

Divided or United- Getting our *Heads, Hearts, and Actions* Right

Introduction: God forbids *division* among His people, 1Cor.1:10; and, God also despises those who are *divisive* and *create* or *spread strife* (detrimental to or destroy *unity*), Prov.6:19b; Jude 19. Therefore, **we need to get and keep:** our *minds* right in how we *think* about one another; our *hearts* right in how we *feel* about one another; and our *actions/interactions* right in what we *say* about and *do* to one another. For as my friend and mentor Bro. Dee Bowman would always say, **“We be brethren!”** How we *think, feel, and act* toward one another either create or contribute to *division* or *unity*.

Divisive attitudes (*thinking + feeling*) and actions:

- ◇ **Selfishness-** Insisting on “My way” or “What I think is best,” Jas.3:14-16; *strife* and *disorder* usually stem from plain old *selfishness*; such is not *heavenly* (heaven-sent *wisdom*) but *earthly, natural/unspiritual, and of Satan*.
- ◇ **Hyper-Sensitivity- 1Cor.13:5**, “*does not seek its own*” (selfishness), “*is not easily provoked*” (KJV), and “*does not take into account a wrong suffered*” (less concerned about “rights” and more about “responsibilities”); even Jesus, with all He endured, was “*not counting their trespasses against*” those who mistreated and abuse Him, 2Cor.5:19. Surely we can do likewise with our “insults/offences.”
- ◇ **Opinionated** (and over-sharing), ***wrangling about words***, 2Tim.2:14 and **providing or participating in *foolish controversies***, Titus 3:9; brethren, if it doesn’t directly bear up or determine our salvation, IT’S NOT WORTH IT- just let it go! This includes masks, vaccines, Covid policies, politics, and “patriotism” (or a supposed lack thereof). Unless it’s about Christ and our salvation in Him, it really doesn’t matter, so learn to just let it go.
- ◇ **Grumbling/Complaining and Fault-Finding** (from *mempsimoiros* {mem·psim·oy·ros}- complaining of one’s lot; querulous; discontented), Jude 16; this *grumbling, complaining, and fault-finding* in others seems to be rooted in *dissatisfaction* with either “me” or how others affect “me.” We must realize that it’s NOT all about “me,” Jas.4:11.

Unifying attitudes and actions:

- **Humility/Selflessness- Phil.2:3-4**; we read and hear this passage often, but do we really practice it? Do we genuinely *think, feel, and act* this way toward one another? Usually not. But what if we did? True *fellowship* would result, and we would “be brethren” in all that the word implies!
- **Encouraging/Consoling/Affectionate/Compassionate, Phil.2:1-2**; together with the previous point of humility and selflessness, these provide the coup de gras to division! When we *encourage* rather than *criticize, console/comfort* rather than *complain*, truly *love one another* more than *ourselves*, and are *compassionate* rather than *fault-finding*, division is dead and blessed unity prevails, Eph.4:1-3. And when *correction* is required (such as Matt.18:15-17 or Jude 20-23), if we do so with the right thinking (for the right *reason*) and with the right heart (*affection* and *compassion*), we’ll do it in the right way (with *gentleness*), cf. 2Tim.2:25.

Conclusion: Never forget, “We be brethren!” Col.3:12-17.