *"But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house (divided) against a house falleth."*

5

Importance Of Unity

Paul demanded unity among the brethren at Corinth. 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:1-5; 4:17

- ▶ Division is ugly, wrong, and sinful.
- ▶ The Lord recognizes no cause for division as just, except truth. Peace must NOT be bought at the expense of compromise of truth. cf. Matthew 10:34-39.
- ▶ The real danger is from within. cf. Acts 20:29-30
 - ▶ Compare Hymenaeus and Philetus who taught the resurrection was past. 2 Timothy 2:15-18

6

Importance Of Unity

God hates division. cf. Proverbs 6:16, 19, *“Six things God hates, yea seven ... A false witness that uttereth lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”*

Division is condemned. Galatians 5:19–20; Romans 2:8; James 3:13–18

7

Jesus' Prayer For Unity. John 17:9–21

Jesus knew what was to happen to him as “the hour is come.” Verse 1 cf. Psalms 22; 1 Peter 1:11

- Though the Holy Spirit was given to the apostles (John 16:13), Jesus knew they would soon pass through the fiery trial. cf. Matthew 26:31.

8

Jesus' Prayer For Unity. John 17:9–21

Note the unity that existed among his chosen disciples.

- Verse 6, they were called out of the world and given to Christ.
- Verse 8, they were given *“words.”*
 - They *“received”* the message and *“they have believed that thou didst send me”* and *“they have kept thy word.”*

9

Jesus' Prayer For Unity. John 17:9–21

The unity among the disciples about to be tested. John 17:11–19 Jesus prayed ...

1. Keep them though thine own name. verse 11
2. That they may be one. verse 11
3. That they might have my joy. verses 13–14
4. Keep them from the evil one. verse 15
5. Sanctify them. verse 17

These were to be set apart from the world, to God's purpose. BUT HOW?

“Through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

10

Jesus' Prayer For Unity. John 17:9–21

This unity would be created among all those who would believe *“THROUGH THEIR WORD.”*
Verses 20–21

1. These would all be one.
2. This glorious unity was IN CHRIST, WITH God, AMONG believers, based UPON the WORD OF GOD.
3. The love of God is seen in this divine plan. Verses 22–26.
4. This is consistent with John 6:56, 63; 14:15, 20–21.

11

The Reality Of Unity

Holy Spirit revealed the word to the Apostles.
Acts 1:3, 4–5; cf. John 14:26; 15:26–27; 16:13–14

- Word preached. Acts 2:14–21
 - *“What shall we do?”* Verse 37
 - Forgiveness offered. Verse 38
- Word received. Acts 2:41; cf. 1 John 1:3–4
- Obedient added (united). Acts 2:47
- Word perpetuated. *“Continued steadfastly ...”* Acts 2:42

12