

Apostolic Studies Series- **The Relationship Between Maturity and Unity in** **the Church -Elder Harry L. Jackson**

1 Corinthians 1:10-15-

10: 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.

11: 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.

12: 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.

13: Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14: I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15: Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

1Corinthians 3:1-7-

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?

4: For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5: Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6: I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7: So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Corinth- then capital city of Achaia (Greece)

1. Very wicked city- temple of Aphordite (Greek goddess of love)
2. Yet many were saved (some had been temple prostitutes).
3. Paul founded the church at Corinth on his second missionary journey (*see Acts 18:1-1*).
4. Paul wrote his letters to Corinth to set order in the church.
5. These letters were written to address the following:
 - Factionalism, division
 - Immorality
 - Abuse of spiritual gifts.
 - Abuse of the Lord's table.

Paul also addressed other issues in the Corinthian letters, such as Christian marriage, and belief in the resurrection of Christ, as well as the legitimacy of his apostolic calling.

In these passages, Paul informs the Corinthians, who, being Greeks of that time, were proud because of their knowledge, and their spiritual gifts, that the fact that they were dividing themselves indicated that they were not the mature Christians that they thought themselves to be, but were in fact, “babes” in Christ. Paul insists that the Corinthian Christians “grow up” to a place of agreement.

- People will come up with almost any reason to separate, if not, the devil will give them one.
- Giftedness is no indication of maturity.
- The Corinthians were unable to discern that the leaders that God had placed in the church to lead them to maturity were merely vessels used in God’s service.
- Some considered themselves to be better than others because of their gifts, or because of whom they esteemed to be their “favorite preacher” or mentor.
- Christians must learn to receive the Word of God for its own sake, and not because of the channel through which God sends it.

Shallow Hearing an Indication of Immaturity

Luke 11:27: And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28: But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

Paul’s instructions to leaders concerning shallow hearers- 2 Tim. 2:23, 2 Tim 1:1-4.

Promoting Unity that leads to Maturity

Leaders Are to Set The Example (“Standing in the same place.”) - Joshua 3:14-17-

The power of agreement + obedience = miracles (**Matt. 17:18-20**).

If the enemy can keep disagreement going in the church, then he can keep the power of agreement from flowing in the church.

Acts 2- Pentecost- “...on one accord,” not just “in one place...”

Unity is not something that occurs automatically because we assemble together on Sundays. It must be worked at. (Eph. 4:1-3, Phil. 1:27).

“Endeavouring” (from Eph. 4:1) - **spoudazo** (gr. Strong’s #4704): to use *speed*, i.e. to make *effort*, be *prompt* or *earnest*.- do (give) diligence, be diligent (forward), endeavour, labour, study.