

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIAN UNITY

By Armando Di Pardo *

- (1) Isa. 26:2
Heb.13:1 2Pet.1:1,2
- (2) Tit.2:11–13 Acts
4:12
- (3) Ps. 23 Jn.10:11–
16 1Pet.2:25
- (4) 1Cor.3:11
1Pet.2:4–8
- (5) Eph. 1:22; 5:23
- (6) Jn. 20:28
Phil.2:11
- (7) Heb. 2:17–3:1;
4:15; 5: 10; 7:26
- (8) 1Jn. 2:1,2
Rom.8:34
- (9) Rom. 14:10
1Cor.3:8–15
2Cor.5:10 Rev.22:12
- (10) Jn. 3:27–31
2Cor.11:2 Rev.19:7
- (11) Col.2:2,3,9,10
- (12) Acts 20:28
- (13) Song 8:6,7
Jer.31:3 Eph.3:18,19
- (14) Ps. 141:2
Rev.5:8; 8:3
- (15) Jn. 17:22 Jn.10:
30

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said: ... 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.” (Jn. 17:1,21).

I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Which is also an open door to hopeful dialogue in brotherly love, among those of “like precious faith”. (1)

“The great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (2), “the great shepherd of the sheep” (3), the only:

Foundation	(4)
Head	(5)
Lord	(6)
High Priest	(7)
Advocate	(8)
Rewarder	(9)
Bridegroom	(10)

and more and even more (11), of the Church which He “hath purchased with His own blood” (12):

WOULD YOU NOT PRAY FOR ITS UNITY?

—YES. HE PRAYED!

The burning flame of His eternal love (13), sacrificed the living incense of His Filial supplication (14):

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—“THAT THEY MAY BE ONE... FATHER... EVEN AS WE ARE ONE” (15).

(16) Job 11:7
Rom.11:33-36

(17) Ex. 3:4,5
Josh.5:13-15

(18) Ps. 95:6
Prov.15:33
1Pet.5:5,6 Heb.4:16

(19) 1Cor. 2:10-14

(20) Rom. 8:26,27

(21) Jn 14:26
Jn.16:13-15 1Jn.2:20

(22) 1 Cor. 13:9-12

(23) Dr. 29:29 1Tim. 6:16

(24) Jn. 17:21,23

(25) Jn. 17:22b,23b

(26) Jn. 17:20,21a

(27) Jn. 20:30,31
Jn.21:24; 2Pet3:1,2
1Jn.1:1-4

(28) Jn. 1: 12,13
Jn.3:1-16 1Pet.1:23-25 1Jn.5:1

(29) Rom. 8:9
Ro.12:5 1Cor.12:13
Eph.5:30

(30) Gal. 3:28
Eph.4:4 Eph.5:25b-27

(31) Mt. 16:18

These profound, conclusive words, reveal to us that Christian Unity has its eternal source, current and pattern, in the bonds and relationship of the Holy Trinity!

—And who can explore such immensity?

—What mind, of man or angel, would ever embrace and explain it? (16).

As Moses and Joshua, let us put off our shoes from off our feet; the ground is very Holy! (17).

Let us worship and bow down before the throne of grace (18) and entreat “the Spirit (who) searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God” (19) to help our infirmities (20) and glorify the Lord taking of His and showing it unto us (21). Only this way shall we know and then only in part (22), what has pleased God to make known, in the revelation of the Holy Scriptures, of His uncognoscibility! (23)

— YES. HE PRAYED!

For the Unity of His disciples to Himself and to the Father: —“I in them and thou in me... that they also may be one in us” (24). That is: the Unity with His own, which at the same time establishes the Unity of His own, as He said: “That they may be made perfect in one.” (25).

That bidimension — both vertical and horizontal dimension — of Unity, defines Christian Unity, which means the Unity of the Church. The Church, though it was not explicitly mentioned, is unquestionably contained in the Lord's clear statement:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (26). It is obvious that these words are only applicable to the Church, because: —who make up the Church?

The Apostles and whosoever, dating from Pentecost, has accepted the Saviour through their testimony which is perpetuated in the New Testament (27).

Yes. There the Unity of the Church of Christ is defined; the Unity of the born again believers (28) who are the only “members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones” (29); that is to say, of the One and Holy Church (30) against which “the gates of hell shall not prevail” (31).

— YES. HE PRAYED!

The centuries have repeated the echoes of His supplications.

BUT: Oh!, they have been repeated with other words that by analogy can be applied to us, Christians of the 20th Century, reproving our consciences with its admonitory note, full of nostalgia and loving solicitude:

(32) Mt. 26:40

—“COULD YE NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR?”
(32).

Our Lord, who prayed, also watched and worked for the Unity of His own:

(33) Jn. 1:29,33

Jn.7:38,39

Acts2:32-38

Eph.4:3,4; 1Th.4:8

—His atoning and vicarious death, His bodily resurrection and His ascension to Heaven, all made it possible for Him, to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, the Spirit of Unity, with which He baptized His disciples (33).

(34) Mt. 28:20

—He ordered them to observe and teach all He had commanded and promises to be with His own always even to the end
(34).

(35) Jn. 5:39; 10:35b

2Tim.3:15-17

2Pet.3:15-18

—He provided, through the media of the Holy Spirit, that sound doctrine would be well guarded, intangible and irrevocable, within the Holy Scriptures (35).

(36) Rom. 8:34 Heb.

7:24,25

—And He ever liveth to make intercession for His people
(36).

(37) Isa. 5:4^a

(38) Mt. 13:33 and

16:5-12

(39) Mt. 7:15; 24-11;

1Tim.4:1,2

2Tim.4:3,4 2Pet.2:1,2

2Jn.,vv.,9-11

Judevv., 3,4

He can certainly say to us: —“WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE MORE TO MY VINEYARD, THAT I HAVE NOT DONE IN IT?” (37).

BUT WE HAVE NOT WATCHED WITH HIM! That is the sad truth in many matters. And among others, the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity which has suffered as a consequence.

(40) Col. 2:4,8

(41) Dt. 32:31,32

Isa.5:18-21

Ezek.22:26-28

(a) On the one hand, “apostate teachers” introduced “leaven” (38), or the doctrine of “Modernism” (39)* whose worldly philosophies (40) have put on the march that syncretistic intent which they have deemed to call “Ecumenism”.**

* MODERNISM. Variety of liberal schools of thought, wrongly called “theological”, which deny the Fundamentals of the Christian faith. They participate in numberless philosophies and theories such as: rationalism, naturalism, humanism, existentialism, positivism, relativism, neo-evolutionism, neo-pantheism, neo-universalism, syncretism, etc. (See the author’s writings on “Old and New Modernism”, “Alfa & Omega” editions, Gral. E. Martinez, 889, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

** ECUMENISM. Different ecclesiastical currents infiltrated by “modernism”, which after twisting John 17:21 etc., and not discerning nor defining, in a Biblical sense what the Church of Christ is, labour to join Protestant, Romanist and Oriental Orthodox Churches into a Super World Church. At the same time they hold dialogue with other world religions and with secular society having as their goal the utopian modernist dream of a pseudo “(kingdom of God on the earth”, through reforms and final ecclesiastical-social-worldly-universal fusion.

