

# Words of Truth

## Where There Is Disagreement There Is NOT Unity

By: Brian A. Yeager

There is a lot of division among churches of Christ. I cannot even number the different sects that have appeared in my lifetime. Division is contrary to the will of our Lord (Psalms 133:1 and Ephesians 4:1-6). Yet, even though those who are in the midst of division know division is wrong, they continue to remain in divisive situations.

In September 2010 I wrote an article about denominationalism amongst churches of Christ (<http://www.wordsoftruth.net/wotvol10/wotbulletin09192010.html>). In May of this year I received an email from a woman who read that article. In that email, the woman said this: "I am part of a congregation where there is some disagreement. Yes, I do disagree with some of what is taught and I disagree with some of the choices the elders have made. I think that it is healthy for us to have these disagreements. We have talks about things that way. Those talks do not always end in agreement but I think that is okay also. Just because there is disagreement that does not mean we are not unified. We still agree on the main things about salvation and the Church. Why do you have a problem with congregations like the one I attend? Do you think nothing should be questioned? Do you really think it is even possible for everyone to agree about everything that is taught?"

I answered the email above with Scriptures. The lady did finally understand some of the truth on the subject. However, she concluded that we'd have to "agree to disagree" about the need to have no division in the local church. What I am going to do with this article is answer what is written in the paragraph above using the Scriptures. Since many in churches of Christ share the sentiments of the woman quoted above, this is a good study for us all to consider. This study will also be a reminder for us that we need to be sure we're unified in mind and speech here locally. We'll begin by seeing how that unity and agreement mean the same thing.

### Unity [Being One] = Agreement

Jesus prayed for His people to be unified [to be one]. In His prayer, He prayed that we be one even as He and His Father are one. Notice what Jesus said: "*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 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. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me*" (John 17:20-23). Now, how do we know that being one means being in agreement? Notice the following text: "*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one" (I John 5:7-8). These Scriptures bring to mind a*

rhetorical question [a question that makes a statement; answers itself] asked in the book of Amos: *“Can two walk together, except they be agreed”* (Amos 3:3)? Clearly, the word of God shows us that being unified means we’re in agreement. Therefore, wherever there is not agreement there is not unity. Thus, let’s move on to our next point. Let’s see that there is not to be any disagreement among saints.

### **We Are Supposed To Have No Disagreements Among Us**

Notice the following Scriptures, which prove the point of this section of this article: *“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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... Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you... Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel... Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind... Nevertheless, where to we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing”* (Romans 15:6, I Corinthians 1:10, II Corinthians 13:11, Philippians 1:27, Philippians 2:2, and Philippians 3:16).

Amazingly, there are many who can read these Scriptures and still be part of a congregation wherein they do not agree with what’s going on. For some reason, people believe that agreeing on some things is the equivalent of agreeing on all things. That is false.

### **There Is No Short List Of Things We Have To Agree About**

Many have created lists of things to agree on and things they believe agreement is not necessary for. What Scripture says that? None! Romans chapter fourteen only shows that we may have different choices in matters of authorized liberties. You can eat certain meats while I may choose not to (Romans 14:1-3). In this, neither party is right or wrong unless they create a doctrine wherein God has given liberty for personal choices (Romans 14:19-21 and I Timothy 4:1-5). There is unity in these areas because both are authorized. If anyone acts outside of God’s authority, even on one point, they’ve erred (James 2:10). You cannot have fellowship with anyone who is in error (Ephesians 5:11 and I John 1:3-7).

### **Conclusion**

What you or I may have a problem with doesn’t matter (I Corinthians 4:6). As we’ve seen, it is the Lord who wants us to be unified in mind and judgment. In regard to questions, we should be questioning everything (I Thessalonians 5:21). We must reason together to find unity (Acts 15:1-35). The inspired Apostle Paul shows us that the same things are to be taught in all churches of Christ (I Corinthians 4:17). If you will read the Scriptures cited in this article you’ll find that we are commanded to be of the same mind, the same judgment, speaking the same things, and walking by the same rule. To say that this is impossible is to deny the Scriptures (Philippians 4:2 and I Peter 3:8)!

When there is disagreement, there is not unity. This means the will of God is not accomplished. Are you guilty of division within the Lord’s body? Do you desire to stand in the way of the Lord’s will that we be unified? To be unified we have to submit fully to the Lord’s will, not our own (John 5:30).