

Introduction

THE MARKS OF UNITY

I. **What are they**

A. Being like-minded

1. The original means to think in the same way or to have the same attitudes
 - a. Scripture teaches that there is a contrast between the things of the flesh and the things of the spirit
 - b. And in Romans 8.5, they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit
 - (1) For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace
 - (2) Because the carnal mind is enmity against God and it is not subject to the law of God
2. And thus Scripture exhorts us to mind the things of the Spirit of God
 - a. But to mind the things of the flesh
 - (1) This flesh is not the physical flesh of our body but the old man of sin which is according to the deceitful lusts and works
 - (2) but how can we mind the things of the spirit of God
 - b. #1 - We must mind the things of the Spirit of God
 - (1) The opposite of it is to mind after the works of the flesh
 - (a) not after the our fleshly desires, lusts and goals which is according to the old man of sin
 - (b) not according to pride or to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think
 - (c) Nor living in sin or living after the pleasures of the world
 - (2) but we are to be spiritually minded
 - (a) To do all things not for self but for the glory of God
 - i) To seek first the kingdom of God:
 - a) support the preaching of the gospel so that the name of God may be glorified
 - b) and for the welfare of the saints
 - ii) To love the church of our Lord Jesus Christ that is scattered on the length and breath of this world
 - (b) To obey God from the heart
 - i) and this is done out of the fear of God
 - ii) to obey God unconditionally
 - (c) To have the fruit of the spirit of love, joy and longsuffering
 - c. #2 - We must think with sound divine judgment
 - (1) Not subjectively but objectively, according to the Word of God
 - (a) This is very important for today, many Christians attribute certain works to the Holy Spirit which is not his
 - i) Speaking in tongues
 - ii) Holy laughter
 - iii) Slayed in the spirit
 - (b) So, we must read and listen carefully what the Holy Spirit says according to the works of the Spirit for they are inseparable
 - (2) Positively

- (a) Be filled with the Spirit of God means to let the word of Christ to dwell richly in us, teaching and admonishing us in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Col. 3.16)
- (b) To make a judgment based on the teaching of the Word of God
 - i) Not to be wishy-washy, or sentimental or going by feelings
 - ii) not according to the will of man to please them
 - iii) but, purely upon the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures
- (3) And thus, if we are all like-minded to be spiritually minded, then we will be united
 - (a) But, if we are not like-minded then the danger is that CERC will be under severe strain and stress and will be divided into different parts
 - (b) Are you like-minded? Do you love the church enough to be like-minded?

B. Having the same love

1. This flows out of be like-minded or if you are of the same mind or like-minded, you will have the same love
2. Rom. 12.10 reads , “be kindly affectioned one towards another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another”
 - a. This means you are committed to meet the needs of our brethren edify him, to be a blessing to him, both physically and spiritually
 - (1) John 15.13, “Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends”
 - (2) God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son to us, whom we greatly need
 - b. Practically
 - (1) Do you befriend your sister if you see that she is lonely, sitting all by herself in church
 - (2) Do you bring the word of encouragement to others who needs it
 - (3) Or if others offend you, what do you do? Do you have love enough to approach the brother and sister to reconcile - this is love
 - (a) It is far easier to talk to others about it, then talk to that person about it
 - (b) But by talking to others about it is gossip and it is sin
 - (4) By doing all these,
 - (a) we have the same love one for another
 - (b) the opposite is complaining, gossip, slander and backbiting

C. Of one accord

1. The Greek word means united in spirit or one-souled, or knit together as one soul - same ambition, same desire and same passion
 - a. And because they are knit as one soul, they gather often together in one place
 - (1) And the example of this is in the early church in the book of Acts
 - (2) After they were saved from their sins, they gathered together in the temple
 - (a) To hear the apostle’s doctrines, in prayers, in breaking of bread and fellowship (Acts 2.42, 46)
 - (b) They were in one accord in one place on the day of Pentecost in the upper room, waiting for the power of the Spirit to descend so that they can be witnesses of Christ
 - (c) And when the congregation were in desperate need, they had all thing common and sold their possessions
 - (d) and they also gathered in Solomon’s porch
 - b. How did they express their unity
 - (1) They expressed their unity in believing in the teaching of the apostle, in the breaking of bread and in prayers