From such “ecumenism” — (which, being an inclusivist mixture of heterogeneous elements (41), it has nothing to do with Biblical Christianity), all that can emerge is a religious—political—worldly—diabolical system discerned in prophetic Scriptures as “Babylon the Great” (42).

(42) Rev. 17: 1 to 18:3

To our brethren in Christ who either because of confusion or indecision, are still involved in the “unequal yoke” (43) in Denominations and modernist ecumenical Councils, we would remind them that the Lord commands: “COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE”(44).

(43) Dt. 22:10
2Cor.6:14,15

(44) Rev. 18:4

(b) On the other hand, — and this is most sorrowful —, the “corpus” of the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity can today repeat the prophetic words: “...I WAS WOUNDED IN THE HOUSE OF MY FRIENDS”! (45). YES, “OF MY FRIENDS”!, because certain currents of thought, generally accepted today in the majority of Christian circles who are Fundamental in the Faith*** maintain diverse criteria which inadvertently reduce or partialize doctrine.

(45) Zech. 13:6

For example:

Some emphasize the subjective aspect of the Unity of the Spirit also called Substantial Unity in Christ, in such a way, that paradoxically they reduce its scope or projection to other objective and practical areas, such as: Unity in Truth (46) which logically refers to Doctrinal Unity (47); full fellowship in brotherly love (48); and the Unity of Testimony before the world (49).

(46) Jn. 17:6-8 and vv., 14, 17, 19b, 21, 23

(47) Eph. 4:13-16

(48) Jn. 15:9-13
Jn.17:26; Acts2:42
1Jn.1:3; 4:7

(49) Jn. 17:18,21, 23
compare Acts17:6

—Other brethren who admit that the prayer of the Lord, together with Substantial Unity includes Unity in Truth or in the Word, nevertheless, paradoxically reduce the latter to the so-called “Fundamentals of the Faith”. And as for other Biblical doctrines on which discrepancies exist among different Denominations, they are left to the private interpretation of each confession, or are called “secondary” or “peripheral” or “not vital”.

As a result: when doctrinal declarations of Churches, Missions, Schools of Theology, Conventions or Fellowships or Fundamental Councils of Churches are drawn up, very often the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity has gone unmentioned. In other cases, it is only mentioned in part or partialized, and that “part” is presented as the “whole” of the Doctrine without it being so. And sometimes, it is confused with “ecumenism”.

*** FUNDAMENTALISM. A spiritual movement and/or firm position of Bible believers, raised up from the beginning of the century for a testimony to the “Fundamentals of the Faith”: Inspiration and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures; the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, atoning and vicarious death, bodily resurrection, ascension, and His second coming. It is therefore against modernism, ecumenism, secular philosophical or dialectic materialism, etc.

As a consequence: the full manifestation of Unity among the children of God is affected!

(50) 2Chr. 7:14
Ps.32:1-6 Prov.28:13
1Jn.1:9

YES, IT IS TIME TO CONFESS WITH REPETANCE AND HUMBLENESS (50); WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO WATCH WITH HIM ONE HOUR!

(51) Rom.13:11-14
Eph.5:14-21

For that reason, the Lord has laid upon us a burden and has raised a Testimony. Because the time has come when we should awake from our sleep, to understand what the will of the Lord is (51). The time has come when we should return to the Lord and His Holy Word in restoring and practicing in our midst, the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity.

(52) Lk. 12:32-40

THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE, if the Lord must find His little flocks (52) in His fast approaching return to rapture His Church, just as He desired when He prayed saying: —“...THAT THEY MAY BE ONE... FATHER... EVEN AS WE ARE ONE” (53).

(53) Jn. 17:21,22

II. THE FUNDAMENTALS

- Prenotings.
- Persons and Elements of Unity in the Lord's Prayer.
- Seven Fundamental Principles.
- The Seven Fundamental Principles, conceptually correlated give us three Elements and Areas of Unity.
- Their relationship to the Lord and to themselves.
- Their relationship to the other Elements of Unity.
- Synthetic definition of the Fundamentals.

1. *Prenotings*

(What we mean by: Christian Unity; Biblical Doctrine; the “Fundamentals”. The Key Biblical Passage.)

By “Christian Unity”, we obviously mean the Unity of Christians in all that this signifies: in origin, areas of relationship and manifestation; and, consequently, the Unity of the Christian Church of which they form part. And in speaking of “Christians” it must be clearly understood that we mean only “born again believers”.

By “Biblical Doctrine” of Christian Unity, we mean its whole Biblical framework; “all the counsel of God” on it, such as “it is written” in the Holy Scriptures, without partializations, nor omissions, nor additions. And this, which is the same for every Biblical subject, logically requires two things: the careful selection of all the related Biblical passages, and their correct interpretation. For this it is necessary to apply the golden rule of Hermeneutics: “THE BIBLE IS ITS OWN INTERPRETER” so that all reference, deduction, implication, inference, etc., issues from the Holy Scriptures themselves, without any contradictions. Such simple principles — perhaps because they are so elementary — are apt to be overlooked to such an extent that in many cases, instead of the entire doctrine, partializations are circulated, with serious omissions and/or additions or traditions which are not Biblical, but rather wrest the Scriptures.

By “Fundamentals”, we mean all the indispensable elements for an integral structure of Doctrine. In other words: not only what we call “foundation” but other elements which are co—indispensable. For example: for “Christian Unity”, the Theanthropic* Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, is an immovable Foundation. But the Person of the Holy Spirit is equally fundamental as the Bond of Christian Unity. And so we shall see other indispensable elements. It is the conjunction of these indispensable elements that we call “Fundamentals”.

The Key Biblical Passage, as has been evidenced in the “General Introduction” of this study, is Chapter 17 of the Gospel according to the Apostle John, where the Lord Jesus Christ's High Priestly Prayer is recorded. By its own rights, it is the Constitutional Charter for

* THEANTHROPIC. From “Theos”, God; and “Anthropos”, man. It so defines the Person who is at the same time very God and very man. Who possesses two natures: the Divine and the human, in ONE PERSON: THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Christian Unity, because it contains and defines —with explicit or implicit clarity— all the Persons, Elements and Areas of Unity. For this reason, we will begin writing synthetically its relevant points, to later extract the conclusions or Fundamental Principles.

