Worship and Unity

Intro: God has placed within man the need to worship. Thus, from the beginning we observe man worshiping God; Gen. 4:3-4a "3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof:"

There was no true unity in this worship; Gen. 4:4b-5 "4 And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

God and Abel walked together in Abel's worship thus they had unity and fellowship with each other. Cain was not walking with God so he did not have unity and fellowship with God. Since Abel had unity with God and Cain did not; Abel and Cain did not have unity among themselves.

I. Unity

A. Definition

1. Unity is defined as: "the quality or state of not being multiple: oneness... a condition of harmony: accord... the quality or state of being made one: unification" (Webster).

2. Jesus prayer; John 17:20-21 "20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 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."
   a. That we would be one—that is unity.
   b. Same unity as between the Father and Son.

   (1) It is impossible to think of the First Person of the Godhead doing and saying one thing while the Second Person of the Godhead saying and doing something else.

   (2) Instead, They are in perfect harmony.

B. Unity in the New Testament:

1. Unity is found twice:

2. Eph. 4:3, 13 "3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.... 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"
   a. This is a unity brought about by the Spirit.
   b. The Spirit accomplishes this unity by the Word of God.
   c. The “unity of the faith” is the completed revelation of God’s Word.

3. When men follow the New Testament then unity, oneness, or harmony follows.

II. Worship

A. Worship defined:

1. It is from the Middle English word which means “worthiness, respect” and is defined, “reverence offered a divine being or supernatural power, also an act of expressing such reverence.”

2. The Old Testament word carries the meaning “to bow down, prostrate oneself.” It was a posture which would indicate reverence toward one considered superior.

3. The main New Testament word is proskuneo and literally means “to kiss toward.”
   a. Arndt, Danker, and Bauer write that this word is: “used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before persons and kissing their feet or the hem of their garment, the ground...to express in attitude or gesture one’s complete
dependence on or submission to a high authority figure, *(fall down and)* worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to*” *(882).*

b. Zodhiates adds: “To worship, do obeisance, show respect, fall or prostrate before. Literally, to kiss toward someone, to throw a kiss in token of respect or homage. The ancient oriental (especially Persian) mode of salutation between persons of equal ranks was to kiss each other on the lips; when the difference of rank was slight, they kissed each other on the cheek; when one was much inferior, he fell upon his knees and touched his forehead to the ground or prostrated himself, throwing kisses at the same time toward the superior. It is this latter mode of salutation that Gr. writers express by proskuneo. In the NT, generally, to do reverence or homage to someone, usually by kneeling or prostrating oneself before him. In the Sept. it means to bow down, to prostrate oneself in reverence, homage” *(G4352).*

4. In worship we have the idea expressed of showing respect to one whom we consider Superior.

B. **Jesus three truths about worship in response to the Samaritan woman:**

1. John 4:23-24 “23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”

2. Worship is to be directed to the Father
3. Worship is to be done with the proper attitude.
4. Worship must be done in accordance with God’s Word.
5. There must be unity in all three areas of our worship to God.

### III. UNITY AND WORSHIP

A. **Unity directed to the Father**

1. Mat. 4:10 “10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

2. One worshiping Jehovah God and another directing their worship to Allah (the god of Mohammadism), they cannot and do not have unity.

B. **Unity in Truth.**

1. Truth deals with God’s Word
   a. John 17:17 “17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
   b. To have unity in worship, we must worship according to what God says in His Word.
   c. When one inserts man’s ideas and words instead of God’s, then there can be no unity.
   d. God has authorized certain actions for man in worship to Him; Col. 3:17 “17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”
2. **Singing**
   a. Eph. 5:19 “19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”
   b. Col. 3:16 “16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
c. Some say that these passages do not involve “corporate worship.”
   (1) “Speaking to yourselves” and “one another” are reflexive reciprocal pronouns which means that all individuals are doing it at the same time and to each other.
   (2) I am doing it to you while at the same time you are doing it to me.
   (3) This shows that it is not individual action but corporate action.

d. Congregational action; 1 Cor. 14:15 “15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

