

Christ is Undivided Outline

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

I. Context.

- A. Paul finished telling the Corinthian church that he was thankful they were fellow “saints” in Christ, sanctified and eternally saved.
- B. In light of their “position” in Christ, they “ought” to then live out their position in Christ.
- C. The problem—Instead of having an impact with the gospel in the Corinthian culture, Corinthian culture was having more impact on the church!

II. The number one problem—disunity within the body of Christ, the church.

A. Comments regarding unity.

- 1. Unity is *the state of being undivided* or “*oneness*”.
- 2. Unity is a vital reality in God’s Word—the Bible.
 - a. The supreme example—the Trinity: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - b. The example in marriage—*they shall become one flesh*.
 - c. The example of mankind—meant to be in fellowship, union with God.
 - Through the original sin man is out of union with God.
 - Through the blood of Jesus Christ, the work on the cross, man can come back into fellowship and union with God (1 Peter 3:18).
- 3. As far as the Christian is concerned, man does not “make” unity— he can embrace it, promote it, maintain it or destroy it. Unity is created by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:1-6).
- 4. The Corinthian church was NOT in unity with Christ or each other.

III. Paul’s exhortation (Verses 10-17).

- A. Paul does not scold or condemn the church, he “exhorts” them—“comes along side them”
 - 1. *Paracletos*—to come alongside.
- B. Paul uses endearing terms—“brothers” (implying brothers and sisters in Christ).

- C. The exhortation does not come from Paul but *by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*.
 - 1. “*The name of Jesus Christ*” = all that Jesus is, has done and will do.
- D. Paul calls for all to *agree* to no *divisions* among them (10).
 - 1. Divisions— *schismata* = to be torn apart.
 - 2. Complete—*katartizo* = a medical term to reset bones to make them useful again.
 - 3. “Be of the same mind” – the mind of Christ (2:16) = Humble.
 - a. Same judgement—the *doing part* resulting from having the mind of Christ.
- IV. Specific situation causing the disunity—following personalities rather than Jesus.
 - A. Some follow Paul, some Apollos , some Cephas, and some Christ.
 - 1. All are dividing factors.
 - 2. Believers are united in Christ, not human personalities.
- V. Paul’s thankfulness for NOT baptizing many in the church.
 - A. Baptism is a profession of who one belongs to—Jesus Christ.
 - B. Paul’s primary purpose is to preach the gospel—it is the gospel that saves and brings unity between the believer and God.

Christ is Undivided Pastoral Notes

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

After a few weeks of introduction...this morning we begin to look at the main body of the letter Paul addressed to the church at Corinth...regarding the first of many issues within the church at Corinth.

Let's encapsulate where we've been to keep this in context.... We began by presenting a basis in which to look at all that the apostle Paul will present to us... this letter is a letter of love to a people that has strayed from the foundation they were established on... Jesus Christ.... And Paul wants them to get back on it.

After the Apostle Paul established the church at Corinth... he had made his way to Ephesus... eighteen months later... he gets a report on how the Corinthian church was doing... not so good!... instead of having an impact on the culture around them with the good news of Jesus Christ.... The culture around them was having a major impact on them!

Sound familiar?

The Corinthian church is a church steeped in sin and because of that...they are missing the blessings of living a life representative of the life of Christ within them...it is a church steeped in fleshly living... we could say that the church at Corinth is a "carnal church".

That term bothers some... some say a carnal Christian is an oxymoron...the word "carnal" comes from the Greek word *sarkikos* which literally means *fleshly*... (sar·coph·a·gus)... some believe that a Christian cannot be living a carnal...fleshly life... someone needed to tell the apostle Paul that in that he himself calls the Corinthian church a "carnal church".

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

3 And I, brothers and sisters, could not speak to you as spiritual people, but only as *fleshly*, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to consume it. But even now you are not yet able, 3 *for you are still fleshly*. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, *are you not fleshly*, and are you not walking like ordinary people?

By living in the flesh.... As "ordinary people"... the church is sacrificing the fullness of life... the peace that "*surpasses all understanding*" that only Jesus can give...and countless other blessings that life in Christ offers....not to mention the testimony and mission they were to be and do in the sinful city of Corinth.

I suggested for each one of us to keep at the forefront of our minds the goal for each one of us to strive to eliminate sin in our lives... strive to take our affections off of earthly possessions and fleshly desires and put our affections more and more on Jesus Christ...borrowing a term from puritan George Swinnock... *The fading of the flesh and the flourishing of faith*...

