

**Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church in Singapore – 2010 June Camp**  
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**WE ARE ONE: (2) THE BASIS OF IT**

**Introduction:**

1. Ephesians 4 sets before us the calling to maintain unity. See also John 17:20-21.
2. The question we now consider is: With whom should we and may we be united?

**WE ARE ONE: (2) THE BASIS OF IT**

- I. Many churches and Christians today are willing to have unity with just about anyone.
  - A. The approach of the ecumenical movement is outward/physical unity. It is not based on spiritual oneness in Christ. Churches are united simply because they call themselves churches.
  - B. While not all churches go along with this, nevertheless many are influenced. Even “Reformed” churches today put aside the truth as the basis of unity. The buzzword is “tolerance.”
- II. The proper basis of unity is the truth.
  - A. We seek unity and maintain unity with those who are one with us in the faith. See John 17:20; I Cor. 1:10, Eph. 4:5, 13-15. The question to ask and to be guided by is that of Amos 3:3.
  - B. The Reformed creeds/confessions are important in this connection.
    1. Notice how the *Apostles’ Creed* is referred to in *Heidelberg Catechism*, LD 7. Notice too that the main creeds of Reformed churches are called the “Three Forms of Unity.”
    2. The creeds have this significance because the Spirit of Christ has led the church into the truth. They are a basis of unity because they faithfully set forth the truths of the Word of God.
  - C. We must maintain the truth, and always make that truth the basis of unity with others.
    1. Many are abandoning the truth, and this is having serious consequences in churches.
    2. Because so many are departing from the truth, it is difficult to find others with whom to unite.
    3. We should never become desperate and join with others simply so we are not alone.
- III. Another important basis of unity is a common life – a common life of holiness, godliness, etc.
  - A. Unity can only exist when Christ’s commands are the norm for the lives of God’s people.
    1. This does not mean we can only fellowship with those who are perfect. For no one is.
    2. The chief characteristic is not perfection, but a life of humble obedience to Christ.
  - B. There may not be differences regarding morality. We are a communion of “saints.” II Cor. 6:14.
- IV. Practical implications/application.
  - A. The church has a calling. That calling is to seek unity with other churches, but without compromise. If you have to stand alone for the sake of the truth, then you must do so.
  - B. The individual believer has a calling to be a member in the church institute.
    1. He/she is not to join a church for earthly reasons, but because the truth of Christ is there.
    2. You must be a faithful member for your own soul’s salvation, and for the sake of your children.

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**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is the explanation for the existence of so many different denominations in the world?
2. Why do most churches today want to be one at the expense of the truth? How is this a warning to us?
3. In what ways does a failure to have a common life of obedience to Christ destroy church unity?
4. Can we cooperate with other churches to accomplish good in society even though we differ in doctrine?
5. Mention some biblical examples of those who stood alone. How did God bless this?