2. *Persons, Elements and Areas of Unity, revealed in the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. (St. John chapter 17).*

1. One Father: the Father of our Lord, who is in the Son. (vv., 1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 21, 26.)
2. One Lord and Saviour: the Son sent of the Father, the Theanthropic Person, the Corner Stone of Christian Unity, the Lord Jesus Christ. (vv., 1, 3, 5, 8, 21, 23, 24, 25.)
3. One Spirit: the Holy Spirit, vital bond for Christian Unity.
The Person of the Holy Spirit is not mentioned by name, but He permeates every word, and is found implicated and contained specifically in two of the Lord's expressions that demand with such forcefulness the Person and work of the Spirit, that without Him, those expressions would lack sense and reality.
 - (a) The meaning of the preposition “in”, precisely in the fundamental declaration: “I in them and Thou in me, that they also may be one in us.” (vv., 21, 23, 26).
 - (b) The meaning of the noun expression “one”: “That they may be one... even as we are one.” (vv., 11, 21, 22, 23).

Without doubt these expressions point directly to the Spirit, because without the Spirit, we would never have Christian Unity. Moreover, it must be remembered that the Person and work of the Holy Spirit were amply dealt with by the Lord, and recorded in chapters 14, 15 and 16 of the Gospel of the Apostle John.

4. One Body: the Church of Christ, formed by the Lord and the Apostles and all who believe on the Lord by the word of their testimony.
Here we have another case, another reality, though not mentioned by name is clearly and implicitly defined however: the Church. (vv., 2, 6, 8, 11—18, 20, 21, 23, 26).
5. One Life: Eternal Life. (vv., 2, 3).
6. One Word: the Word of God. (vv., 6, 8, 14, 17).
7. One Truth: the Truth of the Word. (v. 17).
8. One Faith. (vv., 6, 8).
9. One Experience of Substantial Unity. “One”, as has been said, implies the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. With respect to the believers it also implies the experience of the new birth, because in that experience we are made “one” with Christ, with the Father, with the Spirit, and —with all born—again believers. (vv., 11, 21, 22, 23, 26).
10. One Sanctification. (vv., 11, 14, 15, 16, 17).
11. One joy: the joy of the Lord. (v., 13).

12. One Love: Eternal Love. (vv., 2 3, 24, 26).
13. One Growth: in the knowledge of God and in experience. (vv., 3, 7, 26).
14. One Mission: sent to an unbelieving world. (v., 18).
15. One Testimony: witnesses of the Lord and His Word. (vv., 20, 21, 23).
16. One Glory. (vv., 22, 24).

We marvel at the wealth of the elements of Unity and the different aspects and areas involved, which are revealed to us in the prayer of the Lord. The governing principle of all this is very evident: Singularity harmoniously associated with plurality, diversity and unanimity. Because Unity is ONE (singularity) but MANY participate of it (plurality) and DIVERSE are the areas of relationship and manifestation (diversity), but always in complete and total unanimity.

There is no room for incongruousness, nor contradictions, nor discrepancies.

Therefore — anticipating concepts —, let us say here, of the present day interconfessional “status” that it cannot stand this test, because its partializations and discrepancies declare it to be wanting when confronted seriously with the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us observe moreover, that the only contradictory elements mentioned by the Lord are: “the son of perdition” (v., 12) Judas Iscariot; and “the world” or the sphere of diabolical action, the system (“kosmos”) organized according to fallen man under the “prince of this world” Satan, the “world” that hates the Lord and the Word of the Lord and those who are His (vv. 14, 16). It is obvious that Judas Iscariot and the “world” are completely excluded from Christian Unity.

3. *The Seven Fundamental Principles of Unity.*

“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.” (Prov. 9:1).

From all we have dealt with up to now, we can extract seven conclusions, that, because of their importance, can well be qualified as Fundamental Principles.

1. *The Constitutional Charter of Christian Unity is Chapter 17 of the Gospel of John, which records the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Because, as has been said, it contains and clearly defines — explicitly or implicitly —, all the elements, aspects and areas of relationship and manifestation of Unity.

2. *Christian Unity, essentially, is defined as Unity of the Spirit or Substantial Unity.*

Because it acknowledges the Substantial Unity of the Holy Trinity as the Eternal source, current and pattern; and because it requires the Person and work of the Holy Spirit for its realization.

— “As thou, Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” (v., 21).

— “...that they may be one, even as we are one.” (vv., 11, 21, 22, 23).

3. *Christian Unity is Christ—centered: the Lord, as a Theanthropic Person is the Foundation Corner Stone; as Redeemer He is the author and finisher of it; and as Witness He manifested, proclaimed and propagated it.*

The Apostolic precept governs here with all its force: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 3: 11).

- (a) As a Theanthropic Person He is the Personal concretion or embodiment of Unity; the Foundation Corner Stone which must be established in the heart of every believer. “I in them” (vv., 23, 26),
- (b) As Redeemer He obtained from His Father the promise of the Holy Spirit Whom He sent to His disciples, thus establishing Substantial Unity with, in, and among them: “... I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do” (v., 4 compare Acts 2:22-24, 32, 33).
- (c) As a Faithful and True Witness (Rev. 1: 5; 3:14; 19: 11), He manifested, proclaimed and propagated Unity.

—”I have glorified thee on the earth” (v., 4). “I I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word” (v., 6).

4. *The Essential Bond of Christian Unity is the Person of the Holy Spirit.*

- (a) Because the Holy Spirit is the link of Trinitarian fellowship; and the vital bond of Unity and fellowship between the Theanthropic Person and the born again ones, and for the latter among themselves.
- (b) Because through the Holy Spirit, the Foundation Stone is planted in believers; and by the Spirit, the Lord Jesus dwells in them. (Compare the words of our Lord: “in” and “one”, found in vv., 11, 21, 22, 23 and 26, with 1 John 3:24).

5. *Christian Unity is vitally and substantially concreted in believers, in the experience of the new birth. (A principle intimately linked to the former).*

- (a) In this experience we are made “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4), that is, partakers of the Essential Bond of Christian Unity: the Holy Spirit.
- (b) In the new birth, the words of our Lord: “I in them”, are substantially fulfilled. (vv., 23 and 26, compare Col. 1:27c),

6. *Christian Unity, because essentially it is Unity of the Spirit, includes Unity in the Truth or Unity in the Word Inspired by the same Spirit; that is, it includes the Doctrinal Unity of Christians.*

—”For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them.” (v., 8). “... and they have kept thy word” (v., 6).

- (a) Once Christian revelation has been produced and as the same Spirit who gave us the Inspired Inerrant Bible dwells in the born again believers, the only logical and conceivable thing is their Unity in every Biblical matter. Moreover, we have the

fact that because the Holy Scriptures are Inspired and Inerrant, they are our only Authority in doctrine and practices.

- (b) “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (v. 17). This confirms the former: because the implications of sanctification “through thy truth” do not permit that — simultaneously with that experience — discrepancies with respect to “the word of truth” be perpetuated among those who are being sanctified.