The Corinthian church had their affections on the flesh... so Paul, out of love seeks to turn that around... remember that he begins by affirming that the Corinthian church is truly a Christian church... made up of true, eternally saved “saints”... saints by one’s position in Christ, not your performance.

Before he mentions one sin... he affirms that they are saints...(made holy for God... set apart for God...sanctified)..... And they will never lose their “sainthood”... God who began a good work in them in their salvation will complete it the day they pass from this earth into eternity... GOOD NEWS!

But that period of time between that specific day of salvation... and that final day they would enter into glory.... Their behavior OUGHT to match their position in Christ...remember... “You are/You ought”?

So now Paul is going to...for 15 chapters address the “ought”...*this is how you ought to live Corinthian church..... and every other Christian who ever lived*... including us in this building....let’s begin by reading the passage:

Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

Let’s pray

What stuck out at me this week as I studied this passage is Paul’s choice of issues he makes to be his first...order in scripture is important.... The first issue in a letter is usually the greatest issue.... And there are some really “great” big issues in this letter...for instance:

The Corinthian church is rife in sexual sin...indulging in prostitutes...adultery... there even is a man in the church who has been having sexual relations with either his mother or step mom...
and the church tolerates it if not endorses it...

People in the church are suing each other...all kinds of marital issues... abusing the liberties they have in Christ...practiced idolatry...they abused the most sacred sacrament of the Lord’s Supper by making it a party.... Getting drunk... gorging food... and much, much more...it would be difficult to choose which one of those would be the most important to address first....

I’m fascinated at the topic Paul chooses to be first...None of those qualified... Paul addresses the issue of being a church of Jesus Christ in disunity...divisions between other Christians within the church....

A few words about unity before we get into this passage... by definition... we could say “unity is *the “state of being undivided”*... or “*oneness*”... oneness referring to a “whole”... unity is a vital, key reality in all of God’s Word...

The supreme example of unity would be the triune God... The triune God is one God... is the “whole”... complete “oneness”... yet three persons... Father, Son and Holy Spirit... the Trinity cannot be divided... it can only be in unity...

Deuteronomy 6:4

4 “Hear, Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!

Matthew 28:19

19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, the supreme example of unity....and it is an example for us and our relationship to Him.

Early in the Bible... Genesis 2 we see God’s design for marriage is to be a “union”... what’s a union?... *an act of uniting or joining two or more things into one:*

Genesis 2:24

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother , and cleave to his wife AND THEY SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH... *unity... the act of joining two things into one....* the reason God hates divorce is that it breaks apart... tears apart the unity that God intended to remain whole.

And then there is man in general... Adam and Eve began in peaceful *fellowship* with God... but their sin brought a great division between them and God... and consequently, between us and God as well... the unity has been torn apart.

Romans 5:12

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned...

But Jesus... through the cross... made it possible for sinful man to return to that fellowship, that loving union with our God!.... 1 Peter 3:18

1 Peter 3:18

18 For Christ also suffered for sins once for all time, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

Unity is God’s design for His people.....

The moment of salvation and onward... the Christian life is all about unity... unity with God... Unity with Christ... the Holy Spirit... unity with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.... For they are the church and the church is the body of Christ...so like marriage between man and woman... we the church... are in union with Christ!

One more thing...as far as the Christian is concerned... We do not create unity...we embrace it...we promote it...we maintain it... or tear it apart...unity comes from the H.S. Eph. 4:1-6

4 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, (You are? You ought!) 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, why do all that?3 being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We are maintainers of unity**4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you also were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.**

Here's the problem... The church at Corinth was not keeping the unity if the Spirit... far from it... the reason Paul addresses disunity first is because at the root of all of the other problems... the adultery... the sexual sins... all the other issues stem from being out of unity with Christ.

If you are out of unity with Jesus Christ... it is because you have separated from Him and deemed yourself as Lord.

So this is a paramount issue.... So he begins in verse 10...

Read verse 10

I don't want us to miss the manner in which Paul addresses this issue with the church... this is not a scolding... this is not a harsh rebuke... where my Bible says "**exhort**" you... **Now I exhort you brothers...** some of your bibles may say "**beseech**" or "**I appeal to you...**"

Tough to translate into English.

