

COMING TO COMPLETE UNITY!

John 17:13-23

INTRODUCTION: When will the world know that Jesus was sent by God and that God loves us even as He loves His only begotten Son? The world will know when we are in perfect unity and walk in love as our Lord Jesus walked: John 13:34-35.

I. SEEKING UNITY!

Jesus command here was not new but it was new coming from Jesus: Leviticus 19:18. What is new is that we as Jesus disciples are to love one another as Jesus loved us. Ephesians 4:1-3; Ephesians 5:1-2. Sadly we see so many trying to build their own kingdoms instead of building the kingdom of God: Romans 14:1-15. We have some things everyone must agree upon or we are not true disciples of God. John 1:12-13.

II. SEEKING UNITY IN DIVERSITY!

However, even though there are some things every Christian must agree upon, there are other things that our Lord tells us not to judge others for their differing views: Romans 14:17; Romans 15:7; Romans 14:1: our acceptance in one another on disputable matters will bring glory to our God. Way back in the early church there were disputes going on: Romans 14:1-6. Disputable matters include days and diets. However unity in the church is more important than our individual opinions and we must work at unity: Psalm 133:1. In every local church there are matters of doctrine and opinion. There are matters of truth and preference. Issues of the core of Christianity revolve around the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Of those issues there are no opinions; there is only truth. But beyond those core doctrines there are many opinions. Here is God's solution: Romans 14:13; Romans 14:14-21.

III. SEEKING UNITY FOR GOD'S GLORY!

What you believe about debatable matters is between you and God: Romans 14:22-23. Jesus Christ accepts us on the basis of our faith in His shed blood. As we confess our sins and repent in faith in Christ we are accepted by God unconditionally. We are called to accept as brothers and sisters all those who come to Christ in like faith. So: 1.) in our church we will discuss our debatable matters but when we become hot under the collar it is time to stop arguing and to be sure we do not become a stumbling block to our brothers and sisters. 2.) In our church we will stop judging one another in disputable areas and will not talk about their character and motives. 3. In our church we will try to move towards what makes for peace and edifies one another: 1 Peter 4:8; Romans 15:1-7. Remember, if you have a strong opinion, you are the strong one. Do not for the sake of winning an argument discourage a weaker brother. When people see our unity on the things that really do not matter they will see our complete unity and realize that God sent Jesus Christ into the world to be the Savior of all mankind and that includes them.