

*ACCIDENTAL*  
**PHARISEES**

*Week 7 – Quest for Uniformity*

# Character of Genuine Saving Faith<sup>1</sup>

*“Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” – 2 Corinthians 13:5*

- Evidences that neither **prove** nor **disprove** one’s faith:

<i>List I</i>	<i>Scripture</i>
<i>Visible Morality</i>	<i>Matt 19:16-21, 23:27</i>
<i>Intellectual Knowledge</i>	<i>Rom 1:21, 2:17-24</i>
<i>Religious Involvement</i>	<i>Matt 25:1-10</i>
<i>Active Ministry</i>	<i>Matt 7:21-24</i>
<i>Conviction of Sin</i>	<i>Acts 24:25; 1 John 2:3-6</i>
<i>Assurance</i>	<i>Matt 23</i>
<i>Time of Decision</i>	<i>Luke 8:13-14</i>

<sup>1</sup> MacArthur Study Bible

# Character of Genuine Saving Faith<sup>1</sup>

- The **fruit** / **proofs** of authentic / true Christianity:

<i>List II</i>	<i>Scripture</i>
<i>Love for God</i>	<i>Ps 42:1, 73:25; Luke 10:27; Rom 8:7-11</i>
<i>Repentance from Sin</i>	<i>Ps 32:5; Pr 28:13; Rom 7:14; 2 Cor 7:10; 1 John 1:8-10</i>
<i>Genuine Humility</i>	<i>Ps 51:17; Matt 5:1-12; James 4:6-10</i>
<i>Devotion to God's Glory</i>	<i>Ps 105:3, 115:1; Is 43:7, 48:10-11; Jer 9:23, 1 Cor 10:31</i>
<i>Continual Prayer</i>	<i>Luke 18:1; Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6; 1 Tim 2:1-4; James 5:16-18</i>
<i>Selfless Love</i>	<i>1 John 2:9-11, 3:14, 4:7-8</i>
<i>Separation from the World</i>	<i>1 Cor 2:12; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17, 5:5</i>
<i>Spiritual Growth</i>	<i>Luke 8:15; John 15:1-6; Eph 4:12-16</i>
<i>Obedient Living</i>	<i>Matt 7:21; John 15:14-17; Rom 16:26; 1 Pet 1:2, 22; 1 John 2:3-5</i>

- If **List I** is true of a person and **List II** is false, there is cause to question the validity of one's profession of faith. Yet if **List II** is true, then **List I** will be also.

<sup>1</sup> MacArthur Study Bible

## **Uniformity vs Unity**

- Are **unity** and **uniformity** the same? How are they different?
- Which are we **commanded** to have?

*“<sup>11</sup>And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, **that they may be one**, even as we are one ... <sup>22</sup>The glory that you have given me I have given to them, **that they may be one** even as we are one.” – John 17:11, 22*

*“We often confuse biblical unity with its bogus counterfeit: uniformity.” – Larry Osborne*

## *Unity*

*“If you’re a Christian and I’m a Christian, we’re one in Christ. We don’t have to produce unity. **We already have it** ... our biblical unity is rooted solely in our relationship with Jesus.”*

*– Larry Osborne*

## *Uniformity vs Unity*

- How does **unity** (instead of **uniformity**) apply this year with an election?



## **How Uniformity Kills Unity**

- **The first lack of unity occurred in the garden (Cain & Abel) and was over how to worship God.”**

*“<sup>1</sup>Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, ‘I have gotte a man with the help of the Lord.’ <sup>2</sup>And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. <sup>3</sup>In the course of time **Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground,** <sup>4</sup> and **Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions.** And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup>**but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.** So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. <sup>6</sup>The Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? <sup>7</sup>If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.’ <sup>8</sup>Cain spoke to Abel his brother. **And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.**” – Genesis 4:1-8*

## ***How Uniformity Kills Unity***

- ***Uniformity is based on **clone-like** similarities and is different than unity.***
  - ***Jesus came to save us in our differences.***
  - ***The world notices when we are **loving** and **bearing** with one another.***