- (2) And if you withdraw yourself from all these, it demonstrates that you are not united with the people of God
- 2. And how does the church expressed that they are one-souled
 - a. Not by our own selfish opinions or our private agendas
 - b. But they gathering together regularly in one place and such a gathering glorifies God
 - (1) the glory of God is bound up in the church
 - (2) and the fruit of the glory of God is the unity of the church

D. Of one mind

- 1. Minding one thing
 - a. The first mark of unity is being like-minded
 - (1) here it is one mind and it is slightly different
 - (2) to be of one mind is to have a single eye with a sole purpose
 - b. Examples
 - (1) to be a person of one thing and one thing alone, eg. Psalm 27.4, one thing have desired of the Lord that will I seek after that I will dwell all the days in my life ...
 - (2) One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3.13, 14)
- 2. And in order to have unity, we must be of one mind
 - a. Without this one mind, there is no unity
 - b. And to summarise
 - (1) the apostle Paul takes 4 ways in what unity is
 - (a) but why these 4 ways?
 - (b) answer: because he wants these things to be embedded in their hearts and minds and so that they do not forget it
 - (2) We must think the same thing in the love of christ for one another
 - (a) controlled by the knowledge of Christ and energised by the spirit of Christ who causes us to walk in the Spirit and to maintain the spiritual attitude
 - (b) and in this way, unity is achieved
 - (3) But, why must we maintain unity in the church?

II. The Motivation

A. Because of Christ

- 1. Since you have received the encouragement from Christ
 - a. When you were terribly discouraged, down and in the dumps and you had no one to turn to
 - b. Then came Christ, in the Spirit of Christ, who came alongside you
 - (1) You thought you went through this trial alone, but God's word reminded you, "you are not alone, my son or my daughter" and "I will not leave you nor forsake you"
 - (2) Then, a cheer and a smile came upon your face
 - (a) You were lifted up and encouraged
 - (b) and the Lord restored you the joy of the Lord and you were strengthened in the inner man
 - (c) "the joy of the Lord is your strength"
 - (3) and because you have received the encouragement from Christ, then, be one with your brethren
- 2. Since we have received comfort of love
 - a. Because you have received Christ's love, tender mercy, pity sympathy,

- b. Could you not give the same love to your brethren and this unity is dear to the heart of God

B. Because of the Holy Spirit

- 1. Since we have received the fellowship of the Spirit
 - a. That we owe much to the Holy Spirit who has given us a new spiritual life in Christ
 - (1) So that we become a new creature in Christ
 - (2) We are made holy with a new nature to love God, to serve him
 - b. The Holy Spirit leads us in the way of holiness
 - (1) By causing us to live an antithetical life in this world
 - (2) In obedience to his Word
 - (3) to do good works unto the glory of God
- 2. And since we have received bowels and mercies
 - a. God showed us pity when we were cast out and lain in the streets
 - (1) we were unwashed and our umbilical cord was uncut
 - (2) and we were unloved
 - b. But, God showed mercy on us
 - (1) He washed us with the blood of Christ, cleaned us, cared for us
 - (2) and brought us into the covenant of grace and loved us with an everlasting love

C. And finally, because for the sake of the joy of the apostle

- 1. The apostle exhorts the saints, "fulfill my joy"
 - a. To fulfill means to fill up completely, to complete and to bring it to fruition
 - b. This means to make the apostle's joy complete by being united
 - (1) that there be no divisions in the church of Christ
 - (2) This is the wish of every servant of God that the church is one
- 2. May CERC grow to be one,
 - a. not only in doctrine,
 - b. but also being like-minded, having the same love, in one accord and one mind.
- 3. God willing, tomorrow morning, we will deal with "how to attain this unity". Amen