

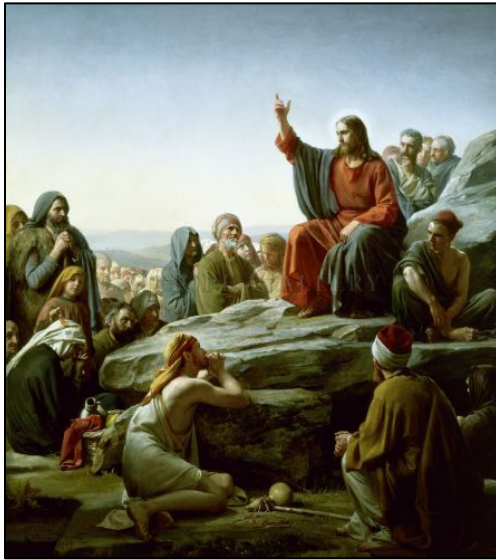


CHRISTIAN
UNION

Seven Keys to Kingdom Advancement

KEY TWO: THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS: CHRISTIAN UNITY

May God's Kingdom Come



Matthew 6:9-10 - Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Sermon on the Mount, 1877
Carl H. Bloch



2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

We live in the church age, and it's our role to hasten the day of Christ's return by deepening and expanding the kingdom of God.

Perhaps no greater effort by Christians to prepare the way for seeking God wholeheartedly and receiving outpourings of the Holy Spirit can be made but by the achievement and maintenance of Christian unity.



Seven Keys to Kingdom Advancement

1. Aspiration and Desperation
2. **Theological Foundations**
3. Seeking God Wholeheartedly
4. Spiritual Practices
5. Supernatural Aspects
6. Impacting the Three Spheres
7. Leadership



Role of Christian Unity to Advance the Kingdom of Light

1. **Hard Work** - To see Christian unity achieved and maintained within a given community takes an incredible amount of focus, labor, repentance, perseverance, teaching, conflict resolution, and discussions. The amount of needed effort is often vastly underestimated to achieve and maintain a community of “one accord.”
2. **Incredible Payoff** - The payoff however, is nothing less than spectacular. Christian unity brings fillings of the Holy Spirit, power for godly living and testimony, joy, life, revival, and cultural change. Repenting of divisive attitudes and behaviors while striving to maintain and promote unity possibly does more to bring fillings of the Spirit than the renunciations of any other sins.

Jesus' Prayer for Christian Unity



John 17:20-23 [Jesus Speaking] - “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,”

Jesus' Prayer for Christian Unity



John 17:20-24 [Jesus Speaking cont'd]
- ²³“I in them and you in me, that **they may become perfectly one**, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”



Christian Unity

1. Nature of Christian Unity
2. Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit
3. Horizontal Unity
4. Vertical Unity
5. Refusing to Take Offense
6. Sin of Partiality
7. Application



Christian Unity

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To Love Others is to Strive for Christian Unity

John 13:34, 35 - “A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Philippians 2:1-11 - So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by **being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.** ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, **but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.** ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.



Foundation for Christian Unity

Philippians 2:2 - being of the **same mind**, having the **same love**, being in **full accord** and of **one mind**

Acts 1:14 - All these with **one accord** were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Ephesians 4:3 - **Eager** to maintain the **unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**



Blessings of Christian Unity

Leviticus 26:8 - “Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a **hundred of you shall chase ten thousand**, and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.”

Deuteronomy 32:30 - “one [has] chased a thousand, and **two have put ten thousand to flight**”

Psalms 133:1 - “Behold, how **good and pleasant** it is when brothers dwell in unity!”

John 13:35 - “By this **all people will know that you are my disciples**, if you have love for one another.”



What Christian Unity is Not

1. **Not Organizational Unity** - Unity does not mean everyone belongs to the same organization, be it a world-wide church or a single Christian agency ministering at a university. It also does not mean a new “unity” organization needs to be created whenever Christian ministries collaborate on an event. Often, these just become new ministries.
2. **Not Everyone in the Same Room** - From the birth of the church in Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 2, Christian unity has never been seen as needing to have events where all Christians are present. Such events may be wonderful to have from time to time, but are not the *sine qua non* of Christian unity.