***“Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” – Galatians 6:2***

***“Bearing with one another in love” – Ephesians 4:2***

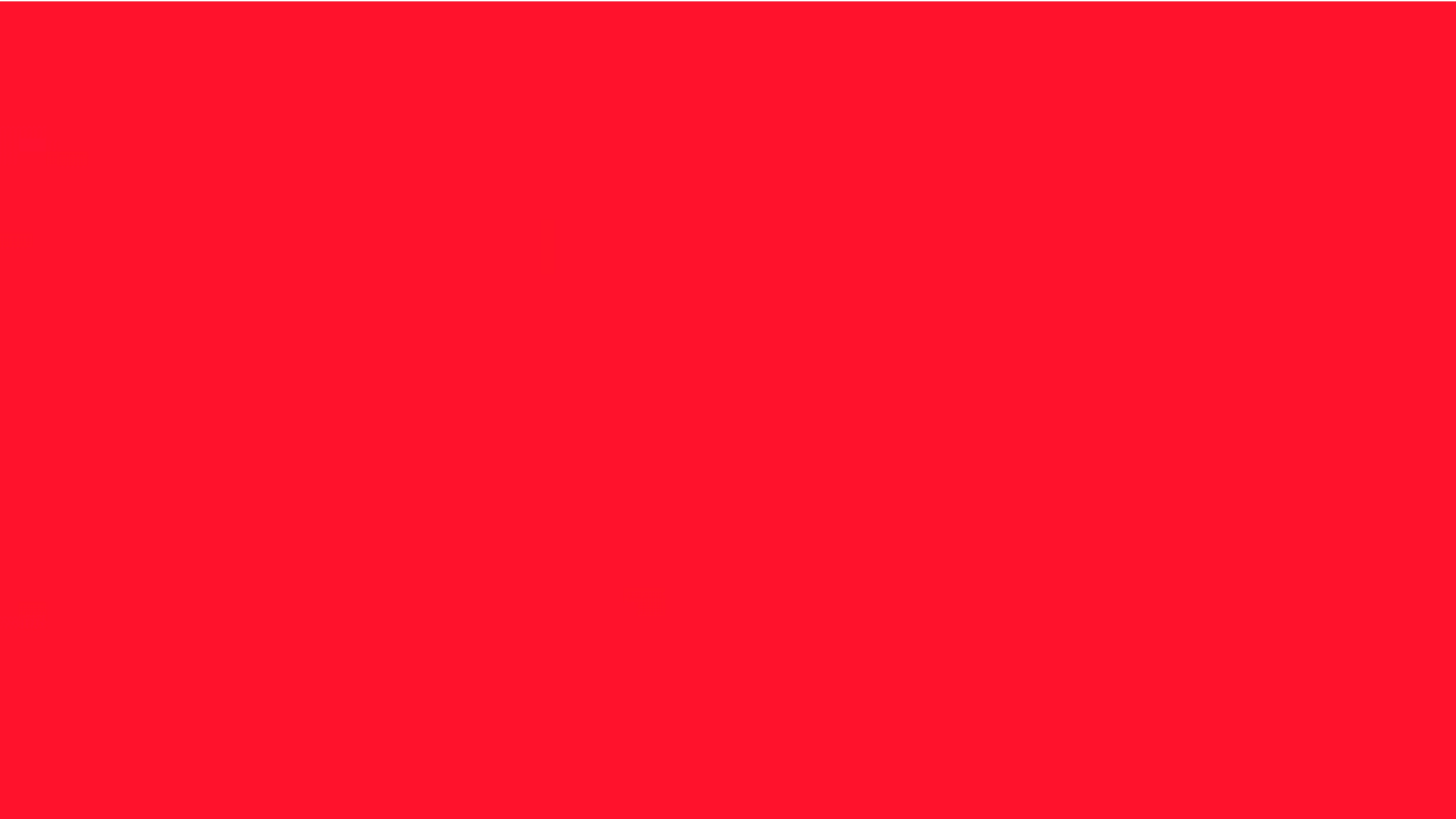
***“Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” – Colossians 3:13***