7. *Christian Unity is manifested, proclaimed and propagated by the Christian Testimony, which glorifies God.*

—“I have glorified thee on the earth” (v., 4). “I have manifested thy name” (v., 6). “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” (v., 18). “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one... that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” (vv., 20. 21).

- (a) Christian Unity must glorify the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit, manifesting or projecting itself from its subjective realms to objective ones. This therefore involves the Lord, the Word of God, the Holy Spirit and born again believers; and speaking ecclesiastically, involves the local Church and the inter—Church sphere.
- (b) Christian Testimony is the manifesting, proclaiming, and propagating instrument which was initiated by the Lord Jesus Christ and continued by the Holy Spirit through born again believers. The Testimony is the testifying, the missional action of Christians and Christian Churches in and to the world.

4. ***The Seven Fundamental Principles, conceptually correlated (according to their basic concept)***

Permit the conclusion that the Lord Jesus Christ for the completing of Unity with His own, is of necessity accompanied by the Holy Spirit, the Word and the Testimony. These, at the same time, give us the three Areas of Christian Unity:

Unity of the Spirit or Substantial* Unity

Unity in the Word or Doctrinal Unity

Unity in the Testimony or Missional Unity.

- (a) Conceptual correlation of the seven Principles.

- Principles, numbers two, three, four and five, refer in the first place to what is Spiritual, or Substantial, in each area and relationship: not only in the Holy Trinity but in the Theanthropic Person and also in the born again believer. The Element of Unity is, therefore, the Spirit; and the Area: Unity of the Spirit, or Substantial Unity.

* SUBSTANTIAL. The expression comes from “Substance” which gives the idea of “matter”, of which the Spirit does not partake. We use it here, nevertheless (for lack of a better word), to refer to the Unity “of the Spirit”, because the Essential Bond of Christian Unity - the Person of the Holy Spirit - is to born again believers the “Substance” of Unity. (See another distinction under page 35).

- The first and sixth Principles, refer to the Word. To the Word of the Father given to the Son, and the Son to the Apostles, and the Apostles, — both verbally and by writing — to all, and which is perpetuated in the New Testament. The Element of Unity is, therefore, the Word; and the Area: Unity in the Truth of the Word, or Doctrinal Unity.
 - The 7th Principle refers explicitly to Testimony; and, therefore, the Area is: Unity in the Testimony, or Missional Unity.
- (b) The Spirit, the Word, and the Testimony, are indispensable to the Foundation Corner Stone the Lord Jesus Christ, and also one to another.

So much so, that speaking in absolute terms though hypothetically:

- If we were to omit the Theanthropic Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, then there would be no Foundation Stone nor Christian Unity.
- If we were to omit the Person of the Holy Spirit, we would have no vital link between the Lord Jesus and His disciples nor, as a consequence would there be Substantial Unity. The Lord could not be established in the believers, and the Word and the Testimony would be purposeless and with no vital concreteness.
- If we were to omit the Word, we would leave the Lord and the Holy Spirit with no means to impart to us the knowledge of the Truth, nor the experience of Substantial Unity nor Doctrinal Unity; and the Testimony would be annulled because there would be none to give.
- And if we were to omit the Testimony, we would have the Lord, the Holy Spirit and the Word, without any instrument for the manifestation, proclamation and propagation of Christian Unity, which would be absolutely unknown and unknowable.

It has therefore been proved: that the Foundation Stone the Lord Jesus Christ, the Person of the Holy Spirit, the Word and the Testimony, are really indispensable to each other, with regard to the fulfillment of Christian Unity. Let us confirm this in another relationship.

5. SPIRIT, WORD and TESTIMONY, keep such close relationship with the Persons and other Elements of Unity in our Lord's High Priestly Prayer, that they practically polarize them, that is, attract or draw them.

Let us examine synthetically that polarizing relationship and in addition, let us confirm it with other Scriptures.

(1) Jn. 14:26
 Jn.15:26
 1Cor.2:10,11
 2Cor.3:16,17
 compare Lk.3:22
 1Jn. 5:7

(2) Acts 2:38-42
 Rom.8:15,16
 1Cor.12:13
 Eph.2:18-22

THE SPIRIT. Vitally related to:

- The Father and the Son with Whom the Holy Trinity is integrated; and Whom He represents and glorifies on the earth. (1)

- The Church, which He is integrating with born again believers, in whom He dwells. (2)
Eternal Life, which He possesses because of His Personal Deity, and imparts to believers. (3)

(3) Ezek. 37:14
Jn.4:14; 6:63a
Jn.7:37-39 Rom.8:2,6
2Cor.3:3-6 Gal.6-8

(4) Eph. 6-17 2Tim. 3:16 2Pet.1:21

(5) Jn. 14:17
Jn.16:13; Eph.5:9
1Jn.2:27; 1Jn.4:6

(6) 1Cor. 12:9
2Cor.4:13 Gal.5:22

(7) Eph. 4:3,4

(8) Rom.1:4
Rom.8:13
Gal.5:16-25
2Cor.3:18 1Pet.1:2

(9)Rom.14:17-19
Gal. 5:22 compare
Ps. 45:7; Acts3:52

(10) Rom. 5:5 Gal. 5:22a 2Th.1:3

(11) 1 Cor. 2:12-15
Eph1:17-20
Eph.2:18-22
Col.2:18,19
2Pet.1:2-11

(12) Acts 1:8; 5:32
and 9:31; 1Jn.5:6-8
compare Lk.12:11,12
Rev.22:16,17

(13) Rom. 8:11-18
2Cor.3:7-9,18
Gal.5:1-5

(14) Ps. 68:11 and
119:89,140; Mt.4:4
Jn.5:39; Heb.4:12

- The Word (4) and the Truth (5), which He inspires and reveals. The Faith (6), Unity (7), Sanctification (8) and joy (9), which He produces and works out.

- Love, which He sheds abroad in the heart of the born again believer. (10)

- Growth, by the knowledge He imparts and the power He gives, causing it to yield fruit and rewarding it. (11)

- The Mission and Testimony, which He authorizes and causes to bear fruit. (12)

- The Glory He has and gives.(13)

(15) Prov.6:23 1Th. 2:13 1Tim.3:15
2Tim.3:16,17

(16) Jn. 6:63-68
Acts7:38 Phil.2:16
1Pet.1:23-25

(17) Ps. 119:160
Jn.17:17b Eph.1:13a

(18) Rom. 10:8,17

(19) Jas. 1:18
1Pet.1:23
Col.3:15,16 compare
Mt.28:20

(20) Prov. 30:5
Jn.15:3; Jn.17:17
Eph.5:25-27
1Jn.2:14-17

(21) Ps. 19:8
Ps.119:111
Jn.15:10,11
Rom.14:17 3Jn.3,4

(22) Rom. 8:38,39
1Cor.13:6 1Jn.4:8-21

THE WORD. Vitally related to:

- The Holy Trinity, Who possess, inspire, and enlighten it, and of Whom it bears witness. (14)

- The Church, whose members are won by its message and whom it instructs, corrects and enables, The Church which is “the pillar and ground of the truth” (the truth of the Word), (15)

- Eternal Life, which it gives to all who accept it, because it is God's Word. (16)

- The Truth, that the Word is and which nourishes its doctrine (17); and the Faith, which comes from hearing the Word of God. (18)

- Unity, which requires the Word for the new birth (Substantial Unity) and for teaching (Doctrinal Unity). (19)

- Sanctification: inside cleanliness of the believer which God works out with His Word, and separation from the world which the Word discerns and orders. (20)

- The joy, it gives to the believer and which comes from Christ through the Spirit to whomsoever keeps it. (21)

- The Love of God, which through the Word is made understandable and which rejoices in the truth of the Word. (22)

(23) Eph. 4:13-16
2Tim.3:15-17
1Pet.2:2

- Growth, which comes through knowing, understanding and experiencing it. (23)

(24) Acts 8:4
Acts10: 42,43
Acts13:46-49
Col.1:25-29
Col.4:3-6 2Tim.4:2-5

- The Mission and Testimony, qualifying and nourishing them with its message and doctrine, as they are for the diffusion of the Word. (24)

(25) Rom.2:6-10
Rom.8:14-18
2Cor.4:17,18 Col.3:4

- The Glory, which gives assurance to those born again, declaring them to be heirs of God and joint—heirs with Christ. (25)

Jude vv.,24,25

(26) Mt. 28:18-20
Jn.17:18; Acts1: 8
Heb.2:1-4

THE TESTIMONY. Vitally related to:

- The Holy Trinity; because it is ordained of God, it testifies of Him, and God accompanies it with His power. (26)

(27) Jn. 15:27 Acts1:
8; Acts5:32
Eph.1:22,23
Phil.2:15; 1Pet. 2:9
Eph.3:10,21

- The Church of the born again, which is a Body for a witness. (27)

(28) 1Jn. 5:11,12
compare
Acts11:12-18

- Eternal Life (28), offered through the Word (29) and the Truth (30) it proclaims; and through Faith by which the soul is invited. (31)

(29) Acts 2:40,41
Acts4:31

- Unity, which through the Testimony is manifested, proclaimed and propagated. (32)

(30) Acts 26:25
2Cor. 4:2 2Cor.6:7,8

- Sanctification, which dignifies the Testimony and glorifies a Holy God in and before the world. (33)

(31) Acts 3:16 and
17:31; Rom.1:8
Rom.10:8-10
Eph.2:8-10

- joy, which the Spirit gives to those who testify. (34)

(32) Mt. 12:25
1Cor.1:13
1Cor.3:1,3, vv.,
21,23; Phil.1:27
Col.2:5

- Love, which makes the Testimony vigorous, valiant and faithful. (35)

(33) 2Tim. 2:19-21
1Pet.1: 15,16
1Pet.2:9-12
1Pet.4:1-7 vv.,14-19

- Growth, which gives experience in testifying. (36)

- The Mission, which is fulfilled through the Testimony. (37)

(34) Acts 5:41,42
Acts20:24

- The Glory, to which the Testimony reaches up to, and which in Glory finds its reward. (38)

(35) Phil. 1:14-17
2Tim.2:10

6. Conclusion. Definition of the Fundamentals.

The Fundamentals of the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity, revealed in our Lord's High Priestly Prayer —(St. John chapter 17, Constitutional Charter for Christian Unity), consider

(36) 1Cor. 15:58
2Th. 1:11,12 1Tim.
3:13 1Tim.4:15

the HOLY TRINITY as the Eternal Source, Current and Pattern of Unity; and can be defined as a COMPOUND UNITY, integrated by:

(37) Acts 20:19-24 1
Cor. 4:1,2 2 Th. 1:10
2 Tim. 4:1-5, and v.,
17

(38) 2 Tim. 2:5 2
Tim. 4:7,8 and V., 18
2 Pet. 3:11-14 Rev.
2: 10 compare Rev.
22:12 and v. 20

- *The Foundation Corner Stone: THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

He is the Theanthropic Person, the Personal embodiment of Unity, the Living Stone which must be planted in the heart of every believer.

- *The Bond of Unity: THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

Vital link of Unity and fellowship between the Lord and the believers and of the latter among themselves.

Who plants the Lord in the heart of the believers giving us in this way SUBSTANTIAL UNITY in the experience of the NEW BIRTH.

- The Doctrinal Authority: THE WORD OF GOD or THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. Inspired by the Holy Spirit. In them, the Lord has given us the message that places within our reach the experience of SUBSTANTIAL UNITY, and the teaching that places within our reach the blessing of DOCTRINAL UNITY.
- The Missional Instrument: THE CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY. Initiated by the Lord Jesus Christ and continued by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles and disciples, the Christian Testimony manifests, proclaims and propagates CHRISTIAN UNITY.

III. ITS SCRIPTURAL DIMENSION

- Definition.
- Detail.
- Unfolding.
- Conclusion.

1. *Definition.*

By “Scriptural Dimension” of the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity, we mean the sum total of teaching of the Word of God with respect to the three Areas of Unity which have been discerned, which are: the SPIRIT (Substantial Unity), the WORD OF GOD or HOLY SCRIPTURES (Doctrinal Unity), and the TESTIMONY (Missional Unity); because they cover all the aspects and connotations of origin, relationship and manifestation of Unity.

2. *Detail of the Scriptural Dimension.*

- A. In relation to the HOLY SPIRIT, Christian Unity is of a Spiritual and Divine Nature. Its Scriptural Dimension includes:
1. With the force of a prerequisite, so as to satisfy connotations of origin: Unity in the very Nature of the Godhead, that is, in the Spirit; and the Unity in the Holy Trinity, which is the Eternal Source, Current and Pattern of Unity.
 2. Unity in the Theanthropic Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Foundation Corner—Stone of Christian Unity.
 3. Substantial Unity of Christians, in personal experience and among themselves.
- B. In relation to the WORD OF GOD or HOLY SCRIPTURES, Christian Unity is of a Biblical, Doctrinal Nature. Its Scriptural Dimension includes:
1. The relation between the Spirit and Doctrine, and consequently, the relation between the Unity of the Spirit (or Substantial Unity) and Doctrinal Unity. And the Unity between the Spirit and the Scriptures, that is, Inspiration, which makes the Bible the only Authority in doctrine and practice for born again believers.
 2. The Unity of the “corpus doctrinae”, that is, the “body of doctrines” of the Word of God; the Unity of the doctrines as they relate to each other; without omissions, minimizations, or lack of harmony.
 3. The Doctrinal Unity of Christians; or Unity of the faith in all Biblical doctrine and practice of the children of God.
- C. In relation to the TESTIMONY, Christian Unity is of a Corporal (or Organic), and Missional Nature: because it has to do with the Church as the Body of Christ, One Body for a Testimony. Its Scriptural Dimension includes:
1. The Unity of the local Church.

