

1 Corinthians

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Preacher: Mercer, Philip (1932-2013)

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[illegible]

Thank you.

[6 : 1 4] Thank you.

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Thank you.

[9 : 48] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We desire even in our day that there might be this true unity among the members of it that there might be that love one toward another that oneness felt we mentioned that word in the psalm this morning and how we desire and covet such an experience of that the psalmist could say behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity and we know from experience friends there is nothing to be compared to it when there is that true unity of the spirit and the bond of peace and surely it is set before us in this verse this evening for as the body is one our bodies have many members each member has a different office and yet the body is one as we saw this morning in those four different things there was a oneness one building one body one family and so with the husband and wife they are made one and so here this evening friends in the body there is this oneness this unity oh how we would desire to dwell upon that unity and our thoughts have gone to that memorable prayer of the Lord Jesus in the 17th of

John for this was the burden of his prayer as he came toward his suffering and his death his desire was that his people might know this oneness I believe this friends that where there is that life within the soul we shall have the same desire that the Lord Jesus Christ had that we might know this true unity this oneness for as the body is one the church is one one in Christ one with each other joined together how does the Lord Jesus pray then for these his people I feel this is a wonderful prayer it begins with a prayer for the Lord's people that they might have eternal life this is the beginning of this unity where the Lord grants spiritual life there is a desire in that soul for this unity this oneness if we are born again believers

I believe we shall have a desire to be one in the things of God the Lord Jesus prays first then that these people might receive eternal life as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him and then he goes on to speak of what that eternal life is it is to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent and the more we know him I believe the more we want to be like him and the Lord Jesus Christ set before us when he was here on earth this unity in various ways not only does he pray for it here but if we turn over to the fifteenth of John we see it in another way set before us the vine and the branches one oh that we may see these things as they're set before us in the word of

[14 : 37] God now this particular prayer that the Lord Jesus put up for unity how does he pray he says now I am no more in the world but these are in the world and I come to thee and then he says holy father keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me that they may be one as we are oh that we may see that prayer answered in the church of God that they may be one as we are you see there is a oneness in the trinity the father the son and the holy spirit are one one in three and three in one they cannot be divided and so the lord prays that his people the church may know this oneness as they know it that they may be one as we are and he goes on to pray for this during that prayer oh there is a desire we believe in the lord jesus that his people might be truly one oh have we the same desire in our hearts and we desire to pray for this unity to know more of it to realize that we are one in christ jesus but as the body is one and have many members yet it's one body these members working together desiring one another's good oh the lord jesus then prays for this in another verse he says the glory which thou gavest me i have given them that they may be one even as we are one oh that that prayer may be heard and answered in our case and that we may know this true unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and then as our mind has gone to that 15th chapter surely we can see this union there in the vine and the branches the lord jesus speaks concerning his people these that are spoken of in our text as the church abide in me and i in you as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine no more can ye except to abide in me there will be this desire to feel the oneness in the first place with the lord jesus a desire to abide in the vine and then there will be a desire to feel that unity with the lord's people feel that real love one toward another i am the vine ye are the branches he that abideth in me and i in him the same bringeth forth much fruit for without me he can do nothing and what are these fruits that are brought forth when there is this oneness i believe the apostle gives it to us in the galatians the fruit that the lord's people will bring forth as they know something of this unity in the galatians we find this the fruit of the spirit is love