# *The Heretic*

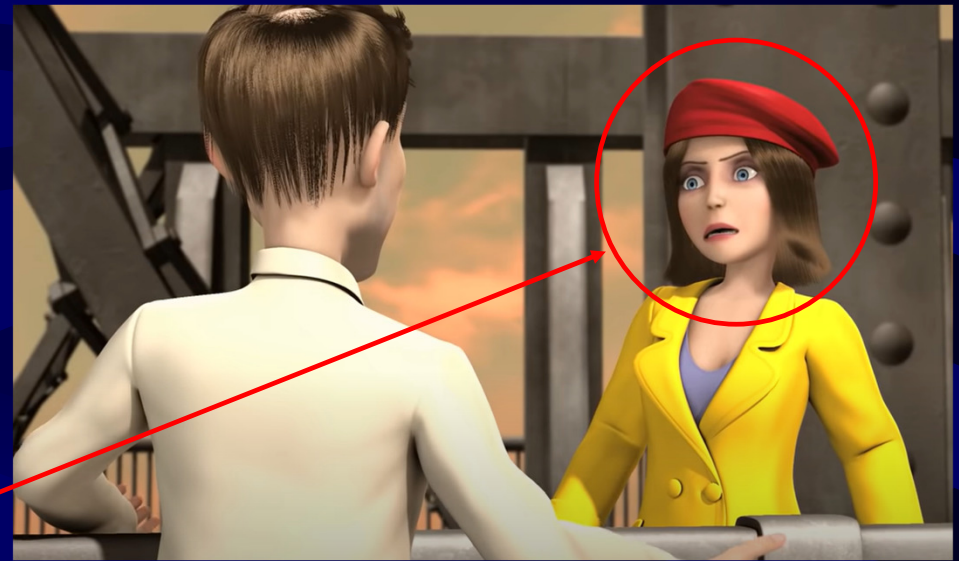


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0zlv2i37UU>



## *How Uniformity Kills Unity*

- *Things they had in common:*
  - *Religious*
  - *Christian*
  - *Protestant*
  - *Baptist*
  - *Baptist Church of God*
  - *Reformed Baptist Church of God*



- *Things they disagreed on:*
  - *Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1879 (her)*
  - *Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915 (him)*

## *Great Quotes about Unity & John 17*

*“As death drew near, the Lord focused on a single concept he knew to be of paramount importance for all those who would believe in him. He did not pray that his followers would always be happy, that they would never suffer, or that their rights would always be defended. **Jesus prayed that his followers would get along with one another.**”*

*– Ken Sande, The Peace Maker*

# Test of Uniformity

What do you think of “He Gets Us?”



*Good message?*

*Too much acceptance?*

*Easy believe-ism?*

## ***Theological Uniformity Undercuts the Bible***

- ***Jesus' words to the **disciples** should blow up our narrow definition of what constitutes an approved ministry:***

***“49’Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us.’ 50But Jesus said to him, ‘Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you.’” – Luke 9:49-50 ESV***



## ***Theological Uniformity Undercuts the Bible***

- ***Paul made the same argument to the Philippians:***

***“<sup>15</sup>Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. <sup>16</sup>The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. <sup>17</sup>The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. <sup>18</sup>What then? **Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.”*****



***– Philippians 1:15-18 ESV***

## How Uniformity Kills Unity

- Larry Osborne says “God delights in our diversity”

Matthew the Tax  
Collector



“Jesus had room for Simon the Zealot and Matthew the Tax Collector. Yet sometimes, the more biblically grounded we become, the less room we have for anyone who hasn’t yet learned all that we’ve learned. **The result is a circle of fellowship that’s tighter than Jesus’s circle of acceptance.**”

– Larry Osborne



Simon the  
Zealot



## *Great Quotes*

*“Although we should seek **unity** in our relationships, we should not demand **uniformity**. Instead of avoiding all conflicts or demanding that others always agree with us, we should rejoice in the **diversity** of God’s creation and learn to accept and work with people who simply see things differently than we do.”*

