

Living in Unity

Key Verse: “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.”

—***I Corinthians 1:10***

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 1:10-17

brethren in the church were responding otherwise to what they had learned of the principles of Truth and righteousness. They were found to be speaking and acting independently from the rest of the ecclesia, and the apostle warned them to not set themselves up as alternate teachers among the Lord's people, or to boast of their new and independent understanding of the Word of God. He points out that the truths that he had been engaged in teaching and expounding to them should have been rightly understood and appreciated by all of the brethren in the same manner and spirit of Christ.

IN THIS WEEK'S LESSON,

Apostle Paul addresses the responsibility that all brethren in Christ have to conduct themselves in the ways of unity and harmony, as well as in Truth and righteousness, toward others of like precious faith. This Christlike spirit should prevail among the Lord's people at all times and places, but especially toward those of like precious faith who have also been called out of darkness into the marvelous light of present Truth.

In our featured scripture, we find Paul admonishing certain at Corinth whom he had learned at Corinth whom he had learned of the principles of Truth and righteousness. They were found to be speaking and acting independently from the rest of the ecclesia, and the apostle warned them to not set themselves up as alternate teachers among the Lord's people, or to boast of their new and independent understanding of the Word of God. He points out that the truths that he had been engaged in teaching and expounding to them should have been rightly understood and appreciated by all of the brethren in the same manner and spirit of Christ.

The scriptural record states that Paul addressed this divisive issue when he said, “I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe’s people, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, ‘I am of Paul,’ and ‘I am of Apollos,’ and ‘I of Cephas,’ and ‘I of Christ.’” (I Cor. 1:11,12, *New American Standard Version*) Paul is thus emphasizing that the root of this problem is evidence of their having the spirit of sectarianism, rather than possessing the spirit of Christ with humble and contrite hearts. This was strong criticism by the apostle towards those within the Corinthian ecclesia. He tells them that they should be more alert to the fact that Christ is not divided, and that the message of Truth that had been proclaimed to them was a harmonious and blessed gift from God.

The apostle continued by making it known to them that he was glad that he had not been involved in the baptism of any of them. He said, “I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.” (vss. 14,15) Paul was distancing himself from any involvement in the sectarian spirit that was evident in the Corinthian church. He wished it to be known that he was not flattered by their actions, and that he would neither condone nor authorize this worldly spirit.

In keeping with the spirit of our Lord, each should be aware of the apostle’s teachings on this subject of living in unity. This lesson thus concludes with a further exhortation from Paul’s teachings. He says, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”—Eph. 4:1-6 ■