3. Prayer
   a. In the assembly; 1 Cor. 14:15 “15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”
   b. 1 The. 5:17 “17 Pray without ceasing.”
   c. Reason we pray; Jam. 5:16 “16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
   d. Prayer is to be directed to the Father
      (1) Mat 6:9 “9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”
      (2) John 16:23-24 “23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. 24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”
   e. They must be according to God’s Will; 1 John 5:14 “14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us”

4. Lord’s Supper
   a. Jesus instituted this prior to His death; Mat. 26:26-29 “26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”
   b. We do so in remembrance of the Lord’s death; 1 Cor. 11:23-25 “23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”
   c. We are to partake of this memorial service every Sunday; Acts 20:7 “7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

5. Contribution or Giving:
   a. 1 Cor. 16:1-2 “1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
   b. Was this only a local situation and not applicable to us?
      (1) Paul had also commanded this in the church of Galatia.
(2) What Paul taught to the church at Corinth, he taught to all.
   (a) 1 Cor. 4:17 “For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.”
   (b) 1 Cor. 7:17 “But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.”

(3) Notice what is taught:
   (a) There was a temporary situation—the poor saints in Jerusalem.
   (b) Paul commanded the collection to have the finances available for when the need arose.
   (c) They were to give upon the first day of the week.
   (d) They were to be (2 Cor. 8-9)
      (i) liberal in their giving
      (ii) give bountifully
      (iii) give cheerfully
      (iv) as they have purposed in their heart
      (v) not grudgingly or of necessity

6. Preaching
   a. Acts 20:7 “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”
   b. Preachers are to:
      (1) 2 Tim. 4:2 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
      (2) Preach God’s Word not man’s think so; 1 Pet. 4:11 “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
   c. Neh. 8:8 “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.”
      (1) Notice the respect Israel had for the Word.
      (2) Neh. 8:5-6 “And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: “And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.”
      (3) When the preacher preaches the Word of God, he is declaring God’s message to man.

C. Unity in spirit.
   1. Spirit refers to man’s attitude as he worships.
      a. We are to center our minds upon those actions God authorized.
      b. Singing:
         (1) Think about the words we sing.
         (2) Make melody in your hearts is speaking of this; Eph. 5:19 “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”
c. Prayer:
   (1) 1 Cor. 14:15 “15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”
   (2) Spirit is our attitude and thinking.
   (3) Understanding is giving understanding to others so they can say “Amen.”

d. Lord’s Supper
   (1) During the Lord’s Supper our mind is to be on the death that Jesus died for us.
   (2) Luke 22:19 “19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”
   (3) 1 Cor. 11:24-25 “24 And when he had given thanks, he brake the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”

e. Contribution or giving
   (1) Our giving is to be cheerfully and not grudgingly.
   (2) 2 Cor. 9:7 “7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

f. Preaching:
   (1) Studying to understand what is being said; Neh. 8:8 “8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.’
   (2) Making sure that what is taught is according to God’s Word:
      (a) 1 John 4:1 “1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”
      (b) Acts 17:11 “11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

2. When everyone has their mind centered upon what they should, there will be perfect harmony with all the worshipers.
3. They all will be one in action and thought.
4. Failure of one to have their mind centered on what they should:
   a. It would have no affect on my worshiping God, since one person does not know what is in the heart of another.
   b. I would continue to worship God acceptably and have unity with God even though the other person is not in harmony with God.
   c. If one alters Truth regarding our worship; it affects everyone’s worship and is a true hindrance to our worship.

IV. HINDRANCES TO UNITY IN WORSHIP
   A. Singing
      1. Mechanical instruments of music:
         a. Mid-1800s some were not satisfied with what God authorized.
         b. When this is brought in into the worship, it affects everyone’s worship, so no one can worship acceptably.
2. Accapella—the “singing” group.
   a. They made their voices sound like instruments (now called bassing or base mic-ing or beat-boxing).
   b. The Bible authorizes a specific type of vocal music which is singing (which involves a type of speaking which includes teaching and admonishing).
   c. Whistling, humming, and such like are just as unauthorized as instruments even though made with the voice.
   d. If someone else is doing one of these things, then I cannot worship acceptably.

