

The Oak Grove Oracle

(Family News & Views of the Oak Grove Church of Christ)

Meeting Weekly At Our Building Located At:

FM Rd. 1402 North, (Mailing Address: P.O. Box 523), Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455, (903) 572-0859

Church Website: www.churchofchristatoakgrove.com or, www.ogcoc.net

David A. McCain, Gospel Preacher & Bulletin Editor, (903) 577-1540 (H), 285-1756 (M)

Volume VI Sunday, December 16, 2018 Number 49

The Foundation of Spiritual Unity

The foundation of religious or spiritual unity must be Christ, and Christ alone, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). The church of the New Testament was built by Christ (Mt. 16:18), and He is the head of His body, the church (Col. 1:18). Any attempt to build religious unity on the foundations of man-made denominationalism is destined to eternal failure, for the Lord warned, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Mt. 15:13).

Jesus prayed fervently for the unity of all believers (Jn. 17:20-21). However, man-made denominationalism thwarted His prayer by creating hundreds of schisms and "isms." Effectively this divided "Christ's body" into many competing factions, all vying for position as the Lord's true church. Amidst all this confusion, is there any way we can achieve religious unity? Yes there is, if all who claim to follow Christ will throw away their denominational names, creeds, and doctrines, to restore the His New Testament church by practicing only what the Bible authorizes and commands. The following principles, taken directly from the Scriptures, must be adhered to if we would restore the unity of the Lord's church in our generation.

The only "creed" or rule of faith and practice for the Lord's church must be the New Testament of Jesus Christ. According to Hebrews 1:1-2, He is God's final spokesman to mankind in these "last days." In Jesus' prayer for unity (Jn. 17), Jesus said He had shared the Father's Word with His disciples, and that His Word was truth (vss. 8-17). In John 12:48-50, Jesus said His Word would be the standard of authority for the final Judgment. Truly, if we want to find religious unity, we will find it in only in the Scriptures, for the Apostle Paul wrote, "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

This is the plea of churches of Christ, to restore in our time the original New Testament church. We believe progress in accomplishing religious unity can be made only by going backwards. Let us go "back to the Bible," as our only pattern for worship and practice. If you are not a member of Christ's body, but you find the concept of undenominational New Testament Christianity appealing, then we would welcome the opportunity to "search the Scriptures" (Jn. 5:39, Acts 17:11) with you, to learn how you too can become a member of the church Jesus died to save (Acts 20:28).

David A. McCain