

The ONE TRUE CHURCH of GOD, part 5 quotes

1 Biblical Guidelines for Fellowship and Unity

John chapter 17 reveals the very last recorded prayer that Christ made while He was on this earth, and what God chooses to do last holds great spiritual importance (Matthew 19:30, 20:16). This means that the very last prayer of Christ holds great and important spiritual truths to understand and follow!

Christ stated in His prayer: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.** As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 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 has 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.**" John 17:14-23.

2 "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John 17:14.

This verse reveals that there is vast difference between the word of God and the world. But how?

The word of God:

- creates and gives life (Genesis chapter 1; Deuteronomy 8:3; Psalms 119:25; Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 11:3; 1 Peter 1:23);
- is fulfilled, settled and will always come to pass (2 Kings 14:25, 23:16; 2 Chronicles 6:10; Psalms 119:89; Isaiah 40:8; Ezekiel 12:25);
- is the truth (Psalms 119:160; 2 Corinthians 6:7);
- is good and pure (Hebrews 6:5; Psalms 119:140; Proverbs 30:5);
- is a lamp that gives light (Psalms 119:105);
- will abide and work in us like a fire to consume all that is sinful and divide and separate us from the wicked one (Psalms 119:133; Jeremiah 5:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12; 1 John 2:14);
- brings joy and rejoicing (Psalms 119:162; Jeremiah 15:16);
- brings blessings (Luke 11:28);
- gives understanding (Psalms 119:169);
- will strengthen and uphold us (Psalms 119:28, 116);
- will sanctify and keep us from sinning (1 Timothy 4:5; Psalms 119:11);
- cannot be bound, but will grow, increase and multiply (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 2 Timothy 2:9);
- encourages hope (Psalms 119:81, 114);
- brings deliverance and salvation (Psalms 119:41, 170; Acts 13:26);
- brings God's mercy and reconciliation (Psalms 119:58; 2 Corinthians 5:19);
- brings comfort (Psalms 119:76);
- will prevail over all (Acts 19:20);
- is Jesus Christ Himself (John 1:1),
- and lives and abides forever (1 Peter 1:23).

3 Why will those who live by every word of God receive hatred from the people of the world?

“...light (God’s word of truth) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.**” John 3:19-20.

God’s word shines the light of truth which exposes everything that is false and evil. This bright exposure reproves those who are following evil, and since the people of the world do not want to change then they hate God’s word. Their hatred of God’s word is carried over to all those who are following and preaching God’s word!

“The world cannot hate you (those who reject Jesus); but **me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.**...If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: **but because ye (those who accept Jesus) are not of the world,** but I have chosen you out of the world, **therefore the world hateth you.**” John 7:7, 15:19.

What makes the followers of Christ so unlike the world?

“I have **refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.**” Psalms 119:101.

This verse reveals to us that in order to keep God’s word you must not follow any of the ways of evil, and since the ways of the world are evil, then you must not be like the people of the world. This shows that God’s word is the exact opposite of the evil ways of the world, and every evil way of the world is directly contrary to God’s word. This means that as God’s people live more and more by every word that proceedeth out of His mouth, they become more and more unlike the wicked world, and thus the love of the world for them grows less and less until they are hated. But this also means that if a follower of Christ discovers that the world does not hate them, then they must not be living by every word of God!

4 “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” John 17:15.

This verse very clearly reveals that there is evil in the world, and God's unerring word also tells us that the evil ways of the world:

- will negate, make of none effect, and corrupt God's word of truth (Mark 7:13; 2 Corinthians 2:17);
- will refuse to follow God's word, but transgress it (Psalms 119:158);
- will bring tribulation and death to those who follow God's word (Revelation 1:9, 6:9, 20:4).

But we are also told that all the wicked plans of the world will not come to pass, but will fail (Isaiah 8:10), and very solemnly we are also told that all who put their trust in them will be cursed (Jeremiah 17:5) as the enemies of God (James 4:4).

Since the ways of the world are so diametrically opposed to God's word, then in following God's word you cannot be like the world! But in following the world you cannot be keeping God's word! You cannot be both a follower of God and a follower of the world at the same time!

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, **choose you this day whom ye will serve**; whether the gods (ways of the world) which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for **me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**” Joshua 24:15.

God does not desire His people to be removed or isolated from this wicked earth, because then how would the people of the world ever come into contact with God's word and find salvation in Jesus Christ? But because it is God's will that His people remain on this wicked earth as His witness, then He promises to keep them from the evils of the world - as long as they continue to follow His word!

5 “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” John 17:16.

You are either a friend of God because you are living by every word of His, and thereby you are an enemy of the world; or you are a friend of the world, and thereby are an enemy of God. You cannot be both at the same time!

“Can two walk together, **except they be agreed?**” Amos 3:3.

6 “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17.

The Greek word for “sanctify” is “hagiazō”, and it translates and means: “to make holy, to purify or consecrate - including mentally, to hallow, be holy, sanctify” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, word #37).

Living by every word of God will purify you, make you holy, will consecrate and sanctify your mind, life and character from every evil way to become perfect.

7 “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” John 17:18.

Christ did not send His people into the world - in verse 18 - until after they were sanctified by the truth - in verse 17! This means that those who have heard but who are not following God’s word, have not yet received Christ’s commission for them to go and preach His word to the people of this wicked world!

What good would it do to for you to tell others of the loving Saviour, if you yourself do not have Christ-like love for others in your heart? What good would it do to tell people to leave all the churches of Babylon, if you yourself still belong to a Babylonian church? Your own neglect to follow the truth would undermine your message and make it of none effect. In fact, because people see that your life does not match your words, then they will most likely reject all the truth you share with them, and in rejecting the truth they will be lost, and all because of your hypocrisy!

“The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead. **An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.**” Proverbs 11:8-9.

It would have been better if you did not share the truth until you were converted and righteous, than to try and share it while you were unconverted and unrighteous! This is why Christ does not commission and send His people out into the world until after they are sanctified by the truth, so that the message they bear would be profitable to those who heard it. Otherwise they go on their own authority, and their message will be unprofitable to those who hear it!

2 Samuel chapter 18 reveals that a messenger named Cushai had received the commission to run and bear an important message of truth to king David. But another named Ahimaaz had not received a commission, but he decided to run anyway and bear his own message.

None of us should be like that self-sent messenger Ahimaaz, who ran on his own accord without the vital message which king David needed, because his message benefitted no one and it all turned out to be a complete waste of time and energy! We instead should be like Cushie, whose commissioned vital message of truth was exactly what king David needed to hear.

"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied (and no one was benefitted by their self-sent message). **But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings." Jeremiah 23:21-23.**

8 Just as God commissioned and sent Jesus to live and preach His word to the wicked world, and then kept Jesus from being contaminated by the corruption in the world, so God would also do the same for His people while they live and preach His word to those around them.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."** Matthew 28:19-20.

"...in the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33.

As Jesus Christ overcame all the wickedness of this world while living in fallen human nature, then this proves that we can also overcome all the wickedness of this world if we follow His every word of truth.

"But what things were gain to me (in the world), those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ....I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**"** Philippians 3:7-8, 4:13.