What Christian Unity is Not

3. **Not Doctrinal Agreement** - Christians have always had different interpretations of the more difficult parts of Scripture. While some doctrines can be definitively considered non-Christian, there's always going to be a variety of understandings.
4. **Not United Against God** - It's possible for Christians to be united in a course of action which is not in alignment with God's will. Just because Christians all agree on something does not mean unity. Christian unity is unity **IN CHRIST**. If Christians are not aligned with the King of Kings, it's the Tower of Babel and not Christian unity. (Genesis 11:1-9)



What Christian Unity is Not

5. **Not Same Type of Ministry or Same Style** - God raises up various initiatives and ministry styles to suit His glorious purposes. This has happened from the earliest days until the present time.
6. **Not a Culture of Niceness** - Out of fear of confrontation or fear of man, a false peace may be maintained in contexts when confrontation is the Lord's will. It's a false peace because while there is no outward conflict, there are serious unresolved matters in the community.



What Is Christian Unity:

Christian unity is achieved when Christians have genuine Christian love for each other, such that there is compassion, forgiveness, generosity, kindness, humility, submission, appreciation, respect, forbearance, and there is absence of malice, jealousy, envy, gossip, slander, rebellion, invective, complaining, grumbling, evil suspicion, quarreling, divisiveness, arrogance and everything displeasing to God.



Worthy of Memorization

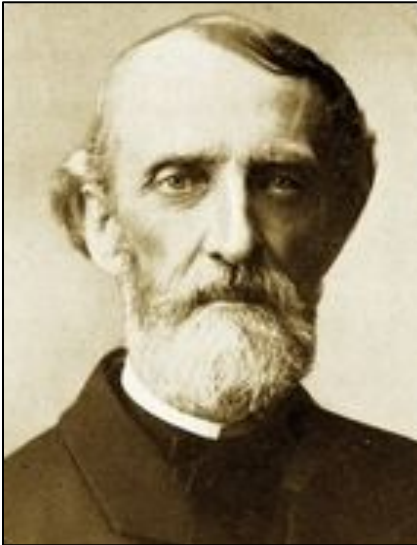
Colossians 3:12-17 - Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ **And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.** ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.



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A. T. Pierson on Importance of Unity



“There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in **united** prayer.”

A.T. Pierson (1837 – 1911)
American Presbyterian Pastor and Missionary



John Mulinde on Praying for Unity



“Pray for unity and protection every day.”

John Mulinde
Ugandan Pastor, Revivalist and Author



Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit

Any sin can grieve the Holy Spirit and therefore hinder fillings of the Holy Spirit, but the Scriptures often teach that the most damaging sins are those of divisiveness among Christians.

The following are five examples in the New Testament where unity of the Spirit precedes filling of the Spirit.



2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

Example 1: Pentecost



(1) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (1/1)

Acts 1:12-14 - Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³ And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ **All these with one accord (homothymodon “one accord”) were devoting themselves to prayer**, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

(1) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (1/2)



Acts 2:1-4 - When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Pentecost, 1545
Titian



2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

Example 2: Believers in Jerusalem



(2) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (1/3)

Acts 2:42-47 - And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ **And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together (homothymodon "one accord") and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.**



(2) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (2/3)

Acts 4:23-31 - When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ And when they heard it, they lifted their voices **together (homothymodon “one accord”)** to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, ²⁵ who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, “‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed’ — ²⁷ for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.



(2) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (3/3)

Acts 4:23-31 - ²⁹ And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, ³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”
³¹ And when they had **prayed**, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were **all filled with the Holy Spirit** and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.



2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

Example 3: Church in City of Corinth



(3) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (1/3)

1 Corinthians 2:10-16 - these things God has revealed to us **through the Spirit**. For the **Spirit** searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except **the Spirit of God**. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the **Spirit who is from God**, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but **taught by the Spirit**, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.



(3) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (2/3)

1 Corinthians 2:10-16 - ¹⁴The natural person does not accept the things of the **Spirit of God**, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.



(3) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (3/3)

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 - But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³for you are **still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?** ⁴For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?



2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

Example 4: Church in City of Ephesus



(4) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (1/2)

Ephesians 4:1-6 - I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³**eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.