3. Praise teams, worship leaders
   a. This covers a variety of activities.
   b. It might be giving microphones to certain individuals.
   c. It might include what is simply a choir (usually a small choir).

4. When one adds things such as these which separate them from God, by its nature it will also separate all others who are there from God.

B. Prayer
   1. Prayer is the outpouring of our heart to God.
   2. Prayer is to be directed to the Father
      a. Mat 6:9 “9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”
      b. John 16:23-24 “23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, WHATSOEVER ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. 24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”
   c. Prayers directed to others:
      (1) There would be no unity if one directed their prayers to the god of the Koran.
      (2) Roman Catholic Church:
         (a) Praying to Mary the mother of Jesus.
            (i) The Roman Catholic Hail Mary prayers.
            (ii) It is a prayer calling for the intercession of Mary the mother of Jesus.
            (iii) “When we pray to her, we are adhering with her to the plan of the Father, who sends his Son to save all men. Like the beloved disciple we welcome Jesus’ mother into our homes, for she has become the mother of all the living. We can pray with and to her” (“Catechism of the Catholic Church” 4:1:2:2:2679).
         (b) Praying to Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
            (i) “The prayer of the Church, nourished by the Word of God and the celebration of the liturgy, teaches us to pray to the Lord Jesus” (“Catechism of the Catholic Church” 4:1:2:2:2664).
            (ii) “Since he teaches us to pray by recalling Christ, how could we not pray to the Spirit too? That is why the Church invites us to call upon the Holy Spirit every day, especially at the beginning and the end of every important action (“Catechism of the Catholic Church” 4:1:2:2:2670).
(3) Have some in the Lord’s church who wish to direct prayers to Jesus.
   (a) Wayne Jackson article “May a Christian Address Christ in Praise or Prayer?”
       (i) He argues for its appropriateness.
       (ii) “In this writer’s judgment, the allegation that it is inappropriate to speak to Christ by means of song and/or prayer is a position that cannot be sustained in light of the available evidence.”
   (b) There is no authority for praying to Jesus or praying to the Holy Spirit.
(4) The one leading in prayer is directing our thoughts so we can say “Amen” to give our consent to the prayer.
   (a) 1 Cor. 14:16 “16 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”
   (b) When one is praying to someone other than the Father, there can be no unity

3. Mechanical devices to aid in prayer:
   a. Buddhists will write their prayers on slips of paper and put them into a prayer wheel which is to propel their request into the far regions of the universe.
   b. Catholics use their rosary beads in their prayers.
   c. Aids such as these are not authorized and separate one from God, and we must separate from them to have fellowship with Him.

4. Women leading in prayer with men present.
   a. 1 Tim. 2:8 “8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”
   b. “Chain prayers” started being practiced where women would be included in leading of the prayer.
   c. It progressed from this to where some now have women in leadership positions including the leading of prayers in the assembly.

5. Prayer is to be in accordance with God’s Will.
   a. 1 John 5:14 “14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.”
   b. Jam. 1:5-6 “5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”
   c. Jam. 4:3 “3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.”
   d. An example:
      (1) Rom. 10:1 “1 Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.”
      (2) It would have been contrary to God’s Will to pray for their salvation apart from their obedience.
      (3) Praying for such would put him at odds with God.

6. God only hears the prayers of the righteous.
   a. 1 Pet. 3:12 “12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil”
b. Only His children have access to the Father through Christ; Eph. 2:18 “18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

c. John 9:31 “31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”

d. We cannot have unity with non-Christians/denominational people when they lead prayers.

e. The same is true of an unfaithful Christian.
   (1) We should not use one who is not a faithful Christian in leading prayers or other ways.
   (2) It will not get them to become faithful.
   (3) Make sure they are righteous first, then use them.

C. Lord's Supper

1. The elements used: unleavened bread and fruit of the vine.
   a. Mat. 26:26-29 “26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”

   b. Some have changed the elements to something else.

   c. If we change them, Christ will not eat and drink with us.

