

Schism is Heresy

There are only two churches.

One is the bride of Christ, waiting patiently for her Bridegroom.

The other is an imposter, committing adultery with the world.

Breaking the unity of the bride of Christ is heresy. It is easy to fall prey to division. There is always reason to divide. The Corinthians were divided on who they should follow: Paul, Peter, Apollos, and some claimed to follow Christ. In I Corinthians 16:15-16, Paul gives them the answer: find households who together minister and are addicted to bless the Family of God and follow them. Not individuals but whole households, proving by their corporate unity that they are serious about blessing Christ's Church.

Actually, you cannot break the unity of the body of Christ. That body is intact and always will be. Schism only means that you have moved from the body of Christ to something that is not His body. I Corinthians 12 makes that evident. There is one Spirit, one Lord, one God. The Spirit gives gifts to the members of the body.

All the members are one body just like Jesus Christ. One Spirit has baptized all the members into one body whether we are Jews or Gentiles, bond or free and all drink of that same Spirit. God placed the members in the body as it pleased Him. Some members are honorable, some are less honorable. The less honorable are given more honor, *that there would be no schism in the body*.

All members have the same care for each other. They suffer and receive honor together. God has given gifts to the body but there is a more excellent way—the way of love. It is not a mistake that I Corinthians 13 is between chapters 12 and 14. Follow after charity. God designed His gifts to bless and enhance each other. All may learn and all may be comforted.

Sometimes we get the gifts misplaced or misunderstood. The brain processes and the mouth speaks. God met with Moses but Aaron did the speaking. Aaron could only speak what Moses told him. Moses could only convey to Aaron what God conveyed to him. Both were needed as

they fulfilled their place in God's kingdom.

When the brain thinks it is also the voice, problems develop. When the voice does not listen to the heart, problems develop.

The human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19).

The body of Christ is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16)

God works through His Spirit in His gathered body (I Cor. 5:4, II Cor. 6:16-18).

This is how the Spirit keeps the body together. Acts 15 is an example of how this worked in New Testament times.

How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1). That is God's plan for His body to dwell in unity and make life pleasant and good.

In Revelation there are two churches. Chapter 17 addresses the harlot church which is in harlotry with the kingdoms of the world. Chapters 19-22 addresses the Bride who has prepared herself for her Bridegroom. God calls people to "come out from her my people that you will not receive her punishments" (Revelation 18:4). God is not trying to correct the harlot church but He calls people out of her to join with His bride.

The key factor in the body of Christ is worship. Worship is the call of God to be close to Him. Worship is our call to God to honor Him above all. It is worship that calls God's children together. Worship transcends everything else in life. Worship is life and life is worship. It calls us to unity instead of making us unique. We are individually unique, but together we are not unique, we are one body.

Our unity is not uniformity. The toe does not look like the eye. The pancreas does not look like or function like the heart. The organs are vastly different in appearance and function, but together make up one organism. That is why and how we are the body of Christ. There is no envy or jealousy between members of the human body or the body of Christ. As one person said, "my whole body stayed awake all night just to bless one toe that had a splinter." If one part of the body is missing, the body suffers from its absence.

Revival is the process of bringing the body back to unity. If difficulties happen in the body, the

sickness can be treated with healthy care and nutrition. In the body of Christ, sickness can be cured by returning to the truth and the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit that gives unity. Unity is restored when the gifts are recognized and utilized in the body. The body of Christ becomes healthy again as revival happens. He is our peace by breaking down the wall of partition between differences (Eph. 2:14).

Either you are a member of the body of Christ, or you are not. Conferences and denominations are not part of the discussion. Personal or group preferences of food or clothing are not schismatic. If you drive a horse and I drive a car, that is not schismatic. If you like red hot peppers and I am satisfied with salt and black pepper, that is not schismatic. Modesty is modesty and while it may have cultural practices, the principle is the same. The body of Christ is secure and safe in the love of Father God and His Son and Holy Spirit.

Principles transcend policies. If we are led by the same Spirit, we will walk the path together. If we allow personal preferences to divide us, we are not part of the body of Christ. Female and male, bond and free, all nationalities, we are all one in Christ and the body of Christ is filled with joy and peace in believing and abounds in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). It is a supernatural life drawn from God Himself. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that rebirth will give eternal life.

In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).

In II Peter 1 we are partakers of the Divine nature, and we are diligent to add to our faith: virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. We give diligence also to make our calling and election sure so that we shall never fall and so that an entrance will be made to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We understand the writings of Paul through the eyes and heart of Jesus Christ. He is our Bridegroom and He is the center of all of life.

Being a member of the body of Christ is a supernatural experience. It defies description. Either you are or you are not. If you are, you have such sweet communion with God that it is all that matters in life here on earth and into eternity. It is the line of Abel from the Garden of Eden to the new Heaven and the new earth and to the water of life. It is being in love and nothing else matters. It is being part of a line of "whom the world was not worthy."

Jesus' words from His Word are our guidance. In John 13 He explains that the world will know

us by our love for each other. That is true over the ages. He also explains in Matthew 5 the attitudes that are to characterize our lives. God's Church is known by being poor in spirit, of those who mourn, meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, persecuted and falsely accused for righteousness, salt, light and good deeds that shine for the world to see so that they will praise our God in Heaven.

W.I.F.E. from Acts 2

Worship is all of life.

Instruction is to guard the worship.

Fellowship is about the worship and the instruction.

Evangelism: people are so blessed and so impressed that they want the blessing of the worship and instruction of the one true God and His Son, Jesus Christ and His body the Church. This is what draws people to the body of Christ.

God is our Father who is in Heaven.

His name is holy.

His Kingdom is come here on earth as it is in Heaven.

His Kingdom is the realm of Christ's Church.

His saints live here on earth like His saints live in Heaven.

His saints worship. Any deviation from that is heresy.

God's Church is a beautiful young lady who is engaged but not yet married. The world is determined to draw that beautiful lady into its control, but she always resists those efforts. The members who do not resist, but who allow the world's advances to draw them in, are the ones who cause the schism that divides the harlot church from the body of Christ.