(4) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (2/2)

Ephesians 4:29,30 - ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not **grieve the Holy Spirit** of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Ephesians 5:18-20 - And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be **filled with the Spirit**, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,



2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

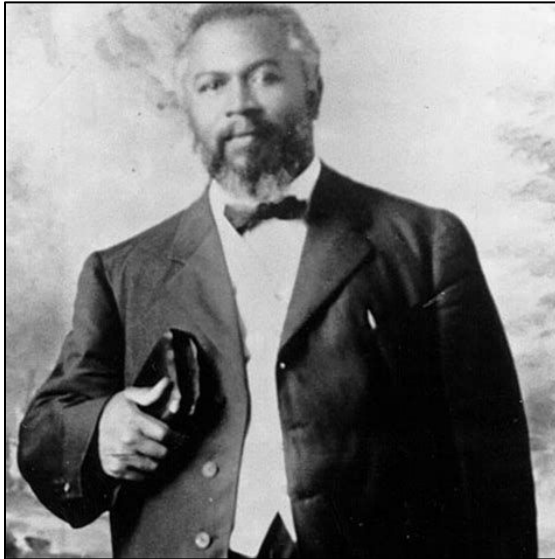
Example 5: Divisiveness of False Teachers



(5) Unity of the Spirit Precedes Filling of the Spirit (1/1)

Jude 17-23 - But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” ¹⁹ It is these **who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.** ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and **praying in the Holy Spirit,** ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. ²² And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

William J. Seymour's Belief in Unity



“I can say, through the power of the Spirit that wherever God can get a people that will come together in **one accord and one mind** in the Word of God, the baptism of the Holy Ghost will fall upon them, like as at Cornelius’ house.”

William Joseph Seymour (1870 – 1922)
Holiness Preacher, Azusa Street Revival



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Both Horizontal and Vertical Unity are Essential

Horizontal Unity - Christians treating fellow Christians with kindness, respect, genuine love, forgiveness, honor, patience, and forbearance, while rejecting jealousy, gossip, lying, evil suspicion, partiality, slander, malice, and all other sins.

Vertical Unity - Authority figures overseeing in a godly fashion, and those under authority submitting in a godly fashion, and refraining from grumbling, complaining, and rebellion. Two parties play roles in the effort to achieve and maintain vertical unity: the leader and the follower. Because the godly role of the leader is so important, there is an entire teaching dedicated to it under Key 7, “Leadership.”



Repenting of Rivalry

There is to be no jealousy, dissension, quarrels, rivalry, pride, division, evil suspicion, or territorial spirit with other Christians, ministries or ministers, but acceptance, blessing and spirit of partnership.

Matthew 27:15-23, (v. 18) - “For he [Pilate] knew that it was out of **envy** that they had delivered him up.”

Acts 13:42-52 (v. 45) - “But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with **jealousy** and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.”



Repenting of Rivalry

Acts 17:1-9 (v. 5) - “But the Jews were **jealous**, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd.”

Philippians 1:12-18 (v. 15) - “Some indeed preach Christ from **envy and rivalry**, but others from good will.”

1 Timothy 6:3, 4 - If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an **unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions,**



Repenting of Rivalry

Galatians 6:25, 26 - If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become **conceited, provoking one another, envying** one another.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 - But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still of the flesh. For while there is **jealousy and strife** among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? ⁴ For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?



Embracing Acceptance

Romans 15:5-7 (NIV) - May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

John 13:34, 35 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to **love one another**. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”



Embracing Acceptance

1 Peter 4:8 - Above all, **keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers** a multitude of sins.

Acceptance means realizing that fellow Christians may look at doctrinal or social engagement issues in different ways, and that Christian love does not depend upon uniformity of thought or approach.



Christians are to Repent of All Malice

Matthew 5:22 - But I say to you that everyone who is **angry** with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, '**You fool!**' will be liable to the hell of fire.

Romans 1:29 - They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, **malice**. They are full of envy, murder, **strife, deceit, maliciousness**.

1 Corinthians 5:8 - Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the **leaven of malice and evil**, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.



Christians are to Repent of All Malice

Ephesians 4:31 - Let all **bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander** be put away from you, along with all **malice**.

Colossians 3:8 - But now you must put them all away: **anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk** from your mouth.

Titus 3:3 - For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in **malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another**.

In addition to rejecting malice, Christians are to reject all resentment and bitterness.

Embracing Forgiveness



“To forgive is to set the prisoner free only to realize that the prisoner was you.”

