

# United in Christ

by Erlo Stegen

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*Jesus prayed for the unity of the disciples, and we should strive to be one in love and God's Spirit, united by the Cross of Jesus Christ.*

**Scripture:** John 17:20

**Topics:** "Unity in Christ", "Heart Condition"

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## Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes the profound prayer of Jesus for unity among His followers, highlighting that true oneness is found in the Spirit of God rather than in denominational or racial divisions. He draws parallels between Jesus' journey across the brook Cedron and David's sorrowful ascent, illustrating the emotional weight of rejection and the call to faithfulness. Stegen urges believers to examine their hearts, ensuring they are not distracted by worldly desires that lead them away from Christ. The sermon stresses that genuine love and unity among Christians are essential for the world to recognize the truth of Christ's message. Ultimately, it is not the church affiliation that matters, but the condition of one's heart in relation to God.

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## Transcript

"When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples." (John 18:1).

What words are being referred to here? What had He said?

We read in the previous chapter that He prayed:

"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. " (John 17:20-24).

These were the words Jesus spoke before they went out.

He prayed for the unity of the disciples. These are grave words, full of meaning.

He prayed that we might be one even as He and the Father are one.

Do we understand and grasp these words?

Some say they are not one with this church but with that one. But if we are in a right standing with God then it's immaterial of what nation or even church we are; we are of one Spirit.

We should be one in love, united in God's Spirit. If that's not the case then we're not on God's way.

If we don't obey God's Word then we're outsiders. And if we're not one with God's child who obeys His Word, then we're outside.

We're not united by race, but by the Cross of Jesus Christ.

If we are not one in Christ then all our other efforts are in vain. The world will believe in Christ when they see our love for one another and our unity.

This doesn't refer to unity in that which is wrong as Ananias and Sapphira. That will take you to hell.

It's also recorded in our text that Jesus crossed the brook Cedron.

We also read of David:

"And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up." (2 Samuel 15:30).

David was a type of Christ, a foreshadow of Christ. Absalom his son tried to usurp the throne and David had to flee and he crossed this same way that Jesus went.

As David cried when he went up the mount of Olives, so Jesus cried over Jerusalem. Jesus came to His own people yet they turned Him away and rejected Him.

Do you know that when you're unfaithful to the Lord you bring tears to Him? The New Testament put it this way that you crucify Him afresh by turning from Him and going your own way.

Maybe your heart is not right with God. Maybe your heart is stolen by the world as Absalom stole the hearts of the children of Israel. Your heart might be in money or position or education.

Make right your life with God and get rid of that thing which has captured your heart in the place of Christ.

It's not what church you're in that's important, it's where your heart is.

Jesus said that the Father loves us even as He loves the Son. Have you seen the Father's love?

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