

Gathering Question: Name a person in your group that you feel more “of one mind” with than any other. Give reasons why.

Agree With One Another

Do you almost feel like breaking out in a chorus of “To Dream the Impossible Dream” when you read the title of this week’s lesson? I do! And yet, there it is in Scripture for all to see and it is found in a letter written to one of the most splintered churches in the ancient world.

Make no mistake, this is a church blessed by God. You need only read the first 9 verses of the letter. They are sanctified and called to be holy. They have been blessed by the grace of Jesus and enriched by the Holy Spirit. They have been eagerly awaiting the coming of Jesus. They are a part of God’s family waiting to go home to be with him.

One vital thing they lack – unity! He uses a very strong word to get their attention. I **appeal** to you! And then he says he appeals in the name of Jesus! What he is asking is extremely important. He wants them to agree with each other so that divisions will not plague them, and so that they will be perfectly united in mind and thought. One translation more literally translates that he wants them to all speak the same thing.

What can Paul mean here? Could he truly be encouraging these Christians to never have any disagreements or divergence on any matter? Is this a statement against diversity of thought? Is he calling for lockstep conformity? That would be hard to imagine since in other places Paul calls for toleration and love when it comes to disputable matters and disagreements (I Corinthians 8; Romans 14, 15). It may be that Paul is mostly concerned about Christians having the same purpose. They must never forget that they are bought by the blood of Jesus. They must always remember that it is God who has placed them into the Body of Christ, the Family of God and that they are to show love, respect, and kindness to their fellow members. They must never allow quarrels over personalities, preferences, rights, etc., to ever destroy their unity in Christ.

The unity they have in Jesus is far too vital to allow anything to destroy it short of an absolute rebellion against God. There must never develop sects or camps or followings or divisive issues. Christians must honor each other, encourage, and love each other. They are family! They need desperately to act like it.

Read: Romans 2:1ff; I Corinthians 1:1-17; II Timothy 2:14-26

Discuss:

1. Make a list of your top five essentials of the faith without the rest of the group knowing what you write down. Now share your list with each other. How united do you seem to be with the rest of the group on the essentials of the faith?
2. Why is quarreling prohibited by Paul?
3. What does Paul mean when he asks us to agree with each other?