this is something that will bring about a bond real love love is the golden chain that binds the happy souls above love oh hell we would pray for more love that the lord would grant us an increase of it love there will be that union that ruth and naomi knew if there's love in our hearts one to another and love will cover a multitude of sins love will cover a multitude of sins if we have that love see the lord jesus had love in his heart to his people when he laid down his life for them oh where there's love there's unity and springing from that love where there's true love and true unity i believe we've experienced this there will be true joy we mentioned this morning the prayer meeting and when we have felt that oneness in prayer together when we have known something of the meaning of that hymn the saints in prayer appear as one there has been a real joy in our hearts as we have felt a oneness in prayer as we felt that love flowing from heart to heart there's been a joy that the world knows nothing of joy will flow from love and from this union joy and peace you see where these two things there'll be bound to be peace if we love one another with a pure heart fervently and if we know something about joy in our hearts which springs from love there'll be peace peace with one another peace with god peace and there will be long suffering also we shall desire to suffer long as the lord jesus christ himself did long suffering gentleness oh hope we would pray for more of these things the fruit of the spirit gentleness to remember what the lord jesus said take my yoke upon you and learn of me for i am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest unto your soul there will be a gentleness and there will be a meekness in the heart of thee that love one another oh how the apostle then brings before us these fruits that flow from a union with christ abide in me and i in you if there's not this union you see this oneness if a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered there'll be no fruit but if we know what it is to be united to christ and united to his people there will be a bringing forth of this fruit and then he goes on to say and as the father has loved me so have i loved you what a love this is the love of the father and the love of the lord jesus christ often think of that word in jeremiah and how beautiful it is the lord said to him i have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have i drawn me the love of god is everlasting it is everlasting

eternal love as the father hath loved me so have i loved you continue ye in my love if ye keep my commandment ye shall abide in my love you see if we are desiring this unity and have this love in our hearts that we desire to keep his commandment to do those things that are pleasing in his sight this is my commandment that ye love one another as i have loved you greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends how great was that love which the lord jesus manifested when he laid down his life when as he says in the tenth of john i lay down my life for the sheep i lay it down of myself no man taketh it from me i have power to lay it down and i have power to take it again this commandment have i received of my father oh how wonderful then this chapter is concerning the vine and the branches of oneness that exists between the lord and his people and even between the people of god themselves as the body is one oh how we would desire then as we consider these words to know something of it to realize that working together that laboring together i thought as i read that word this morning surely there is a desire in our hearts to know it as we go on together in the things of god i desire it for you and desire it for ourselves that we may know what the apostle paul is speaking of in the third chapter of the first epistle of corinthians here he's speaking of the lord's servants and of their laboring and he says i have planted apollo's watered but god gave the increase how true that is the lord's servants may preach the gospel they may pray for the lord's people they may be as these two here paul and apollo's one may plant another may water but how true it is only god can give the increase only god can bring the increase in the church god gave the increase so then neither is he that plant is anything it is good when we're brought to that place when we're nothing in his life brought down to nothing neither is he that plant is anything neither he that water but god that giveth the increase the lord help us to look to him for that increase that we would seek after in the church the lord alone can give the increase and when will it come friends when there's this unity i feel this friend where there's unity there's strength but where there's not unity there's weakness where there's unity there will be prosperity we have it here very plainly set before us the apostle goes on now he that planteth and he that watereth are one notice that he that planteth and he that watereth are one oh how good

it is when there is this oneness with the lord's servants it's good sometimes to meet with them as we do the town once a month and we can feel this unity this unity of the spirit among the brethren we feel we can say concerning each other we are brethren in the lord he that planteth and he that watereth are one and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own life and then that word how it brings before us the unity we are laborers together with god the lord's servants are laborers together with god are desiring to labor together are desiring this unity we are laborers together with god we are god's husbandry we are god's building there is a oneness friend in all these things that we have sought to meditate upon today a oneness and we would desire to be favored with it and to be seeking after it as the body is one and has many members there are many members in the church as we think of it worldwide but that church of christ is one one body having one head lord jesus christ is the head of that church and how wonderfully does the apostle bring before us this great truth in this chapter as the body is one and has many members and all the members of that one body being many are one body so also is christ so it is with christ in the church he goes on to speak about the various members he speaks of the feet you see each of our members have a particular part to take in the church there are those like the feet there are those like the hands if the foot shall say because

