

Unity

We hear a lot about UNITY today. On the world's political scene we have in place the United Nations organization. Many of the world's leaders are advocating and actively promoting a ONE WORLD global system, and even a common language.

More significantly, there is a present-day Ecumenical Movement with its goal of uniting Christendom (professing Christians, denominations, and so-called churches) under the banner of a ONE-WORLD RELIGION.

Because there is so much talk about Christian unity these days, and because our church is NOT involved at all in any ecumenical movement or other inter-denominational / inter-church activities, the purpose of this study is to teach you what the BIBLE has to say about unity – the true and the false.

1. Man's First Attempt at "Unity." - Read events that took place after the great world-wide flood of Noah's day.
 - A. Read Genesis 9:1 ¹ And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.
 - B. Read Genesis 11:2 ² And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.
 - C. Read Genesis 11:1 ¹ And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.
 - D. Read Genesis 11:4 ⁴ And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.
 - a. Build a city – an attempt at political unity

b. Build a tower – an attempt at religious unity

- E. Read Genesis 11:5-8 ⁵ And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. ⁶ And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. ⁷ Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. ⁸ So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.
- F. Read Genesis 11:9 ⁹ Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

2. Man's Final Attempt at "Unity."

- A. Read Revelation 13:7 ⁷ And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
- B. Read Revelation 14:8 ⁸ And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.
- C. Read Revelation 17:1 ¹ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

- D. Read Revelation 17:5 ⁵ And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. God identifies
- E. Study Revelation 17:1 and 17:15
- F. Read Revelation 18:2-8 ² And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. ³ For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. ⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. ⁵ For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. ⁶ Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. ⁷ How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. ⁸ Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

3. True Unity vs. False Unity.

A. Read 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. ⁷ But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. ⁸ Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. ⁹ (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹ And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: ¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: ¹⁴ That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; ¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: ¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. ¹⁷ This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, ¹⁸ Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: ¹⁹ Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But ye have not so learned Christ; ²¹ If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; ²⁴ And that ye put on the

new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. ²⁵ Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: ²⁷ Neither give place to the devil. ²⁸ Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. ²⁹ Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ³⁰ And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³² And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

- B. Read Ephesians 4:3 ³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- a. Read Amos 3:3 ³ Can two walk together, except they be agreed?
 - b. Read Ephesians 5:11 ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.
 - c. Read II Corinthians 6:14 ¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?
- C. Many “churches” and religious groups are associated with (in some way or another) the WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC), the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (NCC), or other inter-faith groups, and / or local city-wide unity groups.

The Chart below contrasts the difference between true Bible based unity and unscriptural associations:

True Unity	False Unity
<p>One Body Ephesians 4:4 ⁴ There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; Colossians 1:18 ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. There is only ONE kind of Church – the New Testament kind!</p>	<p>The ecumenical movement embraces all major Protestant denominations and Eastern Orthodox movements, and engages in active dialog with the Roman Catholic Church and most other major world (on-Christian) religions. Many Baptists have fallen for the unscriptural “mystical (mythical) invisible, universal body of Christ “Church” concept which teaches there are up to three “Churches!”</p>
<p>One Spirit Ephesians 4:4 ⁴ There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; This refers to Holy Spirit - I Thessalonians 4:8 (from verse 7) ⁷ For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. ⁸ He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit. Read John 16:13 ¹³ Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. Read I John 4:6 ⁶ We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.</p>	<p>Departure from the Word of God is giving heed to seducing spirits. Read I Timothy 4:1 ¹ <i>Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;</i> Read I John 4:1 ¹ <i>Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.</i> Read Revelation 18:2 ² <i>And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.</i> TODAYS GREAT “ecumenical spirit” is the Charismatic Movement.</p>

<p>One HOPE Read Ephesians 4:4 ⁴ <i>There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;</i></p> <p>The one hope for the believer and this world is the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Read Titus 2:13 (from verse 12) ¹² <i>Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;</i> ¹³ <i>Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;</i></p>	<p>The World Council of Churches espouses its mission of preaching the social Gospel. It seeks to bring about the utopian dream-society through liberal theology and Marxist revolution [Marxism: The key characteristics of Marxism in philosophy are its materialism and its commitment to political practice as the end goal of all thought].</p> <p>The WCC seeks to fulfill Revelation 12:1 through its own agencies. Revelation 12:1 ¹ <i>And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman [church] clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:</i></p> <p><i>IMPORTANT NOTE: There is a Bible prophecy (Isaiah 4:1) that at the end of time the vast majority of churches that call themselves Christian will not be wearing the garments of Christ's righteousness. It is therefore very important that we find out who this woman/church is that is described as a "great wonder."</i></p> <p>Isaiah 4:1 ¹ And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.</p>
<p>One Lord. Read Ephesians 4:5 ⁵ <i>One Lord, one faith, one baptism,</i> This refers to JESUS CHRIST.</p> <p>Read Philippians 2:11 ¹¹ <i>And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.</i></p>	<p>The Church of Rome still seeks to unite Christendom under the lordship of the Pope. Most protestant leaders acknowledge the pope as a great world leader. The ecumenical denominations pay lip service to Jesus Christ, calling Him Lord, but denying the reality when they do not the things which Jesus commands.</p> <p>Read Luke 6:46 ⁴⁶ And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?</p>

<p>One Faith Read Ephesians 4:5 ⁵ <i>One Lord, one faith, one baptism,</i></p> <p>Read Jude 3³ Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.</p> <p>Jude 3 tells us this faith was once delivered unto the saints. It is the complete body of doctrine taught in the Word of God.</p>	<p>The official “Statement of Faith” of the Council of World Churches is short and very general – it has to be in order to accommodate the wide spectrum of beliefs held by the various denominational constituents.</p> <p>[WCC website statement: The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.]</p> <p>WCC rejects the Bible as the absolute final authority in all matters of faith.</p> <p>Note: The World Council of Churches has urged its 347 member denominations to give "serious consideration" to pulling investments out of Israel in protest of what it sees as mistreatment of Palestinians.</p>
<p>One Baptism Read Ephesians 4:5 ⁵ <i>One Lord, one faith, one baptism,</i></p> <p>According to Matthew 28:19, this is the emersion of a believer in water to set forth symbolically the dearth, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ – an ordinance given to the Lord’s churches to keep.</p>	<p>There is a variety of Baptisms being practiced among the denominations of the ecumenical community. Pouring, sprinkling, etc. on infants, adults, believers, non-believers, for salvation, with salvation, and after salvation! [This reality represents one of the great stumbling blocks to achieving the desired unity.]</p> <p>Many Baptists are failing to hold the line by accepting unscripturally baptized people into their membership.</p>

One God

Read Ephesians 4:6 ⁶ One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

There is one Lord God Almighty of the Bible, Who manifests Himself as three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Read Deuteronomy 6:4

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

Read I John 5:7

⁷ For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

A whole lot of people involved in ecumenical unity believe in a different God than the God of the Bible (a god of their own imagination. Romans 1:21 ²¹ *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

There are atheists roosting in the ecumenical tree – those who actually deny that Jesus is God. There are Universalists who believe God is the Father of all men (saved and unsaved), and that all will be saved anyway.

Don't be fooled by their religious talk and terminology. Read II Corinthians 11:4-15 ⁴ **For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.** ⁵

For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. ⁶ But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things. ⁷ Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? ⁸ I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. ⁹ And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself. ¹⁰ As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹ Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. ¹² But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. ¹³

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

There is a difference between church union and church unity. You can tie a dog's tail and a cat's tail together and through them over a clothes line. You may have a union, but you certainly won't have unity!

- Charles Spurgeon (England - 2nd half of 1800's): "Unity at the expense of Truth is treason."
- (W.A. Criswell? from Dallas, TX circa 1963) Criswell: "Ecumenicity is another name for Death to our Baptist faith."

A "Universal Christian Church" is the antithesis of a New Testament Church. Inherently, such a church will require central leadership (and many other traits) which are not supported in scripture!

For a complete description of a New Testament Church visit the WBC website:
<http://www.wetmorebaptistchurch.com/ABCs/ABCs%20of%20Christian%20Growth.htm>

WBC ABCs of the Christian Life 3/12/2006

Study 3 – The Church

Page 1 of 20

Outline – The Church

1. The Church is a New Testament Institution
2. The Church is an Assembly
3. The Church has a "Head"
4. The Church has Officers
5. The Church makes Decisions
6. The Church is an Independent Institution
7. The Church is a Commissioned Organization
8. The Church has Ordinances
9. The Church is to be Financed
10. The Church and Me

4. The Unity We Need To Be Concerned About.

A. The ASPIRATION for Church Unity

Those that tout the ecumenical movement often quote John 17:21 (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.*) **as a proof text** to show their movement is of God.

- 1) Do you think God the Father would have answered this prayer of His Son (or is it up to man to answer it for Him)? **IT IS NOT UP TO MAN'S DOING.**
- 2) Read carefully John 17:21-23 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:* ²³ *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one [with God]; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

Unity because of a common doctrine (belief in Jesus Christ and by implication, a belief in his teachings). But all the different churches DO NOT share common doctrine or even a belief in Jesus Christ, the Trinity, etc!

The MAIN problem is the definition of “CHURCH”.

- 3) Read I Corinthians 1:2 ² *Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:*

To whom was the epistle of I Corinthians initially addressed? The Church at Corinth! What was the real problem at this church? Read I Corinthians 11:18 ¹⁸
For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. THERE WERE DIVISIONS IN THE [local] CHURCH.

- 4) God's will for the church at Corinth (and every other New Testament Baptist church) is that there be: NO DIVISIONS in the body [of the local church].
- 5) Schism means: division or disunion, esp. into mutually opposed parties
- 6) What is the Lord's desire concerning all members within our church?
- 7) Read Ephesians 4:13 ¹³ *Till we **all come in the unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. **THIS UNITY OF FAITH implies that ALL must share the same and correct doctrine.***

B. The AIM of Church Unity

- a. It is significant to note that both Ephesians 4:16 and I Corinthians liken our church to a human body... calling it the body of Christ.
 - i. Read Ephesians 4:16 ¹⁶ *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*
 - ii. Read I Corinthians 12:12-27 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. ¹³ For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one*

body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. ¹⁴ For the body is not one member, but many. ¹⁵ If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁶ And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? ¹⁸ But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. ¹⁹ And if they were all one member, where were the body? ²⁰ But now are they many members, yet but one body. ²¹ And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. ²² Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: ²³ And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 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 in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. ²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. ²⁷ Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

- b. Ephesians 4:16 sees the goal of our church to have every member working together just as a fit athlete has every joint and muscle toned to perfection.
 - c. I Corinthians 12:26 (²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.) sees the danger of our Church having suffering members – thus causing the Lord's work to be hamstrung.
 - d. THE AIM OF TRUE CHURCH UNITY is not having a group of cloned Christians – all thinking the same, doing the same, liking the same things – it means having a spiritually fit body (the church) with every member matured, ministering, and multiplying.
- C. The AID to Church Unity – According to Ephesians 4:11-12 (¹¹ *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;* ¹² *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;*) the Lord has given the churches apostles and profets (**ministries which ceased with the completion of the Word of God**) and He still gives evangelists, pastors, and teachers.
- D. The ATTITUDE for Church Unity [KEY CONCEPT]
- a. Ephesians 4:2 ² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
 - b. Ephesians 4:32 ³² And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

This attitude is completely contradictory to the “world’s” attitude for unity!

OUTLINE - Unity

1. Man's First Attempt at "Unity."

2. Man's Final Attempt at "Unity."

3. True Unity vs. False Unity.

True Unity	False Unity
One	

4. The Unity We Need To Be Concerned About.