*– Ken Sande, The Peace Maker*

## *Dividing Wall*

- *What are some famous walls built by man?*



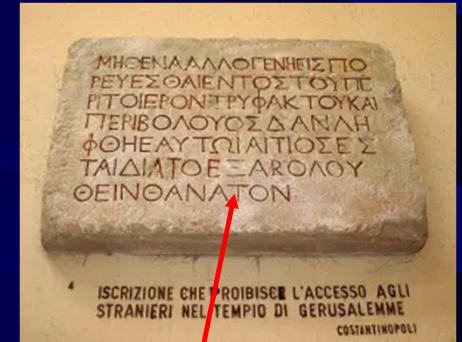
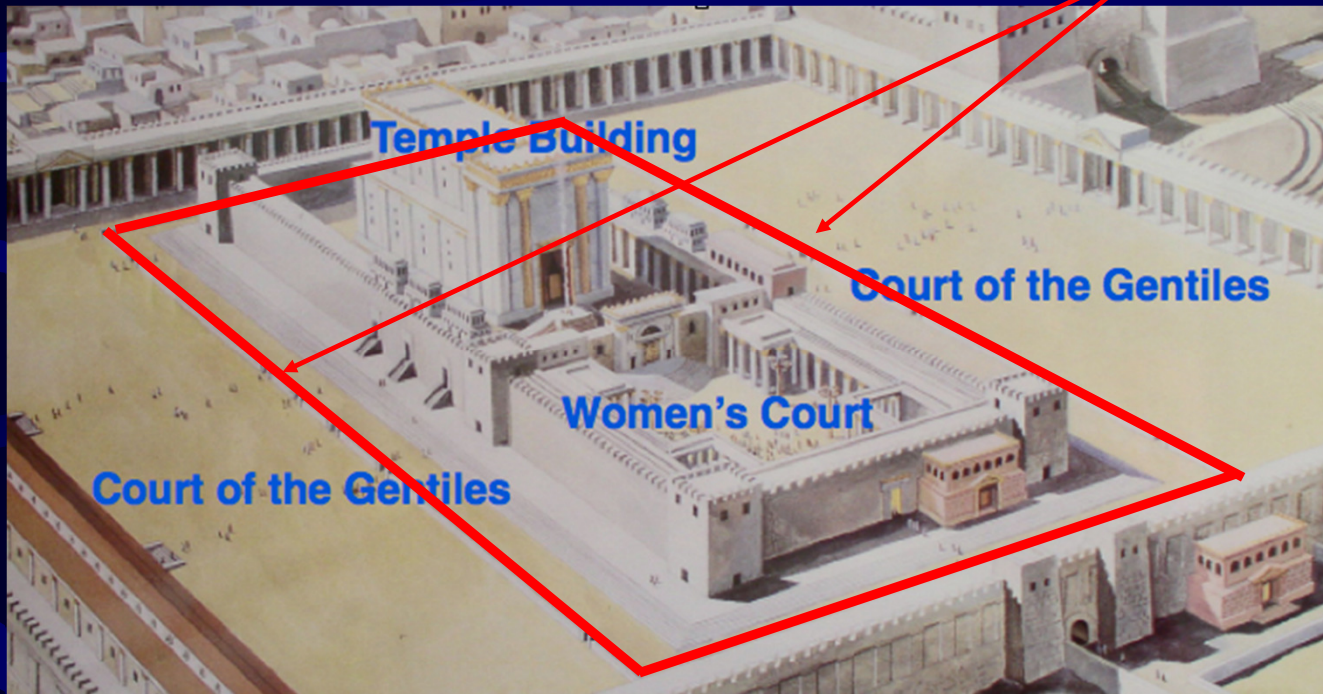
*Wall of China  
Built from Seventh Century BC  
to 17<sup>th</sup> Century AD*



*Berlin Wall  
Aug 13, 1961 to  
Nov 9, 1989*

## Diversity in Scripture

- **What is a famous wall in the bible that separates people?**



***“No Gentile may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”***

- **Paul was accused of taking Trophimus into the Temple area which caused a riot (Acts 21:27-36)**

## Diversity in Scripture

*“<sup>11</sup>Therefore remember that at one time you **Gentiles** in the flesh, called ‘the uncircumcision’ by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands –*

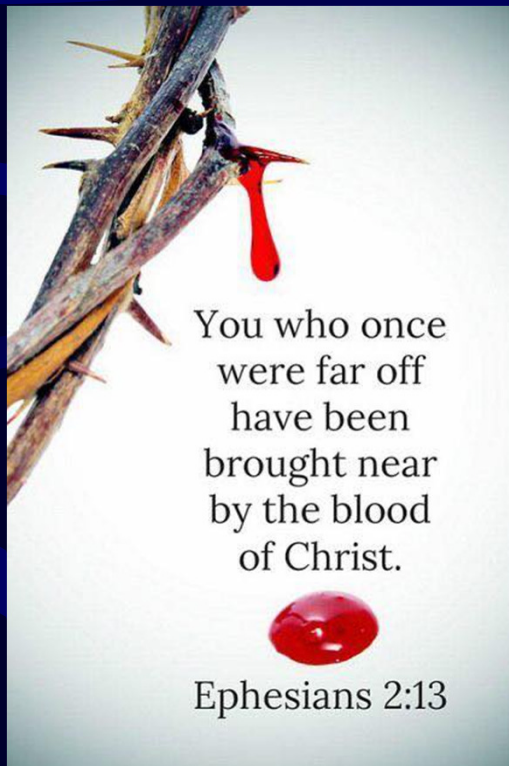
*<sup>12</sup>remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and **strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** <sup>13</sup>**But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.** <sup>14</sup>For he himself is our peace, **who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility”***



