

Christ and Oneness

by H.J. Vine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of oneness among believers, rooted in Christ's death, prayer, and ongoing intercession.

Scripture: John 17:21

Topics: "Church Unity", "Christian Love"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the importance of unity among believers, emphasizing that Jesus died and prayed for oneness among His followers. Those who love Christ must also love His people, as He loves the entire assembly. The present living intercession of Christ is focused on uniting believers as one body, with each member ministered to by Him. The ultimate goal of this unity is for all believers to be perfected into one, a oneness that is as sure as Christ's glory and established in His love.

Transcript

Let us consider the way that the Lord takes to gather His well-loved flock, His favoured family, these sheep of God's pasture, the children of God. First His death was necessary, for only so could He "gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad" (John 11:52). He died to bring about this oneness. He prayed also for it, when He said to the Father: "That they all may be ONE; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be ONE IN US" (John 17:21). Terribly backslidden must be the state of any who are marked by cold indifference to this for which the Son of God both died and prayed!

If we love Him, we must love all who are His. "He that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen." "Every one that loves Him that has begotten loves also him that is begotten of Him" (1 John 5:1). Christ loves the assembly, the whole assembly, and the heart which knows this will love that which He loves.

To the facts that Christ died and prayed for this oneness, we must add He lives for it. Because He lives we live also; and John 17 gives us the character of His present living intercession that we may be one. Again, all the members of His body are ministered to from Him, the living Head, and united together in consequence. Do not let our slackness and indifference to this be excused by the plea, "There can be no failure in regard to the body." For we are warned in Colossians 2:19 against "not holding fast the Head." Laxity on our side as to this leads to utter failure.

Oneness is in view also in connection with the Lord's coming again. He said to the Father as to that longed-for day: "The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them, that they may be one, as We are one; I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one" (John 17:22-23). What surpassing greatness! What divine grace and glory shine here! But to what end? "THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE." May such thoughts and purposes of love stir our hearts, in the deepest depths of their divinely begotten affections. The oneness here spoken of is as sure as Christ's glory is. Nothing can mar it, thank God. It is established in the same glory and in the same love that Christ knows. "Thou hast loved them," He says to the Father, "as Thou hast loved Me."

How can we be indifferent to that for which He went into death, and for which He interceded before the Father, and for which He lives at the right hand of God, and for which He will come again that it may be absolute and unbroken for ever for His joy and glory? May we respond to His great grace and love now by seeking after it even here with true purpose of heart.

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