This is the same root word that Jesus described the Holy Spirit... "*paracletos*" which literally means "*to come alongside to help another*"...that's what the job of the Holy Spirit is, right?... He comes alongside us and helps us...helps us in becoming more and more like Christ...so Paul immediately comes across in a caring, loving way...

*Hey...I'm not here to hammer you... to put you down...condemn you... I want to come alongside you and help you...*this is a great model for us in handling other Christians who are in sin... and then he addresses them as "**brothers**"...that is not a new term to us... we are used to fellow Christians to be addressed as "brothers" and "sisters" in Christ.... But something I didn't realize until this week... that was a very, very new address....

Historical accounts record how confusing that was for those outside Christianity to hear these Christians call non relatives brothers or sisters!... Paul perhaps is the first to call fellow

Christians this... conferring a close, intimate relationship... deeper than just “friend”... or “fellow person”... but a dear brother and sister by the adoption into the family of Jesus!... a union!...into the body of Jesus Christ...

This is such an important verse... everyone should memorize it!... the next seven words are essential here...**Now I exhort you brothers, BY THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**... in other words... *“I am not exhorting to you my idea... I AM NOT THE AUTHORITY HERE!” What I am telling you is from the highest authority.... Jesus Christ!*

Anytime you read or hear the phrase **“the name of our Lord Jesus”**...it has a special meaning... it is saying everything that Jesus is... His character...His will...everything that Jesus taught... everything Jesus said... ALL OF HIM is in consideration here.... So Paul appeals to the Corinthians to be in 100% agreement with ALL THAT JESUS IS... and thus... what follows is what Jesus wants.

What does Jesus want?... He wants everyone in His church **“to “agree”... and have no divisions among you...”**it is the idea of everyone saying the same thing.... I know I’m giving you a lot of definitions off the bat... but they’re important... that word **“division”** is the English for the Greek word *“Schismata”*... we get the word *“schism”*...

Literally it means *“to tear”* or *“to rip apart a garment”*... you take something that was whole... and you separate it into two parts... usually making all of it useless!...what good is a half a coat?...

So here... division is the idea of the whole being torn in two parts becoming useless.... And that of course is referring to the church!... this is a church being ripped apart... we’ll look at that in a minute... Jesus does NOT want the church to be divided into useless parts!... what does He want?

(10b) that you be made COMPLETE in the same mind and same judgement. NIV says to be perfectly united...unified....one...whole.

One more Greek word... promise maybe... this one is good... that word translated as **“complete”** is actually a medical term... *katartizo* (**cat-are-tidzo**)...it’s the idea of putting broken bones... or out of joint bones back together again.

To take two parts that have become useless...*schismata*... *torn apart*.... And put back together again to their useful state!... here... instead of bones being put back together to their functioning state... relationships that have been ripped apart...the church body is out of joint!... divided (for whatever reason)... is to be made complete again!...sown back together...

Why?... BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST WANTS IT THAT WAY!... that’s verse 10!... oh... except for the “how do you do that?... how do you reset the bones? **being of the same mind and**

judgement...which is NOT saying we are to all think exactly alike on all issues... we have our differences which God Himself designed in us...

We are all different parts of the body right?... but we are to have the same mind...how?... in a few weeks we'll get to chapter 2... at the very end in verse 16, Paul writes... **For who has known the mind of the Lord, that He will direct him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST...**

We are all to have the **mind of Christ**.... That's **the same mind!**...well what's the mind of Christ like?.... have you forgotten Philippians?

2 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit So how do you do all that?.... with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

The mind of Christ is servanthood and humility!... **but that you be made complete in the same mind AND IN THE SAME JUDGEMENT...** what's the judgement part?... judgment is the action you take resulting from being of the same mind...it's the doing part...

It is the result of having the same mind... if we all are of the same mind (of Christ), we will be humble... we will think of others before ourselves...instead of pushing and shoving to get to the first of the line...we put on the mind of Christ... we think of each other.... resulting in unity... Psalm 133:1 **Behold, how good and how pleasant it is...For brothers to live together in unity!**

If any of you are schismata... torn apart from another brother or sister in Christ... if there is division among you... Jesus through Paul is not suggesting you *katartizo* (**cat-are-tidzo**)...put things back together... he's demanding it by the name of Jesus Christ!

Huge in Jesus's agenda!... there is no room for disunity among believers... the church...

- Matthew 18:15-20
- Remember the Sermon on the Mount?..(5:24). what did Jesus say?... if you have something against a brother... (you're out of joint)... you go to church...disjointed with another part... don't put your offering in the box ... leave it and go be reconciled with your brother!