Corrie Ten Boom (1892 - 1983)
WWII Concentration Camp Survivor and Author



Embracing Forgiveness

Perhaps the most Christian thing a person can do is forgive others. Many stay in bondage their whole lives because of unforgiveness.

Matthew 6:12-15 - “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. ¹⁴ For if you **forgive others** their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do not **forgive others** their respases, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Matthew 18:34, 35 - And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not **forgive your brother from your heart.**”

Embracing Forgiveness



Colossians 3:12, 13 - Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, **forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.**

Move On Up A Little Higher, 1961
Charles White



Practice of Forgiveness

- **Tool:** A helpful tool to process forgiveness is Neil Anderson's "Step to Freedom" from the *Bondage Breaker*.
- **Books:** Good books on forgiveness include Rodney Hogue's book, *Forgiveness*, Corrie Ten Boom's, *The Hiding Place*, and R.T. Kendall's, *Total Forgiveness*



Repenting of Negative Speech

1. **No Complaining or Grumbling** - The Israelites complained and grumbled, and drew severe rebukes and judgment from God. There are times for constructive feedback, but complaining and grumbling is poisonous.
2. **No Gossip, Slander or Derogatory Speech** - Passing along negative information about others, even if true, is unnecessary and damaging. God does not tolerate speaking disparagingly of people or organizations.
3. **No Abusive, Mocking, Scoffing or Hateful Speech** - The tongue can bless or curse others. Hateful speech or deceptive speech can be very damaging.



Repenting of Negative Speech

Numbers 11:1 - And the people **complained** in the hearing of the LORD about their misfortunes, and when the LORD heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp.

1 Corinthians 10:10 - nor **grumble**, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.

Philippians 2:14 - Do all things without **grumbling or disputing**,



Repenting of Negative Speech

James 5:9 - Do not **grumble against one another**, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.

Proverbs 18:21 - **Death and life are in the power of the tongue**, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

1 Timothy 3:8 - Deacons likewise must be dignified, **not double-tongued**, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

James 1:26 - If anyone thinks he is religious and does not **bridle his tongue** but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.



Repenting of Negative Speech

James 3:5-8 - So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And **the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness**. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

1 Peter 3:10 - For Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him **keep his tongue from evil** and his lips from speaking deceit;



Repenting of Negative Speech

Matthew 15:18, 9 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, **slander**.

Romans 1:29-31 - They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are **gossips**, ³⁰ **slanderers**, haters of God, insolent, haughty, **boastful**, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

2 Timothy 3:13 - while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, **deceiving** and being deceived.



Embracing Positive Speech

1. **Thankfulness and Praise in Speech** - The Christian's mouth is to be filled with thanksgiving, gratitude and praise.
2. **Speaking Well of Others** - Speaking well of others is life-giving!
3. **Speaking Blessing and Grace in Speech** - Speaking blessing to and about others is truly heavenly! Many lives flourish as a result of words of blessing.



Embracing Positive Speech

Psalm 19:14 - Let the **words of my mouth** and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Ephesians 4:29-32 - Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may **give grace to those who hear.** ³⁰ **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,** by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

The Ninth of the Ten Commandments



Exodus 20:16 - “You shall not **bear false witness** against your neighbor.”



Deceptive Ways Bring the Judgment of God

- Deceiving others through outright lies or material exaggerations for a variety of motivations
- Cheating on exams.
- Filing lawsuits for financial gain when there is no true negligence or wrongdoing.
- Deceiving the government, one's employer or companies for gain of some type.
- Breaking one's word, even if originally intended to keep it.

Lying to or deceiving others breaks unity in the body of Christ, sowing distrust. It creates wounds, necessitates forgiveness, and can seriously impede strong community and fillings of the Holy Spirit.



Repenting of Lying and Deception

Proverbs 6:16-19 - There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: ¹⁷ haughty eyes, **a lying tongue**, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, ¹⁹ **a false witness who breathes out lies**, and one who sows discord among brothers.

Proverbs 12:22 - **Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who act faithfully are his delight.**

Proverbs 19:9 - **A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will perish.**



Repenting of Lying and Deception

Psalm 101:7 - No one who **practices deceit** shall dwell in my house; no one who **utters lies** shall continue before my eyes.

Proverbs 12:19 - Truthful lips endure forever, but **a lying tongue** is but for a moment.

Colossians 3:9-10 - **Do not lie to one another**, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.