2. Inter—Church Unity; or the manifested Unity in fraternal relations between local Churches.
3. Missional Unity; or the Unity manifested in the fulfillment of the Mission and Testimony of the Church in and to the world: the manifestation and proclamation of Christian Unity before unbelievers, and the propagation of it in those who accept the Testimony with all their hearts.

3. *The Unfolding of the Scriptural Dimension.*

A) IN RELATION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, CHRISTIAN UNITY IS OF A DIVINE, SPIRITUAL NATURE.

Thank God, this is acknowledged by every faithful interpreter of the Word of God: the Unity for which the Lord prayed is essentially Spiritual, Divine, because its origin is in the Substantial Unity of the Holy Trinity and because it needs the Person of the Holy Spirit for its out-working.

BUT: —What do such solemn facts about Christian Unity signify and imply?

—How is it qualified and defined and with how much wealth of relationship and fellowship has it been endowed?

It is surprising, yes, very surprising, that these matters do not receive all the pious consideration that their importance demands; and that they are not a motive for special prayer, nor Bible study, nor adequate practice among God's children, the people who pertain to Unity! Articles and even books and special conferences abound that are against "ecumenism" because it is false doctrine, the "modernist" doctrine of Unity. But Scriptural studies in favor of the true Christian Unity do not abound. As a result there is much confusion. The hour is favourable; the time has come to reopen the Holy Word for these purposes: searching and allowing only the Bible to inform, to speak, to captivate our hearts with its message on Unity. What follows, may be of help, especially to the humble.

1. Prerequisite. Consideration of Unity In the Substance of the God head. THE SPIRIT.

(a) "God is a Spirit" (1)

(1) Jn. 4:24
Compare Isa.40:13
2Cor.3:17

In these words uttered by our Lord we have an authoritative and absolute revelation of God's Nature.

1. Designation of Substance.

Obviously, the Lord revealed what it is, when He said: "SPIRIT". The Substance, Essence or Nature of God's Being, is therefore SPIRIT.*

* SPIRIT. We need to note here, the conceptual distinction between Spirit as a Substance and Spirit as a Person. This distinction is posed upon us by the fact that Substance, as also the Third Person of the Godhead, are called by the same name: SPIRIT. It must be born in mind therefore, that though Substance and Person are an inseparable and indivisible reality, yet must be distinguished, because Substance does not make the Person disappear nor vice versa, otherwise the Trinitarian reality would disappear together with the reality of the Person or Substance, and God would be a Bi-Unity and not a Trinity. Therefore: there is distinction but not division; there is identification but not confusion.

2. Integration of Substance.

Because God is Spirit, therefore all His Being is Spirit.

God is solely and purely Spirit. Quantitatively and qualitatively One Substance. One, quantitatively or numerically. And One, qualitatively or integrally, that is, in His singular quality of Oneness, in His state of Being, because the Spirit lacks constitutional diversity: it is a simple not compound entity; it has no parts, it is undivided and indivisible. (2)

(2) Compare
1Cor.12:11a,13
Eph.2:18; 4:4

3. Perfection of Substance in relation to His Attributes.

Now we turn from the simple or singular to the complex. Singularity, in the Substance of the Godhead, does not exclude association with plurality and diversity; because Substance, which is One, possesses properties, virtues, intrinsic or inherent capabilities; in a word: ATTRIBUTES.

Substance is One but possesses many Attributes. These are not “parts” of the Substance because Substance does not have parts. They are “Properties” and it is through these Properties that Substance manifests itself. Without Attributes, Divine Substance would be unknown and unknowable. (3)

(3) Rom.1:20

We need to refer to those Attributes, though just in passing, because that will enable us to obtain a notion about Unity in its eternal Source.

ATTRIBUTES.

What naturally is suggested first when we speak of Spirit, is: *Spirituality*. The Spirit is immaterial (4); and neither has nor needs any connection or dependence up on matter, to be, exist or subsist (5).^{*} And is *Invisible*. (6) *Selfsufficiency*: possessing Life and self existence. God is a Living God. (7) This does not mean mere subsistence, but perfect life, organized life, that is, a life of Personality. “I am that I am.” (8) Because the Spirit is vitally self—sufficient, it is *Immortal* (9) and *Incorruptible* (10); and therefore all the properties of the Spirit are, as the Spirit itself, *Eternal* (11). And all this in *Perfection* (12), which demands *Truth* (13), *Holiness* (14), and *Love* (15); with their companions: *Veracity* (16), *Fidelity* (17), *justice* (18) and *Rectitude* (19); *Mercy* (20), and *Goodness*

(4) Lk. 4:37-39

(5) Isa. 40:18-25
compare
Acts 17:25

(6) Dt. 4:12,15
Job 9: 11 Jn. 1:18a
Col. 1:15
1Tim. 1:17c

(7) Ps. 42:2
Mt. 16:16 1Th. 1:9
1Tim. 3:15
compare Jn. 5:26

(8) Ex. 3:14

(9) 1Tim. 1:17b
1Tim. 6:16a

(10) Rom. 1:23

(11) Rom. 1:20
2Cor. 4:18
Heb. 9:14

(12) Job 11:7

(13) Dt. 32:4c
Jer. 10:10a

(14) Ex. 5:11b
Rom. 1: 4

(15) 1Jn. 4:8
Jude v., 21

(16) Num. 3:19
Tit. 1:2 1Jn. 2:27

But: Why are both Substance and Person called “Spirit”? We suggest that this fact is an index finger pointing to the similitude of purpose between the quality of the Substance and the vocation of the Person, that is: to serve as a nexus. And so, as the Substance, has the quality of being the Essential Bond of “Natural” Unity in the Godhead, so the Person of the Holy Spirit has the vocation of being the Essential Bond of Trinitarian and Theanthropic fellowship, and now also of Christian Unity and Communion.

^{*} “Pantheism”, that confuses spirit-matter assimilating them, and therefore is “monistic”, is proved to be false.

(17) Dt. 7:9 2Cor.1:18

(18) Ps. 11:7
Ps.111:3b; Isa.48:1

(19) Dt. 32:4
Ps.92:15; Ps.99:4b
Isa.26:7b

(20) Ps. 36:5,7
Eph.2:4

(21) Rom. 11:22
Tit.3:4

(22) 1Pet. 5: 10a

(23) Dan. 2:22

(24) Acts 15:18
1Pet.1:2

(25) Dan. 2:20
Rom.11:33,34

(26) Gen. 35:11
Job39:35

(27) Ps. 139:7-12

(28) 1Jn. 4:8

(29) 1Pet. 1: 16

(30) Gen. 17:1

(31) Ps. 85:10
Ps.89:14; Acts3:14
Rev.4:8 compare
Ps.146:5-10

(32) 1Cor. 14:33
compare Job.25:2
Rom.15:33 Phil.4:7

(21), or in one word: *Grace* (22). Finally: *Omniscience* (23), *Foreknowledge* (24), *Wisdom* (25), *Omnipotence* (26), *Omnipresence* (27).