Disunity is a cancer... even if just two people in a church are divided... that affects the whole body... factions can begin... people take sides... some get behind one and others behind the other... a church can't be what Jesus wants it to be if any part is out of joint!

You don't ignore a broken leg do you? [expound]

Read verse 11

Word had gotten to Paul in Ephesus by Chloe's household... we don't know anything about Chloe other than what we see in this verse... most likely a servant or relative of Chloe is the one who informed Paul... that's why it says Chloe's *household*..... James 4—really puts the finger on what's going on here... people are quarrelling... why do people quarrel (resulting in disunity)?

James 4:1-3 **What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is the source not **your pleasures that wage war in your body's parts?** 2 **You lust and do not have, so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motives, so that you may spend what you request on **your pleasures.******

It's all about you!

Disunity is, I believe... always caused by the elevation of the self... I will go so far to say that all your relationship problems are a result of one or both elevating themselves and their interests over the other person..... to have the mind of Christ is so very counter-culture! We are a culture obsessed with the self... promotes the self... loves the self.... Just take a look at social media.... Actually... don't!

Now we get to some of the specifics of what's going on.

Read verse 12

I want you to note that Paul is not criticizing these men... there is nothing negative about them in these verses... what Paul is revealing is, again, the people of the church causing division through following their favorite preacher... placing one preacher over another... rather than setting aside personalities and focusing on Jesus Christ and the gospel!

People are so celebrity oriented they would prefer to link themselves with a personality rather than link themselves to Jesus Christ!

I follow Paul.... You poor thing, I follow Apollos! ...you know... all four of these names represent four different factions... what I would like to do is to bring this verse into today... perhaps put a little too much creative license to it... but I think it represents so well... what's going on in the church today.

1. We have those who are following the apostle Paul... I am of Paul!...now think about it... Paul founded the church... this would have been kind of the old guard... the more traditional members of the congregation would naturally gravitate towards Paul.... We could call these people traditionalists...

“this church is fine... we don't need to be flashy... we come to this church because Paul preaches the word... certainly not because he's an exciting preacher!... he stutters... he's long winded”... people have died during his sermons they're so long!

2 Cor.10:10 **For they say, “His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.”**...BUT HE PREACHES THE WORD.... this is the crowd that chants *“We need hymnals!”*

And Paul would have a Bible like this.... Close to the Greek and Hebrew... *“That's who I'm going to follow!”*

2. “I follow Apollos!”... This is a polar opposite of Paul.... Apollos came from a university city... Alexandria... a highly educated guy... contemporary...up-to-date...very persuasive... knows what people like... an amazing orator... *man can this guy keep your attention!...*he would be the guy to come into a church and tell them *“we're going to think outside of the box”*...

*We're going to do church differently...*maybe try a few special effects... a smoke machine and strobe lights... maybe a coffee shop in the lobby...and did I say he was a fiery speaker?... he could get the crowd going.... Not always biblically accurate...but wow! (remember Aquilla and Priscilla?... early in Apollos's career they had to pull Apollos aside.

Acts 18:26 **and he (Apollos) began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.**

Well... a little off biblically... that's ok...in fact, we don't read that much Bible here!. but look at all the people in church! The place is packed! ...they think they're really on to something... they know what “works”...

His crowd starts chanting *“Get rid of the hymnals!”*..... Apollos's Bible is nicely right here in his phone.... *We follow Apollos!*

So you have the traditionalists who want to keep things the same... who... think they're the most Biblical.... And the cool church that wants to change everything...knows how to fill the church... then you have:

3. Cephas... I follow Cephas (Peter)!... Here's his Bible!...these were probably Jewish believers... Jews who have accepted Christ... they don't carry just the New Testament... they've got the Torah!... and their Bibles are gigantic!

Cephas didn't tell them so... but they put together lists of things you can and can't do as a Christian... you can't drink, smoke, dance, read comic books, go to movies, and drink too much coffee....never indulge in too much of anything except God's Law.

SO... you 've got one group trying to keep the church the same.... One group trying to modernize the church...make it relevant.... And one group trying to put it under the law... BUT... we have this fourth group that may sound like the church to belong to:

4. We're the church of Christ.... "I follow Christ"....and each one of them carry a red letter edition of the New Testament...now... this sounds like the group everyone should be in.... the one's who say "*I of Christ*"!