I am not the hand I am not of the body is it therefore not of the body each member is necessary each one is in its place doing that particular work that the lord has called them to do and how wonderful it is when we can work together when there's that working together and desiring to know this unity as the body is one and has many members and all the members of that one body being many are one body so also is christ we should always keep this in mind as we think concerning the church although it is scattered throughout the whole world it's one and presently it will be brought together I love to think of that word just come to the mind in the 10th of john where the lord speaks of his sheep same people the church of christ spoken of as a sheep and in the course of that chapter we find him saying other sheep

[30 : 27] I have which are not of this fold them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd there we look forward to that time when there should be one fold and one shepherd there are many denominations on earth many divisions many separations but presently there will be but one fold and one shepherd oh how we long for that there shall be says the lord one fold and one shepherd oh that we may be striving towards it here below then this oneness in the things of God we have thought in connection to this word of that other word in the Ephesians where the apostle speaks to us concerning this unity and he brings it before us in that fourth chapter this is a wonderful word concerning this unity of the spirit he says to us

I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith your call and we need grace to walk worthy of this vocation to realise that we have been called by grace called into those positions that we hold how we desire grace to walk worthy of it but how shall we walk worthy of it with all loneliness this is the desire of those that are united to walk in this loneliness and meekness with long suffering for bearing one another in love there will be a bearing and a forbearing a desire to pray one for another a desire to bear one another's burden and then he says endeavouring and this shows how we need grace endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit it is possible you see that we may lose this unity so he says endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of thee and then he says there is one body and one spirit even as you are called in one hope of your calling one Lord so this brings before us true unity one Lord

Father Son and Holy Spirit the Trinity in unity one Lord one faith we are true believers in Christ we possess that one faith that faith which is the gift of God that faith which he alone can impart one faith one baptism what a mercy friends to be favoured to walk in these things to know that we have this one faith that God has given it to us when we are called by grace quickened by the spirit we have that gift of faith bestowed upon us as we have it very clearly set before us in chapter 2 of the Ephesians for by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of

God not of works let any man should bow when God quickens the soul he gives this grace of faith it's one faith one baptism what a mercy to be favoured to walk in this way this way of one baptism and to know not only the baptism of water the outward baptism but the baptism of the Holy Spirit to know that wonderful blessing of being baptised of the Holy Ghost one baptism one God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in you all oh how wonderful then does the apostles speak of this unity in this very chapter he speaks of the apostles and the prophets and the evangelists and the pastors and the teachers given for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ the edifying of this church the true church of Christ and then he says till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the

Son of Man and to a perfect man and to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ this surely is growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and there will be a desire to speak the truth in love I believe the Lord's servants will have that desire to speak the truth of God in love and how they desire that the Spirit may convey it to the hearts of the hearing and that we may grow up to him in all things which is the head even Christ from whom the whole body fitly join together this is a wonderful description of the Church of God fitfully joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies according to the effect you're working in the measure of every part this is surely the work of the

[36 : 55] Spirit to bring this unity cause us to know the meaning of our text concerning the body as the body is one and has many members and all the members of that one body being many are one body thou also is Christ and how we love to think of that which the apostle brings before us in the latter part of this chapter after speaking of the various members of the body we have mentioned the hands and the feet and the eyes he says whether one member suffers or the members suffer with it I believe if we know this unity there will be that in the Church there will be that sympathy with one another in our trials in our afflictions in our bereavement wherever there is suffering in one member all the other members will suffer with them they sympathise with them and certainly the

Lord Jesus Christ who is ahead will suffer with them in all their afflictions he was afflicted yes there will be a sympathy with those that suffer and if one member be honoured all the members will rejoice with it be that rejoicing too amongst the members of this body oh how beautiful then this unity is the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace oh I never forget recently being brought to that sixth chapter of the epistles of the romans and there we saw how these members are brought before us again by the apostle Paul he's speaking of the difference before calling grace how our very members are used in a wrong way our members are used unto uncleanness but he says when we are born again these very members are used for God's honour and for

