

# Every Wind Of Doctrine

Ephesians 4:14

**Introduction:** Rarely in today's religious world do folks concern themselves with scripture. By scripture I mean the writings and guiding principles of the New Testament. It shouldn't surprise us then when we read of how some denominational group has debate and division over secular issues. If a ship isn't anchored it will drift wherever the sea desires and so if man is not anchored he will wax and wane. Indeed, this is exactly why there is religious division among all believers today.

It certainly would seem that the unity among believers prayed for by Christ and pled for by His holy ambassadors seems to be just a pipe dream. However, there was a time when this unity existed and flourished. Even at one time in this country, not so long ago, men realized the need for true unity. (Not inter-denominationalism but unity) The call in those days was "back to the Bible" and it was heard and men had hope. A few today still hold out hope for the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph 4:3) I am one who still holds out for the hope of true unity among believers and it is with this in mind that I offer these thoughts this week in hopes that many might answer the call of Jesus for unity.

For our consideration of Bible unity I believe the apostle Paul provides, in his epistle to the Ephesians, a guiding rule, which if followed, would help all find true Bible unity. Let us, therefore, study together Paul's answer to the unity question.

## I. The Seven "Ones"

- A. Paul had great hopes for unity among believers and taught of its need often. (cp I Cor 1:10)
  1. Here in Ephesians, however, Paul establishes forever the grounds for true Bible unity
  2. Seven Ones: (Eph 4:1-6)
    - a. **ONE** body/church – Eph 1:22-23
    - b. **ONE** Spirit/Holy Spirit
    - c. **ONE** hope
    - d. **ONE** Lord/Jesus Christ
    - e. **ONE** faith
    - f. **ONE** baptism/immersion
    - g. **ONE** God/Father
  3. These seven "ones" are the pedestals of unity.
    - a. They should not be considered the totality of unity only its roots
    - b. However, clearly Paul's concern is for unity BASED upon these principles
- B. Of course, no study of Bible unity would be complete without referencing the fact that Bible unity begins with Christ's prayer for it. (Jn 17:21)
  1. Paul's call here for unity is simply the fulfilling of the teachings of Christ.

## II. Unto A Perfect Man

- A. In this epistle, Paul is speaking to those in the New Testament church, those already set on the seven pillars of unity.
  - 1. This alone however, as mention before, is not all there is to unity
  - 2. Paul further explains this by noting the purpose of the instructors given to the saints (Eph 4:11-13)
    - a. These were given for:
      - 1) Perfecting of the saints
      - 2) Work of the ministry
      - 3) Edifying of the body of Christ
    - b. Note that these three missions would *bring* one to “the unity of the faith” (Eph 4:13)
    - c. Mature Bible unity then is not found in the seven “ones” alone but they are the pillars of unity - A starting point
- B. Clear, however, is that perfect unity is what is to be striven for (cp Eph 4:13b)
  - 1. Without it no individual believer can attain “The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”
  - 2. This is what each individual believer is to be striving for and this can only begin to be obtained when we are first planted upon the pillars of unity.

## III. Every Wind Of Doctrine

- A. The key to obtaining unity among believers is revealed in verse 14. (Eph 4:14)
  - 1. It is clear by the import of this verse that men must leave behind certain doctrines
  - 2. What doctrines then should they leave and to which should they cling?
- B. Clearly, Paul was warning that there are doctrines, which are harmful.
  - 1. A simple investigation of the scriptures would allow even the youngest of Bible student to deduce which doctrines are harmful
    - a. Doctrine of the Pharisees (Matt 16:12)
    - b. Doctrine of Balaam (Rev 2:14)
    - c. Doctrine of the Nicolaitans (Rev 2:15)
    - d. Unhealthy doctrine (cp II Tim 4:3-4)
    - e. These are but a few specific harmful doctrines that we read of in the New Testament.
- C. When we include what the Bible teaches about the appropriate doctrine to adhere to we can gain an even greater appreciation for what doctrines to exclude
  - 1. For brevity sake consider just these few passages.
    - a. Jesus’ doctrine
      - 1) Not his own (Jn 7:16-17; cp I Tim 6:1)
      - 2) Withdraw from those who “consent not to wholesome words” of His doctrine (I Tim 6:3-5; II Jn 9)
      - 3) This is sometimes known as the “apostle’s doctrine”
    - b. Any doctrine then that is not Jesus’ doctrine must be left

- D. What this points to is in its entirety is that when we follow only the doctrine of Christ based upon the seven pillars of unity we can have true Bible unity.

#### IV. The Bible Definition of Unity

- A. If we follow these instructions here in Ephesians how does that produce unity?
1. Because unity by definition can only be fulfilled when we all agree
    - a. Unity:
      - 1) Merriam-Webster's – "the quality or state of being made one"
      - 2) Jn 17:20-21 – "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be ONE; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be ONE in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."
  2. Religious or Bible unity is accomplished by being one in voice and in mind (cp I Cor 1:10)
    - a. Speak the same thing
    - b. Together in the same mind
    - c. Together in the same judgment
  3. Obviously, being ONE means we can't be two
    - a. We can only be ONE when we agree
    - b. The only way we can agree is when we are saying and believing the same things
    - c. This can only be done when we use the same formula for ONENESS
      - 1) Settled upon the seven pillars of unity
      - 2) Led by the doctrine of Christ only

**Conclusion:** Many religious denominations have tried compromise as a means of unity. They call this interdenominationalism. They simply agree to disagree on many religious points and claim unity on a few. This is not true Bible unity however and is certainly not what our Lord prayed for. Nothing less than total and entire Bible unity is called for and nothing less is what we should strive to obtain.