



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

Aug 21, 2022

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Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Dale Barger

Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace

How does one keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? When people willingly join themselves together, they do so with good intentions. Each one comes from a place that is not shared by the others in that group. We all have our experiences, perspectives, and we launch into the future with that. Sometimes, we forget that not everyone thinks like I do. When we forget this, we attribute to others “*they understand*” my intentions (my motives) when, in fact, they may not. A great failing of humanity is this: attributing to another my way of thinking.

In answering the question, the only right answer is under the banner of the Lord’s leadership. We have political perspectives that align, but they do not always align perfectly. We have philosophies of life that align, but they do not always align perfectly. When we address another who is totally different from me, then what? Can we still be unified? Yes, but only under the banner of the Lord’s authority. The Lord molds us into a thinking people that aligns with Him, and not our heritage or perspective.

In this approach to keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace we gain the Lord, and the Lord gains all those who love and obey Him. With love, devotion, and conviction, we live as Paul exhorted us to live, “*I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me...*” (cf. **Gal. 2:20**). With this new approach to life, we operate from the source of love, as revealed in that which God did for us; we seek to show this love to others, regardless of their point of reference and circumstances (cf. **Matthew 7:12; 22:34-40**). We are kind, gentle, teach the truth, forbearing to those we believe have done us wrong, allow not yesterday to get in front of today. In short, we live as Christ.

How much effort are you putting in to keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace?

Ron Thomas
Sunrush church of Christ
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Three Things Christians Need Today

Imagine encountering some of the people that Jesus encountered during His lifetime. Would you respond like Jesus did? Imagine coming face-to-face with a leper, a woman with a blood malady of 12 years, a woman caught in adultery, beggars, ingrates, disfigured and unsightly invalids, numerous diseased, tricksters, spoiled rich brats, a traitor, hateful and violent soldiers, a cowardly king, a spineless governor, etc., etc. How would you treat them? We can learn much from our Great Example!

Jesus was humble! How difficult it must have been for the Son of God to lower Himself before His own creation! It is an awe-inspiring scene indeed to picture Jesus as He “*began to wash the disciples feet and to wipe them*” (**John 13:15**). The humility of Christ is set forth in exemplary detail for us in **Philippians 2:3**, “*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*” This was the mind of our Lord (**v. 5**). The humble heart says, “*I am not better than you!*”

Jesus was respectful! How difficult it must have been for the Son of Man to be respectful of His imperfect creations as so many of them were disrespectful of Him! There were those who intentionally and repeatedly sought to test Him (**Matt. 16:1**); those who would not leave Him alone (**Matt. 14:13-14**); those who bound Him, treated Him like a criminal, put Him on mock trials, struck Him, insulted Him, scourged Him and crucified Him. Yet, what was Jesus’ response? How did He treat those who mistreated Him so severely? “When He was reviled, He did not revile in return” (**1 Pet. 2:23**). When He had opportunity to put His enemies in their place and destroy them, He “*kept silent*” (**Matt. 26:63; Isa. 53:7**). He broke His silence only to say things like, “*Father, forgive them*” (**Luke 23:34**). The respectful heart says, “*I will be considerate of you no matter what!*”

Jesus was compassionate! How difficult it must have been at times for the human side of Jesus to maintain a heart of compassion for the cruel and heartless self-seekers. Yet, Jesus did not just “*possess*” compassion (if such could be merely possessed), but He “*exhibited*” compassion. Scripture says that “*He was moved with compassion*” for the multitudes (**Matt. 9:36**). His sympathetic feeling of pity for His shepherd-less creation was so deep that He could not but do something to alleviate their distress. The compassionate heart says, “*I feel for you and I want to help you!*”

Brethren, how humble, respectful and compassionate are we? Do we seek to treat others the way our Lord did?

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