God's glory oh have we known that change have we been brought into this body the church by being born again have we known something of this change in our hearts oh I believe he gives it to us very wonderfully in the first part of that chapter when he speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ being raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father and he says this even so we also should walk in newness of life if we have been called by grace born again there will be a desire to walk in newness of life a desire to know this unity among the Lord's people and so he goes back into the past and he says neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin this was our condition in the past our members were used as instruments of unrighteousness but when we are born again those very members will be used as instruments of righteousness unto God we shall seek to use our lips to speak his word we shall seek to use our tongues to proclaim his truth we shall seek to use our hands in that way that the Lord

Jesus did we read of him he went about doing good healing all that had need of healing and we shall have a desire friends to use our members as instruments of righteousness and it is unto holiness I believe with this unity there will be a desire for holiness the apostle Peter says in his epistle be therefore holy for I am holy I believe that there will be a desire in the Lord's people to grow in that holiness to be more like the Lord Jesus Christ to have that spirit of Christ that mind of Christ surely friends if we know this unity we shall have a desire to walk in that word that is brought before us in the Philippians it is a word that we desire to walk in more and more where the apostle says let nothing be done through strife or vain glory but in lowliness of mind let each esteem hover better than themselves if there's this unity in the church there will be a desire

I believe to esteem each other better than ourselves and he says look not every man on his own thing but every man on the things of others and then he says let this mind be in you oh this is the mind we want the mind of Christ let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus he who was God as well as man equal with his father equal in power equal in wisdom equal in authority and yet he made himself of no reputation this is the example to follow this is the person we should follow friends made himself of no reputation took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men surely the

[43 : 45] Lord Jesus sets before us the way we should walk and if we desire this unity this is the way we shall walk we shall desire this humility we should desire the mind of Christ I believe it is beautifully set before us in that 13th chapter of John surely friends if we are unable to walk in that chapter where the Lord Jesus set that example before his disciples as he took the basin and the towel and began to wash the disciples feet there friends he gives us an example and there we shall find real unity and real oneness as we are unable to do what he did he washed his disciples feet and after he washed their feet he said to them he call me master and lord and he say well for so

I am if I then your lord and master have washed your feet he also ought to wash one another's feet this is where we should find unity as we are enabled by grace spiritually to wash one another's feet for he says I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you the servant is not greater than his lord neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him and then he says this if you know these things happy are you if you do all that we may be able to walk in these things to spiritually wash one another's feet to desire one another's good to pray continually for one another's and to be seeking this true unity amongst the people of

God I believe this should be our desire as we go on together in the things of God to really feel that we are on the right side of this text for as the body is one and has many members and all the members of that one body are many and they're many and they're one body so also is Christ Christ in the church one oh that we might have that desire then as we leave his house this day to walk in unity as the hymn says brethren let us walk together in the bond of love and peace can it be a question whether brethren children conflict see tis in union love and joy and peace increase oh this is what we would desire to pray for then the unity that is found in the words of our text as the body is one and have many members all the members of that one body being many are one body so also is Christ the Lord grant us this unity amongst us and may we pray more and more for it and walk in it we desire these things and desire that he may bless his word and bless you here as a people and go before you and help his servants to preach the word the Lord bless his word to us amen for a season called to pass let us know ourselves commend to the greatest iron heart of our ever present friends

Jesus hear our humble prayer attend the shepherd of thy sheep let thy mercy and thy share all our souls in safety speak in 501 inch ve surrendered send graves in seated then■ng■■■ in a estoy oh in dance cos and again tem and ■■■■■■ ay eternity Thank you.

Thank you.

[49 : 52] Thank you.

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[51 : 58] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

to journey in mercy as we journey and be with us in all that lies before us. Help us to lean upon thee and to trust in thee at all times. We ask it in the worthy name of the Lord Jesus and for his sake.

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the sweet communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, rest and remain with us even this night and forevermore.

Amen.