2. The day to partake: Sunday
   a. 1 Cor. 11:26 “26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”
      (1) Some take “as often as” to mean any time they desire.
      (2) General context shows it is the first day of the week; 1 Cor. 16:2 “2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

   b. Acts 20:7 “7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”
      (1) Here is an example that must be followed if we are to please God.
      (2) While there are several things in this account that are not binding, the day would not be.

   c. There are no other days authorized to partake of the Supper in the Scriptures.

   d. Denominations have changed the time element:
      (1) Some on a monthly basis
      (2) Some on a yearly basis.
      (3) Some on a quarterly basis.
      (4) Bruce Stulting points out: “Sometimes preachers reason that infrequent observance of the Lord's Supper help keep it from becoming mundane or commonplace. I wonder if those same preachers would agree that the preaching done on the Lord’s Day becomes 'mundane or commonplace’ when done weekly?” (318-19)

   e. Some in the Lord’s church have changed the day.
      (1) First I saw was some partaking on Thursday (the day Jesus instituted the Supper).
(2) Some now partake of the Communion on Saturdays.

3. Some have made the supper into something common:
   a. Eat it as a common meal which is eaten together.
   b. Eat it during a wedding ceremony.

4. Some have bound things which God did not bind:
   a. One container for the fruit of the vine.
   b. Binding something is just a sinful as loosing.

D. Contribution

1. God commands us to contribute to the treasury of the church.
   a. This is a free-will offering.
   b. 1 Cor. 16:1-2 “1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
   c. They are to give liberally, bountifully, not grudgingly; 2 Cor. 9:6-7 “6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

2. Freewill offerings are the only means that God has authorized to fund the work of the church.

3. Denominational groups:
   a. Take up contributions every time and any time they met.
      (1) They needed money so they “passed the plate.”
      (2) Sunday is the God authorized day and only day God authorized.
   b. Some entered the business world and some of those have become highly profitable—one even with gambling parlors (Bingo).
   c. Fund raising schemes:
      (1) Additionally some have garage sales, bake sales, bazaars, etc.
      (2) Now some are standing on the street corner to solicit money from passer-by’s.

4. Tithing:
   a. Denominations have not understood the distinction between the covenants.
   b. They go to the Old Testament to get their doctrine of tithing and binding that upon their members.
   c. Tithing was done away with at the ending of the Law of Moses.
   d. Binding something God has not bound is sinful.

E. Preaching

1. We are to only preach the Word.
   a. 2 Tim. 4:2 “2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
   b. 1 Pet. 4:11 “11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
   c. Acts 20:26-27 “26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God”
2. There is the need to preach everything that is essential for man to attain heaven.
   a. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 “16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
   b. 2 Pet. 1:3-4 “3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

(1) God’s Word gives us everything we need for life and godliness.
   a. Life:
      i. The abundant life here; John 10:10 “10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”
      ii. Eternal life
         a) John 3:16 “16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
         b) Comes from a knowledge of God which only comes through the Bible; John 17:3 “3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”
   b. Godliness
      a. It means piety or reverence.
      b. The Bible gives us everything we need to show piety or reverence toward God.

(2) The Bible gives us everything pertaining to life and godliness, so it alone should be preached.

3. We have no right to change or alter that Word.
   a. Deu. 4:2 “2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”
   b. Rev. 22:18-19 “18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”
   c. Gal. 1:6-9 “6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so now I say again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”
   d. The one who believes the false doctrine is just as condemned as the teacher of it.
      a. Each must study for themselves.
      b. 2 Tim. 2:15 “15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
      c. Acts 17:11 “11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”
4. In the early church, men were not been content to only preach that Word.
   a. The early church had Judiazing teachers.
      (1) They taught Gentiles must keep the Law of Moses and be circumcised to be saved.
      (2) This is the background of Romans, Galatians, and other books.
   b. Paul warned the Ephesian elders to watch
      (1) Wolves would enter in among them.
      (2) Acts 20:30 “30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”
   c. False teachers were always opposed by the faithful; Gal. 2:5 “5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”

5. We see a continued teaching of false doctrine through history.
   a. The Catholic Church continued on a road of false teaching.
   b. The Catholic Church became so vile, some tried to reform it.
      (1) This simply led to the Protestant Reformation.
      (2) It brought about the denominationalism we see today.
      (3) There is no denomination which teaches the truth of God’s Word and none of them are authorized by God.