All these Attributes, are interrelated.

And what can we deduce from this?

(b) *The wonderful Unity in the singularity of the Nature and the plurality of its Attributes; and their harmonious, unanimous interrelation and interaction.*

The One Substance has such cohesion with its multiple Attributes, that it always expresses itself fully in each and all of them. The Attributes, on their part, always express themselves fully in the Substance and always in harmony and unanimously with each other. For this reason we read: “God is love” (28), “I am Holy” (29), “I am the Almighty God” (30); all are absolute declarations. It cannot be said: God is “in part” love, “in part” Holy, “in part” Almighty; NO! Such a thing would divide the Substance and break its intrinsic and integral Unity, which is impossible.

Finally, we have the fact of the wonderful Unity of the Attributes with each other, There is perfect balance between them. There is none superior to the other. None can be employed in such a way to elude, minimize, reduce or contradict any other. There can be no discrepancies nor contradictions nor conflicts!(31)

—“On the whole it may be said that Scripture does not exalt one attribute of God at the expense of the others, but represents them as existing in perfect harmony in the Divine Being.”*

—“God never magnifies one of His attributes at the expense of another.”**

—“Conflict of attributes is impossible... They never need reconciliation with each other.”***

—“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (32) this is also applicable to God Himself: in Him there are no conflicts!

(c) *The Immanent Unity of Divine Essence.*

Summerizing: The integration and perfection of the Divine Nature reveals to us the fact that its Immanent, Basic Unity, is defined as a Unity in plurality and diversity: because Substance is One and Attributes are multiple, though Substance cannot be divided between its Attributes and the Attributes cannot be confused, expressing themselves always

* Berkhof. “Systematic Theology”, page 42.

** Moule. “Bosquejos de Doctrina” (“Outlines of Christian Doctrine”), page 37.

*** Clarke. “Christian Theology”, pages 83, 92. Quoted by Strong, in “Systematic Theology”, page 295.

cohesively, with equanimity and unanimity. Moreover: Unity in the Substance of the Godhead has a trinitarian basis and vocation, because it covers three areas: Substance; Substance—Attributes; Attributes among themselves. That is:

SUBSTANCE: Unity of Substance as such, in itself, as ONE: pure and solely Spirit; undivided, indivisible. That is: UNITY IN SINGULARITY.

SUBSTANCE—ATTRIBUTES: The Unity of the One Substance and its multiple Attributes; the cohesion and relationship Substance—Attributes: UNITY IN DIVERSITY.

ATTRIBUTES AMONG THEMSELVES: Inter—Attribute Unity. UNITY IN UNANIMITY.

(d) *Axiomatic Conclusion.*

“God is a Spirit” and the One Substance of the Godhead, can only communicate or manifest His own Unity, that is: UNITY IN SINGULARITY, IN DIVERSITY AND UNANIMITY! That is Unity in depth, Basic Unity, Unity in the Substance. There is no room for incongruences nor discrepancies. THAT IS THE UNITY THE LORD HAD IN MIND WHEN HE PRAYED FOR THE UNITY OF HIS OWN!

2. Unity in the Holy Trinity.

<p>— “... as be one, even as we</p> <p>“Holy, Persons blessed</p> <p>The understanding (3) it, for lack of</p> <p>But the Holy Scriptures, a demands of longing hearts. And will focus on the Christian Unity.</p>	<p>(1) Jn.17:21,22</p> <p>(2) Compare Isa. 6:1-3</p> <p>(3) Job 11:7 Rom.11: 33-36</p> <p>(4) Isa.40:25,28</p>	<p>thou Father, art in me, and I in thee... that they may are one.” (1)</p> <p>Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty! God in three Trinity”, so sing the Christians. (2)</p> <p>mystery is unsearchable, beyond all possible and all adequate representation which could illustrate precise analogies. (4)</p> <p>Goodness of —God has placed at our reach in the sufficient measure of revelation to supply the knowledge, and the necessary blessing for our as we study what is revealed in the Scriptures, we aspects more directly dealing with our study on</p>
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(a) *One the
God, is manifested*

*Essence, three the Persons. * Unity in the Triune
as Tri—Unity.*

* PERSONS. Though there are dangers in the use of this word in relation to the Holy Trinity, because of its natural anthropomorphic sense, yet, that danger disappears if it is remembered that the Personality of the Persons of Deity is infinitely superior and different from the human personality concept: because the latter is totally separated from one individual to another, but in

“God is Spirit” (5). Therefore, the Divine Essence of the Holy Trinity is ONE, undivided and indivisible: SPIRIT; and three the PERSONS: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (6). And that Holy Trinity is ONE TRUE GOD! (7)

(5) Jn. 4:24

(6) Mt. 28:19
2Cor.13:13
2Pet.1:17,21
compare Mt.3:16,17
Eph.3:14,16

(7) Jn. 17:3 1Jn.5:20

1. Here we must remember that in the Divine Substance, we discerned the basic Unity as Tri—Unity; that is: Substance; Substance—Attributes; Attributes among themselves. And this imprint of Triune Unity, we find wherever the Spirit has the Holy Trinity, whose Unity covers three areas, which are: Substance in itself; Substance—Persons: that is the cohesion, relationship and action between the one Substance and the three Persons; and the interrelation of the three Persons: their harmony, equanimity and unanimity.

The same principle of Triune Unity or Tri—Unity rules, but here we can observe that “Persons” figure instead of “Attributes”. This does not mean that the Persons take the place of the Attributes, but rather that they possess them. They are the three Persons in the one Substance, who possess and exercise the Attributes; but not for that reason can one Substance be divided among the Persons nor can the Attributes be distributed among them. We cannot say: The Father exercises some Attributes and not others, and similarly the Son and the Holy Spirit, NO! The three Persons possess and exercise all the Attributes because they have one Substance and they are one God only. As the Lord says: —“For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” (8)

(8) Jn. 5:21 compare
Rom.8:11

(9) Dr. 6:4

2. The same occurs with Substance, which is one and yet is expressed fully in the three Persons. That is an exclusive capacity of the Divine Nature, which: “... is distinguished from the human nature in that it can subsist wholly and indivisible in more than one person.”* A glimpse of this great mystery is given to us in that great Hebrew text: “Hear O Israel: the Lord our God (Elohim—plural) is one Lord.” (9) And even clearer do we find it in the New Testament: “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” (10)

(10) Col. 2:9
compare Jn.1:16

(11) Jn. 10: 15 and
vv., 17,18 compare
Heb.9:14

(12) 2Cor. 3:17

3. The fact that the one Substance dwells fully in the three Persons, does not affect their individual liberty, though their own wills, consubstantiated, concur in everything. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.” (11) This declaration of the Lord Jesus Christ proves His Personal liberty within the Divine Nature. And that His will agrees with that of His Father's is seen by what follows: “This commandment have I received of my Father.” There is liberty and at the same time complete accord.