Repenting of Lying and Deception

Luke 8:17 - For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.

John 8:44 - You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. **When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.**



Repenting of Lying and Deception



Proverbs 20:23: **Unequal weights** are an abomination to the LORD, and **false scales** are not good.



Repenting of Lying and Deception

Ephesians 4:25 - Therefore, having **put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor**, for we are members one of another.

Revelation 21:8 - “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and **all liars**, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

Proverbs 19:5 - A **false witness** will not go unpunished, and he who **breathes out lies** will not escape.



Repenting of Lying and Deception

Leviticus 19:11 - “You shall not steal; you **shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another.**

Proverbs 24:28 - Be not a witness against your neighbor without cause, and **do not deceive with your lips.**

Proverbs 21:6 - The getting of treasures by **a lying tongue** is a fleeting vapor and a snare of death.

Proverbs 14:5 - A faithful witness does not lie, but **a false witness** breathes out lies.



Repenting of Lying and Deception

James 3:14 - But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be **false to the truth**.

Proverbs 13:5 The righteous hates **falsehood**, but the wicked brings shame and disgrace.

Psalms 109:2 - For wicked and **deceitful mouths** are opened against me, speaking against me with **lying tongues**.



Repenting of Lying and Deception

Proverbs 26:18-19 - Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death is the man who **deceives his neighbor** and says, “I am only joking!”

Proverbs 26:28 - **A lying tongue** hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

Luke 16:10 - “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is **dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.**”



Valuing the Truth

James 5:12 - But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but **let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.**

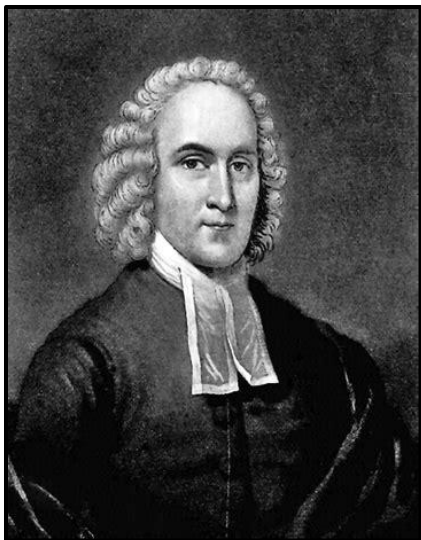
2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 - The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,¹⁰ and **with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.**¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,¹² in order that all may be condemned who **did not believe the truth** but had pleasure in unrighteousness.



Christian Unity

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Jonathan Edwards' Treatise on Unity and Prayer



“A humble attempt to promote the **agreement and union** of God’s people throughout the world in extraordinary prayer for a revival of religion and the advancement of God’s kingdom on earth, according to scriptural promises and prophecies of the last time”

Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758)
American Pastor and Theologian



Both Horizontal and Vertical Unity are Essential

Horizontal Unity - Christians treating fellow Christians with kindness, respect, genuine love, forgiveness, honor, patience, lack of jealousy, gossip, lying, evil suspicion, slander, malice, etc.

Vertical Unity - Authority figures overseeing in a godly fashion, and those under authority submitting in a godly fashion. Two parties play roles in the effort to achieve and maintain vertical unity: the leader and the follower. Because the godly role of the leader is so important, there is an entire deck dedicated to it under Principle 7 “Leadership.”



Rebelling Against Human Authority is Akin to Witchcraft.

1 Samuel 15:22, 23 - And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. ²³ **For rebellion is as the sin of divination**, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king.”



Rebellion Against Authority

1 Samuel 26:6-12 - Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab's brother Abishai the son of Zeruah, "Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?" And Abishai said, "I will go down with you."⁷ So David and Abishai went to the army by night. And there lay Saul sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the army lay around him.⁸ Then Abishai said to David, "God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice."⁹ But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him, for **who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?**"¹⁰ And David said, "As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish."



Rebellion Against Authority

1 Samuel 26:6-12 (cont'd) - ¹¹ The LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the LORD's anointed. But take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go." ¹² So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul's head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen upon them.

This is remarkable because:

1. David was anointed to be king (2 Samuel 5:1-12), and
2. Saul was a wicked man (1 Samuel 15:1-35)



Godly Submission Needed For Fillings of the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:18-21 - And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be **filled with the Spirit**,¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ **submitting to one another** out of reverence for Christ.



Wives and Children Submitting

Ephesians 5:22-33 - **Wives, submit to your own husbands**, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. ²⁵ **Husbands, love your wives**, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

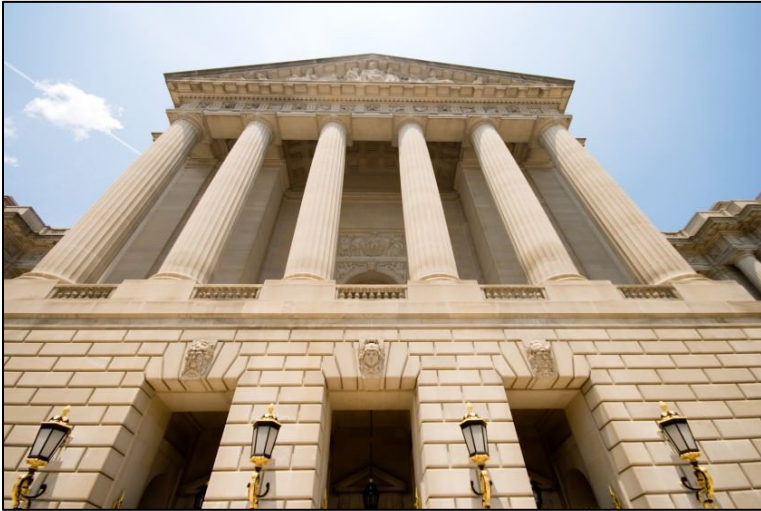
Ephesians 6:1-4 - Children, **obey your parents** in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” ⁴ Fathers, **do not provoke your children to anger**, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.



Employees Submitting

Ephesians 6:5-9 - Bondservants, **obey your earthly masters** with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. ⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and **stop your threatening**, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Submitting to Government



Titus 3:1 - Remind them to **be submissive to rulers and authorities**, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,

Submitting to Government



Romans 13:1,2 - Let every person be **subject to the governing authorities.**

For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.



Submitting to Human Institutions

1 Peter 2:13-17 - Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵ **For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.** ¹⁶ Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Principles could apply to all human institutions: government, employers, volunteer organizations, educational institutions, athletic teams, etc.



Submitting as a Christian

1 Timothy 6:1-2 - Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. ² **Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved.** Teach and urge these things.

Korah's Rebellion - See (Numbers Chapters 16 and 17)



Numbers 26:9,10 - The sons of Eliab: Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are the Dathan and Abiram, chosen from the congregation, **who contended against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended against the LORD**¹⁰ and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, when the fire devoured 250 men, and they became a warning.



Submission Over Rebellion in Ministry Contexts

Hebrews 13:17 - **Obey your leaders and submit to them**, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Submission Over Rebellion in Ministry Contexts



***1 Clement** - Clement of Rome wrote the epistle to the church in Corinth about 96 AD where congregants had deposed certain elders. They were called to repent, restore the elders to their position, and submit to their leadership.*

Clement of Rome in 2nd half of 1st Century



Submission Over Rebellion in Ministry Contexts

- **Rebellion in Ministry** - Rebellion is not uncommon in ministry contexts, both in local churches and Christian agencies. This is a grave affront to God.
- **To Obey Human Authority is to Obey God** - A key to submitting to human authority is to know that these authorities are instruments of God, and unless asked to do something against God, to obey human authority is to obey God. Authority of pastors is not recognized in the West the way it should be.
- **Beware Abuse** - Of course, sometimes human authorities abuse their positions, which is to be resisted, but one sin does not justify another.



Challenges to Submission

The following are sometimes challenges for followers to submit:

1. **Age** - The follower is older than the leader.
2. **Capability** - The follower feels he is wiser, smarter, more experienced, more knowledgeable, or more educated than the leader.
3. **Process** - The follower is not confident that a godly decision-making process was followed.
4. **Pride** - The follower has pride or lack of Christian maturity.



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Refusing to Take Offense

Number One Sin of America? One revivalist documentary-maker has stated that the taking of offense is the number one sin of Americans (both Christians and Non-Christians). He has called the nation, “The United States of Offense.” What does this say about America?

Anti-Victimhood - Christians ought to be committed to never seeing themselves as victims, nor indulge the sin of self-pity or entertain a spirit of hurt. We all are to eschew the temptation to play victim in order to gain power over others.