## Diversity in Scripture

*“<sup>15</sup>by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself **one new man in place of the two, so***

***making peace,** <sup>16</sup>and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. <sup>17</sup>**And he came and preached peace to you who were far off** and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup>**For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.** <sup>19</sup>So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you **are fellow citizens** with the saints and members of the household of God.” – Ephesians 2:11-19 ESV*



## *How Uniformity Kills Unity*

- *We become accidental Pharisees when we lay down boundary markers that are narrower than the ones laid down by Jesus and then treat people who line up on the wrong side of our markers as if they were spiritual imposters or enemies of the Lord.*
  - *Boundary markers that are narrower than Jesus don't protect the flock. They divide the flock.*

*Radical*

*Authentic*

*Missional*

*Gospel centered*

*Revolutionary*

*Organic*

## *Theological Uniformity Undercuts the Bible*

- *The more we pursue **theological uniformity**, the more the Bible takes a back seat. Sometimes the Bible is not even allowed to speak for itself:*
  - *We can be overly influenced by our favorite author or pastor.*
  - *Eventually the Bible becomes nothing more than a **proof text** for what our tribe already believes.*
  - *Theological systems **superimpose** on the Bible and make passages fit in their system.*

## *Systematic Theology*

*“No matter how much you’d like it to be, **no (theological) system is perfect.** If you can’t enumerate the problems with your system, **deal honestly with the verses that are troubling to your side,** and admit that the other side makes some good points, you are probably in danger of being seduced by your system.”*

*– Dave Miller SBC Voices*



## **Agreeing to Disagree**

- *Some disputes are about passages that do not have indisputable interpretations:*
  - *Scripture is indisputable about living in harmony.*
  - *Scripture is indisputable about not having a quarrelsome spirit.*

*“<sup>23</sup>Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. <sup>24</sup>And the Lord's servant **must not be quarrelsome** but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, <sup>25</sup>**correcting his opponents with gentleness**. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, <sup>26</sup>and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.” – 2 Timothy 2:23-26*

## **Agreeing to Disagree**

- Passages that **do not** have indisputable interpretations:

**Matthew 16:18 “on this rock I will build my church”**

**Acts 2:38 “Repent and be baptized ... for the forgiveness of sins”**

**Acts 16:31 “And they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’”**

**1 Corinthians 13:8 “As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease”**

**1 Peter 3:21 “Baptism ... now saves you”**

## *Agreeing to Disagree*

*“We should say our piece but then seek the peace. We should try to influence but not inflame.”*

*– Larry Osborne*

## Agreeing to Disagree

- Many of us do better bearing with **non-Christians** than we do bearing with our **annoying** and **wrongheaded** brothers and sisters in Christ.

Greek word actually means to detest (dislike intensely) someone or something

- The Apostle John has a warning for us:

*“<sup>9</sup>Whoever says he is in the light and **hates** his brother is still in darkness. <sup>10</sup>Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. <sup>11</sup>But whoever **hates** his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.” – 1 John 2:9-11 ESV*

## ***Final Quote***

***“We can live in light of our spiritual unity, or we can live in denial of it. We can focus on our common allegiance to Jesus, or we can focus on our many areas of significant disagreement. We can bear with one another, or we can fight and divide.”***

***– Larry Osborne***

## *Application Questions*

- 1. There are some things that are worth fighting for. Which **specific issues** do you believe should be on that list?*
- 2. How would you rate the **diversity** of FCOV?*
- 3. Where should FCOV watch to make sure we are not elevating **uniformity** over **unity**?*

*ACCIDENTAL*  
**PHARISEES**

*Next Week – Gift Projection & the Money Police*