



# **Non-Denominational Christianity**

Colossians 1:9-10

# What do we mean?

- **Non-denominational** - open or acceptable to people of any Christian denomination
- **Alexander Campbell:** "I have no idea of adding to the catalogue of new sects. I labor to see sectarianism abolished and all Christians of every name united upon the one foundation upon which the apostolic church was founded.
- **Thomas Campbell:** Division among the Christians is a horrid evil, fraught with many evils. It is antichristian, as it destroys the visible unity of the body of Christ. It is antisciptural, as being strictly prohibited by his sovereign authority; a direct violation of his express command. It is antinatural, as it excited Christians to condemn to hate, and oppose one another, who are bound by the highest and most endearing obligations to love each other as brethren, even as Christ has loved them.



Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone believed in a Nondenominational Christianity, which they spread in what is known as the Restoration Movement

# Jesus' prayer for Unity

- John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
- 20-23 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: <sup>23</sup> I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

## **Jesus' prayer.. Unity of believers**

- The unity of Christians is God's stated goal
- The pattern Jesus sets: to be one as Jesus and the Father are one
- The promise unity provides is continued union with the Father and the Son
- That the world may know that You sent Me

# The church is to strive for unity

- Ephesians 4:3-6 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;* <sup>5</sup> *one Lord, one faith, one baptism;* <sup>6</sup> *one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*
  - Unity is something we are to strive for..
  - Christian unity rests on the singleness of Christian doctrine
  - Unity of the body is kept by our relationships with each other

# How God feels about divisions

- 1 Cor 1:10-15 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.
- For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's *household*, that there are contentions among you.<sup>12</sup> Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."<sup>13</sup> Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

# Correcting this was not optional

- Paul's first topic to address this problem in Corinth
  - How childish to separate over which leader baptized them
  - Paul condemns separating into manmade divisions
- What unity is not..
  - Denominationalism the system and ideology founded on the division of the religious population into numerous ecclesiastical bodies each stressing particular doctrines, views, and traditions and each competing with the others in the same community under substantial conditions of freedom
  - “I am of Calvin, I am of Wesley, I am of Spurgeon”

# How do we find unity again..

- We have to desire it and be willing to work hard..
  - We must be willing to eliminate human traditions from religion..
  - You have to allow room for growth and maturity among believers
  - Make commitment to accept only what is taught in the Bible
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- **John 17:20-21** I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who [\[a\]](#)will believe in Me through their word; <sup>21</sup> 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.



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