

## UNITY Eph 4:1-6

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. In the apostles' day there was but one church (body), one Lord, one faith, and one baptism
- B. Conditions are much different today, WHY?
- C. Is God pleased that the conditions are different now from the first century
- D. Only way we can know what God thinks is by reading His word Eph 3:4; Jhn 17:17; Jhn 8:32
- E. Before looking into God's word to see what God thinks, let's take a look at present conditions in religion and religious thinking

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. HOW DOES THE AVERAGE PERSON FEEL ABOUT RELIGIOUS DIVISION?

- A. One church as good as another
- B. Church doesn't save (not important)
- C. Doesn't matter what you believe as long as sincere
- D. There are good people in all churches
- E. Examine convictions of Mr. and Mrs. Average
  - 1. Mr. Average is a member of church A
    - a. Teaches baptism is unnecessary
    - b. Teaches one cannot fall from grace
  - 2. Mrs. Average is a member of church B
    - a. Teaches baptism is a burial and necessary
    - b. Teaches one can fall from grace
  - 3. Both feel the other is in error
  - 4. Yet both feel that the other is a Christian and will go to heaven. Therefore, they believe error will not cause one to be lost
  - 5. If this conclusion is true, then neither truth nor error has anything to do with salvation
    - a. Believing this, truth does not have to be preached
    - b. Error does not have to be opposed
    - c. Every man becomes his own standard, his own will is law.
    - d. Whatever he believes to be right is then made right because of his sincerity
- F. This is the present standard or conditions in religion today and cannot be successfully denied

#### II. HOW DID APOSTLES FEEL ABOUT RELIGIOUS DIVISION

- A. One who preached something different
  - 1. Let him be accursed Gal 1:8

- 2. Don't receive him if brings not this doctrine 2Jhn 10
- 3. Paul preached same thing in every church 1Cor 4:17

- B. One who believed something different
  - 1. Paul marveled about the Galatians Gal 1:6,7
  - 2. Were removed from one who called them, God
  - 3. Justified by law, fallen from grace Gal 5:4
- C. It does make a difference what we believe
  - 1. Truth makes free (saves) Jhn 8:32
  - 2. Error condemns 2Jhn 9
  - 3. Recognize distinction between faith (doctrine) / opinion (expediency)
- D. What did apostles urge early Christians to do
  - 1. Stand fast in the faith 1Cor 16:13
  - 2. Stand fast in one spirit -- strive together Phil 1:27
  - 3. Stand fast in the Lord Phil 4:1
  - 4. Contend earnestly for the faith Jude 3
  - 5. Speak same thing / no division among them 1Cor 1:10

#### III. THE APOSTLES ALL PREACHED THE SAME THING

- A. Spoke as Spirit gave the utterance Acts 2:4
- B. Cursed anyone who would preach another gospel Gal 1:8
- C. What was the result of this
  - 1. Had like precious faith 2Pet 1:1
  - 2. Common salvation Jude 3
  - 3. They were united Amos 3:3

### CONCLUSION:

- A. God wanted people united then 1Cor 1:10; Jhn 17:21
- B. He wants people united today
  - 1. United on the Gospel Phil 1:27
  - 2. Preachers who preached error then were condemned Gal 1:8; 2Jhn 9-11
  - 3. So, preachers who preach error today must be condemned
  - 4. People believing error were separated Gal 1:6-9 and so must people believing error today
- C. God was not pleased with division then 1Cor 1:13 and he is not pleased today
- D. If everyone would earnestly contend for the faith delivered unto saints there would be no division Jude 3
- E. All scripture given by inspiration of God 2Tim 3:16,17
- F. He has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness 2Pet 1:3