

IS CHRIST DIVIDED? (1 Corinthians 1:10-13)

I. Jesus demands it.

- A. Jesus said that He would build His church.
 - 1. It doesn't take an extra-special grammarian to know that church is singular.
 - 2. Jesus only intended to build one church, and what Jesus intended is exactly what Jesus did.
- B. The truth is that one church is all that is needed.
 - 1. Jesus is the Son of God, a divine being.
 - 2. What He established or built is powerful enough by itself to do what He intended.
 - 3. It is the only body to which He adds people (Acts 2:47).
 - 4. There was only one church in existence at that time and it was the church He built.
- C. (Illus.: a little boy was growing up in a religiously divided home. He asked his mother, "Does God do all things well?" She said, "Yes, He most certainly does." The boy then asked, "Then why didn't God make just one church so we could all go to church together?")
 - 1. From the mouths of babes...
 - 2. Common sense doesn't endorse the divided state of those that claim to follow Jesus.
- D. 1 Corinthians 14:33.
- E. Jesus is the One who prayed that all that followed Him would be united (John 17:20-21).
 - 1. This was a sincere prayer from the lips and heart of a sincere Prayer.
 - 2. One who cites that Jesus is the Builder of all the different religions charges Jesus with hypocrisy.
 - 3. The reason is that if Jesus prayed for unity and then created different bodies teaching different things, then Jesus created division.
 - 4. A sectarian thanks God for the division so that people can find the "church of their choice."
 - 5. This is a far cry from what Jesus prayed in John 17.
- F. You might ask, "Why be one?"
 - 1. If unity promotes faith, division promotes doubt and infidelity.
 - 2. It is no wonder that many that are called "unchurched" point to the division in religion and use it as an excuse to not find Jesus.
 - 3. Many young people are leaving religion today because they can't decide which is right or if anyone is right.
 - 4. Unity allows for strengthening of faith while division allows for doubt and distress.

II. The Bible directs it.

- A. Notice these passages: Ephesians 2:16; Ephesians 4:4; 1 Corinthians

- 12:20; Romans 12:4-5.
- B. The Bible simply teaches that the body and the church are one in the same (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).
1. There is one body, thus there is one church.
 2. This agrees perfectly with what Jesus said He would do - build one church.
 3. This agrees perfectly with the Lord adding to the church those that were being saved.
- C. The Bible illustrates unity for us by using different figures of speech.
1. There is one vineyard instead of many (John 15:1).
 2. There is only one vine and its branches instead of many vines with opposing branches (John 15:1-6).
 - a. Verse 6 plainly shows that the branches are individuals, not religious bodies.
 - b. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch..."
 3. There is only one house or family instead of hundreds of houses or families (1 Timothy 3:15).
 4. The church is pictured as a human body having one head (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
 - a. You and I have one body and one head.
 - b. Anything else would not be compatible with nature and would be considered freakish and avoided except to mock.
- D. The Bible directs man to be united in doctrine, which will unite us in one body.
1. Paul said that there is only one body as we noticed and he also said there is only one faith, which means system of belief.
 2. If one obeys only that system of belief, then he will be added only to that one body and all men can and will be united in that way and that way only in matters of religion.

III. Man denies it.

- A. Just as clearly as Jesus demands it and the Bible directs it, man denies the clear teaching of scripture with a multiplicity of doctrines and religious bodies.
1. If a preacher preached one doctrine one time and another doctrine another time we would rightly call him a hypocrite.
 2. What does that make God if He is the originator of various religions all with a different doctrine of how to be saved, enter the church, or many other doctrines?
 3. Those doctrines contradict one another and God cannot be and is not the author of contradictions.
 4. God teaches we should walk by the same rule (Philippians 3:16).
- B. Just because people say that we cannot see the Bible alike doesn't make it so.
1. Paul, by inspiration, taught we could (I Corinthians 1:10).
 - a. It is true that we may not see alike in matters of opinion.
 - b. However, in matters of doctrine inspiration says we can.

2. Notice the rule for unity:
 - a. Preach only what has been revealed (Galatians 1:8-9).
 - b. Preach all that is revealed (Acts 20:26-27).
 - c. Don't add to nor subtract from it (Revelation 22:18-19).
- C. Why are we divided then?
 1. The only reason is because people are teaching items of faith not in the Bible.
 2. We agree on things that are in the Bible but when things outside of the Bible are brought in, Christians must stand with God's word.
- D. We are agreed in the Bible; we are divided out of it.

Sermon idea and material came from br. Leroy Brownlow's book "Great Questions Of The New Testament."