

## Unity in the Church John 17:20-23

### Introduction:

Illustration: The Lone Ranger and Tonto.

Unity has always been important in the Lord's church.

**Acts 1:14** – Before the apostles chose Matthias, they were “with one accord.”

**Acts 2:46** – After the Day of Pentecost, the disciples continued “daily with one accord.”

**Acts 4:24** – When Peter and John were arrested and then released, they went back to their companions, and “with one accord” raised their voices to God.

**Acts 5:12** – After Ananias and Sapphira were killed by God, the disciples were “with one accord in Solomon's Porch.”

**Acts 15:25** – When it came to the problem of circumcision, the church leaders were “assembled with one accord.”

### I. God wants His church to be united.

A. Jesus prayed for unity in His disciples.

1. **John 17:20-23**
2. Jesus is talking about all who will believe in Him.

B. There is only one church.

1. **Matt 16:18** - "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."
2. **Eph. 4:1-4**

C. There are many members of that body, but only one body.

1. **I Cor 12:12-13**
2. “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. {13} For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

D. **Ps 133:1** – “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”

1. We must be united as Christians.
2. How would it sound if we all sang different songs?

### II. God does not want there to be any divisions among His people.

A. Notice the example of Abraham and Lot.

1. **Gen. 13:8**
2. “So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren.”

B. Christ is not divided, so neither should His people be divided.

1. **I Cor. 1:10-13**
2. **I Cor. 12:24-25**

- C. Also notice:
1. **Rom 16:17** – “Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.”
  2. **Jude 1:19** - “These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.”

III. What can we do to gain and maintain unity within the church?

- A. We need to realize that this is God’s ministry and treat it as such.
1. **I Cor. 3:5-6** – “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? {6} I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.”
  2. **I Pet 4:10** – “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”
- B. We need to have fellowship with one another.
1. **Acts 2:42** – “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
  2. We need to make opportunities to spend time with each other.
- C. We need to have the same purpose.
1. **Phil 2:1-2** – “Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, {2} fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”
  2. **Phil 2:5-7** – “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, {6} who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, {7} but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.
  3. We can have that same purpose only when we follow the teachings of God.

Conclusion: