

Testament (Hebrews 1:1-2)—not only gives encouragement to these false teachers but also encourages others to submit to their error.

Unity in diversity stands opposed to Scripture. It also wars against the unity of the Spirit and oneness of faith found in Ephesians 4:1-6.

Our Plea

The only proper way to unite religiously is to have the truth of God's word as its basis. As long as the doctrines, philosophies, creeds and traditions of men are included in religion, there can be no true unity. Jesus said those who teach the precepts of men as doctrine make their religion vain (Matthew 15:7-9). He called such people "hypocrites." The apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 6:14, said righteousness and iniquity have no fellowship with one another. A believer, a true worshiper, should never be unequally yoked with an unbeliever or false worshiper.

For unity to exist, people must abandon all beliefs and practices which are not in the Bible or which are contradictory to it. In John 17, Jesus prayed earnestly for such unity. He desired that all be one as He and the Father are one (vv. 20-21).

We offer that same prayer. We harbor that same desire. We, therefore, teach and practice only those things authorized by God's word. We urge all to look solely to the teachings of Jesus and obey them so that all will be one and all might be saved.

Does God approve of religious division? No. He never has, never will. He desires that all be one by hearing and obeying His Son. 🙏

© 1994, Gene Taylor. All Rights Reserved.

www.centervilleroad.com

"That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."
(John 17:21)

Does God Approve of



Religious Division?

Gene Taylor

Does God Approve of Religious Division?

The Holy Spirit has revealed the will of God to man in the inspired Scriptures. “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10). They make known what people must do to be pleasing to God and to stand justified in His sight. In essence, they state that which is approved of God.

What, then, do the Scriptures, the word of God, say about religious division? Men say such division is approved. They say, “*One church is as good as another*” and that you can “*Attend the church of your choice.*” But does God give approval in His word to such ideas? Is religious division pleasing to Him? What, exactly, does the Bible teach concerning religious division?

Division At Corinth

In 1 Corinthians, chapter one, the inspired writer, the apostle Paul, was aware that religious division existed in the city of Corinth among those who were supposed to be servants of God and Christ. He addressed the situation in this way: “Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul, or ‘I

am of Apollos,’ or ‘I am of Cephas,’ or ‘I am of Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:10-13).

The state of affairs at Corinth was very similar to today's conditions. Though all at Corinth were supposedly serving God, they were calling themselves by different names. Some were saying they were of Paul, some of Apollos and some of Cephas (Peter). Did Paul, inspired of God, say this was all right since they were all trying to do what they thought was right? Did he say it did not matter whose name they wore because they could wear the name of their choice? NO! He condemned them for their practices and attitudes. He beseeched them to be of the same mind and judgment and to place all their hope and trust in Jesus, the one who had died for them and in whose name they had been baptized, so that there would be no divisions among them. For them to divide religiously was wrong. They needed to unite with that oneness based on the Christ and the truth of His gospel.

Modern Ecumenical Movements

Many desire unity today. Ecumenical movements and similar ideas have been and continue to be formulated and forwarded by men to promote unity in the religious world. There are many problems with these actions but the main problem with such efforts, though, is that they epitomize the philosophy that “*one is as good as another*” because they are based on the premise of unity in diversity.

Unity in diversity is a unity wherein each distinct group unites with other groups to form an alliance or interfaith group while retaining its own beliefs even though they are contradictory to the beliefs of the other groups with which it seeks to unite. It is an attempt to unite while still divided in doctrine, practice and belief.

In Spirit And In Truth

Unity in diversity is of the wisdom of the world because its origin is with man, not God, for no such idea can be found anywhere in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 1:20 says the world's wisdom is foolishness to God. God's word, along with an appeal to reason, an application of logic, and a little common sense, will show why such ideas of men are folly.

All differing religious groups claim to be teaching the truth, yet their beliefs and practices not only contradict the Bible but also the teachings of other religious groups. When the practices and beliefs of one group contradict those of another, someone has to be wrong because truth does not contradict truth. When such contradictions occur, someone must be believing, practicing and worshiping in error.

Jesus said, in John 4:24, that acceptable worship must be offered in spirit and in truth. Those who worship in error must be worshiping in vain. Since their worship is vain, they are lost and so is anyone who joins with them while condoning their error. To condone, encourage or partake in another's sins is to sin yourself (2 John 9-11). To unite with those teaching false doctrine — doctrine other than that which is revealed in the Bible as God spoke by His Son in the New