Repentance - Now is the time to repent of taking offense and to release and bless.



Love Does Not Take Offense

Proverbs 19:11 - Good sense makes one slow to anger, and **it is his glory to overlook an offense.**

Ecclesiastes 7:21,22 - Do not take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. ²² Your heart knows that many times you yourself have cursed others.

1 Corinthians 13:4-6 - Love is always patient and kind. It is never jealous. Love is never boastful or conceited. It is never rude or selfish. It **does not take offense and is not resentful.** Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins, but delights in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.



Not Taking Offense, But Turning the Other Cheek

Luke 6:27-33 - “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ **To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also**, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. ³² **“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.”**



Not Taking Offense, But Bearing With One Another

Colossians 3:12-17 - Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ **bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other**; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.



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God Shows No Partiality

Deuteronomy 10:17 - For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, **who is not partial and takes no bribe.**

2 Chronicles 19:5-7 - He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, ⁶and said to the judges, “Consider what you do, for you judge not for man but for the LORD. He is with you in giving judgment. ⁷Now then, let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Be careful what you do, for **there is no injustice with the LORD our God, or partiality or taking bribes.**”



God Shows No Partiality

Acts 10:34 - So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that **God shows no partiality**”

Romans 2:11 - For **God shows no partiality**.



God Commands Humanity Not to Show Partiality

Exodus 23:1-3 - You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ²You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, ³**nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.**

Leviticus 19:15 - You shall do no injustice in court. **You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great**, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.

Deuteronomy 1:17 - **You shall not be partial in judgment.** You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.



God Commands Humanity Not to Show Partiality

James 2:1-9 - My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. ²For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” ⁴have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?



God Commands Humanity Not to Show Partiality

James 2:1-9 (cont'd) - ⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? ⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you **show partiality**, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.



God Commands Humanity Not to Show Partiality

Proverbs 17:15 - He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD.

Leviticus 19:15 - You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.



God Commands Humanity Not to Show Partiality

Isaiah 1:17 - Learn to do good; **seek justice**, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

Proverbs 21:15 - When **justice** is done, it is a joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers.

Amos 5:24 - But let **justice roll down like waters**, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Micah 6:8 - He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but **to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly** with your God?



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Immaturity and Poison of Division



1 Corinthians 1:10 - I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.**

Immaturity and Poison of Division



1 Corinthians 3:1-3 - But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³**for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?**



Immaturity and Poison of Division

Romans 16:17 - I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who **cause divisions and create obstacles** contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

Titus 3:10-11 - As for a person who stirs up **division**, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is **warped and sinful; he is self-condemned**.

Jude 1:17, 18 - But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” ¹⁹ It is these who **cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit**.



Severe Repercussions for Those Causing Division

Those who sow division are to be “avoided,” and Christians are to “have nothing more to do with [them]” because they “create obstacles,” and are “warped,” “sinful,” and “self-condemned,” “following their own ungodly passions.” They are “worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.”

In your view, why is condemnation of those causing division so severe?



Unity Self-Test - Rank Yourself from 1-10

- **Positive** - Give yourself a higher score if in your life you have love, compassion, kindness, submission to authority, forgiveness, servant leadership, bearing with others, and accepting others.
- **Negative** - Give yourself a lower score if in your life you have grumbling, complaining, rebellion, envy, rivalry, judgmentalism, resentment, factions, dissensions, gossip, slander, evil suspicion, malice, hatred, taking of offense, boastfulness, pride, lying tongue, obscene talk, deception, disrespect, partiality and lording over others.

If a group of Christians average close to 9 or 10, expect fillings of the Spirit!



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2. Theological Foundations: 4. Christian Unity

Perhaps no greater effort by Christians to prepare the way for seeking God wholeheartedly and receiving outpourings of the Holy Spirit can be made but by the achievement and maintenance of Christian unity.



We live in the church age, and it's our role to hasten the day of Christ's return by deepening and expanding the kingdom of God.

As Christians seek God wholeheartedly, He gives the grace, power and direction to be used as His instruments in our families, communities and nation.

**Help America Return to God by Becoming a Cornerstone Partner
with Christian Union: christianunion.org/cornerstone**

**Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!**

Psalm 33:12



**CHRISTIAN
UNION**