

Series: 1 Corinthians  
Title: Perfectly Joined Together  
Text: 1 Corinthian 1: 10-  
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Now the apostle Paul begins to deal with the first problem in the church at Corinth: which was contentions among brethren.

## **THE PROBLEM**

First, we see the problem, “For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.” (1 Cor 1: 11)

“Contentions” means strife, debate, wrangling, disagreement, disunity. It was sinful and it greatly hindered their spiritual growth.

1 Corinthians 3: 1: And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. 2: I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. 3: For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Some think it shows wisdom to debate and object, to create clicks. But it proves immaturity in the faith. It takes more maturity to submit and trust Christ to teach one another than it does to object and argue. Paul said, “ye are acting like babies in Christ, walking as carnal men, not as mature believers.”

And contentions greatly hinder spiritual growth. They were too distracted by their contentions to hear Paul preach the gospel of Christ. Paul had to sort this out among them before he could return to the preaching of the gospel of Christ.

## **DIVISIONS**

What was it that caused their divisions? “Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.” (1Co 1:11-12)

This was a division that began over preachers. Paul was not a very good speaker. Apollos was eloquent. Some preferred Paul’s simple style, others liked Apollos’ eloquence. Then, like all division, it grew into a greater division.

There was a division here between Jew and Gentile. Peter was an apostle to the Jews. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles. Some favored one because he was Jewish, others the other because he was sent to the Gentiles. Today, this might be likened to denominations. You cannot find any justification for denominations in scripture—not any! God finds us divided; he makes us one in Christ!

Then this was a division over education. The Jews were divided amongst themselves because Apollos the Jew was highly educated but Peter the Jew was an uneducated fisherman. Today, this is likened to folks making preferences of a preacher who went to seminary over one who did not.

Then this rent grew to this awful point of division. Some thought it pious to say, “We don’t give honor to any preacher, we don’t even need a preacher, we are of Christ.” That is where division leads. Then men split off

on their own and wither away and die!

All of this division was all because they took their focus off of Christ! When we draw attention away from Christ to ourselves because of *some thing* then we make *that thing* to be the issue rather than Christ.

## **OUR CHIEF MOTIVE**

So how does Paul deal with this problem? Paul begins with the chief motive of every true believer. This is the greatest reason why true brethren put away any and all divisions and contentions—“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,…” (1 Cor 1: 10)

Paul beseeches them, not for his own name’s sake, not for his own glory or honor’s sake, not for his own reputation’s sake. If a man is a true Christ-sent preacher, he is not instructing the Lord’s people for his own glory. Christ said, “He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.” (Jn 7: 18)

Paul said, “I beseech you, brethren, for the glory and honor of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the testimony of his gospel!” For Christ—who laid down his life for us, who bore our sin, our suffering and our death, who sanctified and justified us by his precious blood, who sent us the gospel and called us by his grace, who made us one in the unity of the faith—“I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,…”

If Christ is precious to me, if I truly love Christ, when I realize my conduct is dishonoring to the name of Christ, that will be enough to make me change my dishonoring conduct. Our reverence and love of Christ, our regard for Christ’s authority as our Lord, constrains us to yield obedience to the exhortation delivered us in Christ’s name.

## **PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER**

Notice what Paul beseeches them to do, “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.” (1 Cor 1: 10)

Brethren, these are principles that we do well to think about before everything we say and do among each other.

“That ye all speak the same thing”—the same gospel, the same doctrine, the same truth, as well as seek to speak the same thing in all that we do. Seek unity in speech.

“And *that* there be no divisions [no schisms, no rents] among you”—no division in doctrine, no division by alienating certain brethren and no division by being at odds with one another in any matter.

“But *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”—perfectly joined together means repair what needs repaired and be perfectly united together. Be so in the same mind and in the same judgment. Do away with division and live in harmony with one another from the heart with the same desire to honor Christ!

Brethren, never compromise the gospel of Christ. But learn how to keep unity while not compromising the gospel. And it is fine to compromise in lesser things. The quickest way to become isolated, to create division among brethren, is to always object; to have a snobbish attitude that you are right and the other is wrong. That is not grace! That is not the mind of Christ! (Turn Php 2)

Philippians 2: 3: *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (Php 2:3-5)

Brethren, these principles of unity are on my heart before I speak anything to you: before I exhort, before I rebuke—I am not speaking or doing anything among you, hastily. Scripture says, “Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” Learn to hear. Learn to give it time. Learn to think long on these unifying principles before speaking. Make it your chief desire to strive for the unity of each member of this congregation—and of the whole church of God—for the honor of Christ our Lord!

## **DOES CHRIST CREATE DIVISION?**

Then Paul deals with this problem by asking a few questions, “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Cor 1: 13)

Christ is not divided. Christ does not create division in his body, in his people. Christ alone was crucified for his people. In believer’s baptism, we confess Christ alone.

Believers are one in Christ, by Christ, in the Truth of the gospel. How so?

First, every true believer is one because we have the same teacher. Christ said,

John 6: 45: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (Joh 6:45)

John 8:47: He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

Those among the Corinthians who were only taught by men—who had only learned doctrines—went on dividing. But those taught of God, submitted to Christ, submitted to Paul, submitted to their pastors, and submitted to one another. They sought unity among each other. That is the difference the grace of God makes in the heart!

Secondly, every true believer is one because we are taught the same gospel. God does not teach one believer one thing and another an opposite thing. God teaches every believer the truth which gives God the Father and his Son all the glory!

1 John 2: 20: But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21: I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. (1Jo 2:20-21)

John 16: 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. (Joh 16:13)

We know and believe that every child of God was chosen by the same Father in the same Christ—we do not simply know the sovereignty of God, we know the God who is sovereign. We know and rest in the truth that we were redeemed, made righteous and holy, by the same precious blood of Christ our Lord and Savior. We do not merely know about the righteousness of Christ, we know and rest in Christ our Righteousness. We know and trust that we were regenerated and taught and preserved by the same Holy Spirit. We give God all the glory and man none! We only sinners saved by grace! There is one gospel, one truth!

Todd Nibert made the point that “Satan’s objective is to move us beyond one. If we have more than one truth then you have confusion. Now, you have to make a choice of which one is right.” He pointed out the word “heresy” means “choosing or choice.” There is no division created by Christ in his body. God’s entire church everywhere is one.

Ephesians 4: 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.*

2 Corinthians 11:3: But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Simplicity means singleness, oneness that is in Christ. Satan’s objective is to create division to give a choice to create confusion. Christ shall not allow.

Thirdly, this oneness shall continue amongst God’s church because Christ works it and intercedes for it and it is the eternal will of God our Father. Oneness is what Christ accomplished on the cross for his people. Oneness is what Christ accomplishes in each of his people, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3: 28) Oneness is what Christ intercedes for with the Father—John 17: 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.” (Jn 17: 21) Oneness in Christ is the Father’s eternal will, “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.” (Eph 1: 10)

## **STRIVE FOR WHAT?**

So let’s conclude by going to Ephesians 4. If any here ever feels a divisive spirit rising up in you. Remember how you longed for God to establish the gospel in this place. Think on the sweet unity he has given us here in Christ. Think on the price he paid to give us this unity! Knowing this great grace of God toward us, knowing how one he has made us in Christ—by the name of Christ—what should we strive for?

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.

Philippians 2: 14: Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16: Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. (Php 2:14-16)

**Amen!**