

Psalm 133:1 “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”

To remember the reference, look at the pattern of the numbers: 13 and 31. If each one of us (1) hold close to the Trinity(3) letting Him control and guide our minds and hearts, we will have unity!

Ephesians 4:1-3, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

To endeavor means to exert physical strength or intellectual power, for the accomplishment of an object.

There will always be people in the church that will say or do something that we think is not right. You will have to endeavor to keep the right attitude towards them and let the issue go. Over the years, I have found the following thoughts most helpful in this area:

- 1) The same God that faithfully corrects and trains me is the same God that will faithfully correct and train them. I have to remember that this job is His, not mine.
- 2) Self-evaluation is vital. God may have allowed the conflict to reveal something about myself which I have been ignorant.
- 3) Check your expectations; they may be unfair. When a 2 year old walks into a room and acts like a 2 year old, they are acting as we expect. When a 60 year old walks into a room and acts like a 2 year old, we are shocked. We easily set behavior expectations on people based upon physical age. But we cannot easily set spiritual expectations on people by physical appearance. Physical age has nothing to do with spiritual maturity. An elderly person may be a baby in Christ, a teenager may be a young adult spiritually or a middle age person may be a toddler spiritually. Setting spiritual expectations based upon physical age is unfair and leads to wrong expectations.
- 4) Overlooking the faults of others pleases the Lord. He overlooks my faults and forgives me of all my sin, it's the least I can do.
- 5) The devil is the source behind all disunity in the church. Thus our real enemy is not the person. Satan's goal is to get people out of church and disunity is an effective tool.

John 17 outlines the beautiful prayer Jesus prayed for you and I. (Note: the chapter is 17 – The power of God '10' + plus His number '7'!)

In this prayer, Jesus is burdened about our unity. This is not the worldly unity of religions. Many falsely use this verse to promote world unity. There is no unity that can be achieved that goes against scripture. We should never promote unity between ourselves and false religions.

Jesus prayed and is still praying for unity among Christians because He knows the persecutions we face or will face. The world's hatred towards Him is reflected upon us. Our unity in persecutions and in prayers demonstrates the love of Christ. It shows the world that He is real.

JOHN 17: These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, **Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 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. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.**