Is Christ Divided?
By Trey Sullins

There is a world of confusion around us. With so many denominations and various religions it can seem really hard to know what is right. However, the Bible is clear in 1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." Because God is not the author of confusion, He tells us and shows us exactly what He wants of us within His word, and His word commands us to have unity. We can find these great lessons within the life of Christ.

Christ practiced unity among His people. In John 10:30 Jesus says, "I and my Father are one." It is upon this principle that Jesus lived his life. Everything that He did showed unity with the Father. Jesus has the same goals as God the Father as we find in John 3:16 which tells us that God sent Jesus to bring everlasting life to those of faith. Furthermore, in Luke 22:42 Jesus said, "not My will, but Yours, be done." This is confirmation that He was only going to do what God the Father wanted Him to do. There is a great lesson for us in this attitude; our unity with God and each other, as Christians, must be based upon God's will. We should never seek to unify by overlooking sins which God has condemned or by ignoring God's word. Unity in practice means that we are all brought together by God and therefore are in unity.

Christ prayed for unity for His people. The great prayer of Christ in John 17 has a major focus on being in unity. Jesus both prays for His own personal unity with God the Father and for unity with His followers. He said, "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:20-21). Notice Jesus's wording "that they all may be one." Jesus was saying that He wanted His followers to be unified in their beliefs of Him. Does a world filled with numerous denominations and varying beliefs match His prayer? Certainly Not! If we truly love God, then our desire should be to serve Him according to the way He has commanded. When we choose to be one in the doctrines of Christ and not men, then we will be perfectly brought together in unity with Christ, God the Father, and each other.

Christ preached unity to His people. One of the main themes of Jesus preaching was this very thing. After being accused of working for Satan, Jesus said, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand" (Matthew 12:25-26). If Jesus was working for Satan, then it would make no sense for Him to be casting out evil things. In the same way, if we are not doing the works of God, then we are against Him; and thus, Jesus shows us the necessity of unity. A little further in verse 30 He said, "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad." When we are not unified in the ways of God then we are not only harming our own status before Him, but we are also working against His kingdom and possibly hurting the faith of many others.

Jesus Christ, the Word of God, brought us the will of God so that we might know how to be righteous. His will teaches be in unity. Jesus proves this by His practices, prayers, and preaching. Those who are "in Christ" have "been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13); therefore, we have to ask ourselves the question does our faith come from the creeds of man? The

traditions of man? Our pastor or preacher? Or does our faith come from the word God? If our faith comes from the word of God, then that means we have studied to know what and why a Christian ought to believe. When we do it this way, we will be in complete unity with each other and most importantly with God. Of course, Christ is not divided, so we cannot be either!