But don't switch churches yet! ... I don't think Paul would have listed this group with the other three had it not been a divisive group as well!... these are probably the worst of all... this is the crowd that said "*I don't need to listen to ANYONE else... I only listen to Jesus!*" "*whatever he tells me to do I'll do it!*"

This is the crowd that has the inside line... they don't need anyone else... they don't need to even go to church... it's just them and Jesus.... Sort of. ... this is the group that makes Jesus into whoever they want Jesus to be... they act super spiritual and they tell you so.

All these add up to division within the church!... people seeking what they want, what they like, what they feel comfortable with... following a style... a personality... and Paul says:

Read verse 13

This really is a wise statement from Paul... He doesn't go after any of these other preachers... he puts himself as the example... had he used Apollos, someone would say *Paul is upset that not everyone is following him!*...he uses himself as the example.... **Was Paul crucified for you?...were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

What Paul is saying is "*I haven't done anything for you other than to be God's instrument... I didn't die for you... I didn't save you... you were NOT baptized in my name!*"

His point is that believers are united in Christ...and no human leader... no matter how entertaining, gifted, appealing and effective that leader is... should ever have the loyalty that belongs ONLY to the Lord Jesus Christ!

Whenever a church begins to follow a man not the gospel message...they fracture the body of Christ...not only that... you could be setting yourself up for great disappointment... following any human being in place of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Early on in my ministry here... back in 2004... you, the church, sent me to Chicago to attend the Moody Pastor's Conference... There were four keynote speakers, one each night of the

conference... each one of those speakers are names of men you would recognize their names... famous preachers.

When I heard them speak I said to myself... *"I'll never be able to preach like that!"* all four were amazing... What else is amazing is that out of the four, only one is still preaching...the other three have all fallen since.... It turned out they were only men!

Has Christ been divided?... are there now parts to Christ?... Paul, Apollos, Cephas...and Jesus?...no... it is all about Jesus Christ.... The moment we begin to elevate human instruments... we will be divided...

Years past there was a very famous, popular preacher named Henry Beecher... you may know of his wife... Harriet Beecher Stowe who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*...Henry Beecher was undoubtedly the most popular preacher in London... auditoriums were packed every time he spoke...thousands of people flocked to hear him'

One Sunday he wasn't able to be there so he had his brother fill in for him... when his brother came up to the pulpit it became clear that HENRY wasn't going to be there that Sunday...so people actually got up and began to walk out of the church!

His brother then said something brilliant... *"All of you who have come here today to worship Henry Beecher may now be excused... all of those who want to worship the Lord Jesus Christ please remain seated..."*

He made his point... people were grabbing seats!,... *"just going to the restroom!"*

The next verses are great... I love these verses...listen to them

Read verses 14-16

This is the word of God!... Paul sounds a bit jumbled!... is it because he's over 35?... *I don't know what I did a week ago!*

What it does show... is that at this moment... in what Paul is trying to get across to this divided church, baptism... is not the most important issue...and WHO baptizes you is definitely not the issue here.

The most important issue is the preaching and receiving of the gospel of Jesus Christ... Baptism is important... it is commanded by Jesus Himself...it is an honoring thing to God... publically declaring that Jesus is your savior... but it is secondary to salvation...Baptism is a public proclamation of who one belongs to... *"I belong to Jesus Christ"...*

SO in no way does Paul want anyone to be steeped in pride as to WHO baptized them!... evidently the Corinthians were placing high importance to the WHO baptized them rather than the meaning of baptism...

Also... can't you just picture how all this was written down?... remember that Paul did not write the letter... he dictated the letter to who?... remember?... Sosthenes.

So Paul is pacing back in forth, talking and Sosthenes... *"I'm thankful I didn't baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius.... Oh wait!... I did baptize a few of Stephanus kids... maybe Stephanus... I don't think I did his wife.... Yes!... I did!*

But nobody else!"...and Sosthenes is not humored one bit!... remember... these are Holy Scriptures... God breathed!

Read verse 17

Paul's priority was to preach the gospel... a couple of weeks ago we looked a bit at Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus... Acts 26:16

I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you as a servant and a witness not only to the things in which you have seen Me, but also to the things in which I will appear to you, 17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the [a]power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

Paul's mission was to preach the gospel to bring those who hear into unity with the Father through the Son.... Becoming new creatures in Christ.... Unified in His body... unified together in the church....**there should be no divisions among you.**