6. The restoration:
   a. People returned to the Bible and it alone for our guide.
   b. For a while they were content to remain in the doctrine of Christ.
   c. While they were, brethren had unity.
      (1) John 17:20-21 “20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 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.”
      (2) 1 Cor. 1:10 “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.”
   d. Some were not content to remain with God’s Word.

7. The changes we have seen:
   a. Brought in mechanical instrumental music and the missionary society.
      (1) These changes led to the US Census recognizing the division between the Lord’s church and the Christian Church denomination.
      (2) When someone teaches things which change the nature of the church, we can no longer have unity with them.
   b. Scheme of redemption: Saved by grace only:
      (1) Rubel Shelly teaching: “It is a scandalous and outrageous lie to teach that salvation arises from human activity. We do not contribute one whit to our salvation”
      (2) Denny Boultinghouse teaching: “Are we saved 100% by the grace of God? Yes ... Our salvation is completely by grace. We contribute nothing to our salvation”
   c. Organization of the church:
      (1) This is a major factor in the apostasy of the following the first century.
(2) Denial of eldership having authority:
   (a) Waymon Miller’s book, *The Role Of Elders In The New Testament Church* saying elders had no authority except by example.
   (b) Dave Miller’s sermon at Brown Trail Church Of Christ in the Fort Worth area on the subject of the reevaluation/reaffirmation of elders.

d. Work of the church:
   (1) It is saving souls through preaching to the lost, edifying the saved, and benevolence.
   (2) Some promoted recreation and entertainment.
   (3) Some wanted to make social ills the focus of their *preaching*.
   (4) It was reported that Landon Saunders stated that “environmental organizations were as necessary as the church and that ‘saving the whales’ was as necessary for one to go to heaven as was baptism or the Lord’s supper.”

e. Moral issues:
   (1) Fornication: Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage:
      (a) James D. Bales wrote *Not Under Bondage* advocating a loose view of divorce and remarriage.
      (b) His book opened the way for more liberal views.
      (c) These doctrines allowed fornicators to be extended fellowship within the church.
   (2) Modesty:
      (a) One preacher argued that modesty was determined by what other people wear in doing a specific action or activity.
      (b) If that were true, then to go to a beach without being naked (by God’s definition of nakedness—covered from neck to the knees) would be immodest.
      (c) Modesty is determined by God and not by society and circumstances.

f. Women in leadership roles in the local congregation:
   (1) They call it gender justice.
   (2) One web site states:
      (a) “The purpose of this site is to promote gender justice in the Church of Christ by...1. facilitating communication and mutual support and edification among Churches of Christ that practice or strive toward gender justice.”
      (b) In defining gender justice they write, “In general, gender justice means recognizing that men and women are created by God, redeemed by Christ, and gifted by the Spirit truly without distinction or partiality. In Christian community, gender justice means encouraging both men and women to exercise their Spirit-given gifts in the church’s work, worship, and leadership, and celebrating the truth that the Spirit grants such gifts without respect to gender. Concretely, gender justice in the Church of Christ includes opening traditionally masculine leadership roles and activities (deacon, elder, minister, worship leader, preacher, teacher, etc.)
to women, and encouraging men to discover and cultivate their gifts for activities traditionally performed by women.”

(3) 1 Tim. 2:12 “12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”

g. Fellowship:

(1) Some expand the Biblical limits of fellowship.

(2) Eph. 5:11 “11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”

(3) 2 Cor. 6:14-17 “14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”

h. Anytime a preacher preaches any doctrine that if believed and/or acted upon would separate those individuals from God, then that preacher destroys the unity that exists with God and with the church.

Conclusion: Unity is certainly a wonderful situation. It is a joyous situation when brethren can come to worship together in peace, harmony, and sweet unity with God and with one another. While David wrote, Psalms 133:1 “1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” It is also true of being able to worship together in unity. Let us make sure that we never do anything that will harm that unity that exists both with God and with other faithful brethren.