Deity it is perfectly united in Essence or in one Substance though at the same time they have distinction and relationship.

* Berkhof. “Systematic Theology”, page 88.

The same is evidenced in this other verse of Scripture: “Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (12) There are three wills, though they are equanimous, or while keeping their own individual considerations pertaining to their liberty, they feel in unison and are in absolute accord in will and action, expressing themselves fully and unanimously, as complete participants of the whole Substance.

(13) Jn. 1:14 and
vv., 14,18

(14) Jn. 10:30

(15) Jn. 14:26

(16) Jn. 16:7

(17) Jn. 16:15
compare Acts2:33
Acts5:30-32

4. Such sublime Unity, eternally immanent in the Holy Trinity, remains unalterable in the revelation of the economy of Salvation. For this reason the Son, the incarnate Word (13) said: “I and my Father are one” (14), which proves the Trinitarian Substantial Unity. Then we see the Trinity of Persons in this other declaration: “But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name — (in the name of the Son: a Person) — he shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (15) “... it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.” (16) “All things that the Father hath are mine.” (17) The Lord's teaching is clear: there is Substantial Unity in Diversity of Person and total Unanimity. Trinitarian Unity has this wonderful seal of Triune Unity or Tri—Unity: *Substance in itself; Substance—Persons; and Persons among themselves.*

(b) *The Trinitarian Unity, in the Prelation (or Procession) within equality of the Divine Persons.*

(18) Jn. 14:28

(19) Jn. 16:27,28

(20) Jn. 1:14,18

(21) Jn. 15:26

(22) Jn. 10:30,38

(23) Jn. 14:9

(24) 2 Cor. 3:17

(25) Mt. 28:19

Jn.5:18,23 Jn.20:28
Phil.2:5-11 Rev.4:11
Rev.11:16,17

(26) Mt. 16:27

Mt.28:18; Jn.17:5
Eph.1:17 1Pet.4:14
1Pet.5:10

(27) Isa. 9:6 Jn.1:1,2;
Heb.1: 8 Heb.9:14

(28) For ex.:
Jn.5:21,26 Jn.16:15
compare 1Cor.8:6

1. The Scriptures also present to us the Trinitarian Unity in an order in which the Father is first, the Son is second, and the Holy Spirit is third. The Lord said: “My Father is greater than I.” (18), which reveals the priority of the Father. Logically, the Son follows the Father and that is why we read: “I came out from the Father” (19); “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” (20) Finally, the revelation as to the third Person in order: “... the Comforter, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father he shall testify of me.” (21)

2. This order, does not imply any change in the equality and Substantial Trinitarian Unity: neither does it imply dissimilarity between the divine Persons. So much so that — let us repeat it — not even the fact of the incarnation of the Word altered conditions. That is why we read: “I and my Father are one... the Father is in me and I in him.” (22); “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (23); “now the Lord is that Spirit.” (24)

These Scriptures are final: identification of the Being and of the presence, prove that the equality and Substantial Unity are there. For the same reason, that order does not imply inequality whatever between the Trinitarian Persons. The Scriptures present them as coequals in

Deity with equal rights to be worshipped and adored (25), equal in Glory and Power (26), in Eternity (27), and in all things (28).

3. The order of Eternal Priority, between Equals, implies an Eternal State of Subordination.

(29) Heb. 13:8 Rev.
1: 4,8

Seeing that the Scriptures reveal: (a) the one and immutable Eternal Substance in a Trinity of Persons, that is, the Holy Trinity did not come into being but for ever “is, was and is to come” (29); (b) they also reveal the existence of an order of Personality in which the Father is greater: What can we induce from these facts?

There is only one answer: That in the Eternal Nature of Deity there exists from all Eternity a state of Eternal Subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Father; without this affecting their coequality with the Father as Trinitarian Persons, nor their equality and Substantial Unity.

(30) Jn. 1: 18

(31) Jn. 15:26

(32) 1Cor. 12:3-6
Eph.1:2,3,13
Eph.4:3-6

(33) Jn. 14:28
compare
1Cor.15:24-28

The Scriptures reveal this state, saying: —“ ... the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father” (30), “... the Comforter, whom I will send unto you from the Father... who proceedeth from the Father” (31);at the same time they reveal that the Son and the Holy Spirit are just as Personal as the Father himself is (32), and that the Son says: “For my Father is greater than I.” (33)

Therefore, our induction is correct: coequals with the Father as Trinitarian Persons, the Son and the Holy Spirit are Eternally Subordinate to the Father: not with regard to Nature but with regard to an Order of Personality.

4. Reasons for that Eternal Subordination.

We have already seen — in dealing with the Attributes — that the life of Personality is organized life, not mere subsistence. Now we see the great reflection of that principle. So that, — having respected the distinction between the concept of a Personal God and the reality of the three Personal distinctions for the Godhead* organized life is interpreted in Trinitarian terms as the vital Order of Personality or an Order of Procession (or Prelation) of Persons, with their implicit attendants: the necessary Order of Office (or Functions) and Personal Operations (or Procedure). In other words: the Trinitarian Order of Being and Doing. God is a God of Order!

5. Explanation of Orders. THE ORDER OF PERSONALITY, indicates Prelation or Procession of Persons: the Personal Order — not chronological — which distinguished them in the Godhead, and in their

* Sound doctrine demands that distinction. For ex.: when we say “God is a Personal Go&, we affirm the Personality of Deity as a fact in opposition to the error of Pantheism’s immanentism or monism. But we must bear in mind that the reality of a Personal God, is a Trinitarian reality, and so avoid falling into the error of “Unipersonalism” which says that God is only one Person not three.

operations. THE ORDER OF OFFICES has to do with the function of the Persons, indicating what they do according to the Order of Personality. THE ORDER OF OPERATIONS, completes the Offices from the point of view of procedure or mode of acting, how they exercise their functions.

(a) *Order of Personality: Praelation or Processions of Trinitarian Persons.*

(34) Jn. 1:1,2
1Jn.1:1,2; Isa.11:2
Rev.1:4 compare
Gen.1:2; Mt.3:16

(35) Jn.14:10
Mt.10:20 compare
1Cor. 2:10

(36) Ps. 45:6
Heb.1:8; Isa.9:6
Jn.1:1

(37) Jn. 1:14,18
Jn.3:16,18

(38) Lk. 1:26-38

(39) Lk. 2:1-20

—Why is the Father the first Person? The answer should be sought in the fact that the Son and the Holy Spirit are revealed in Scripture as coeternal with the Father (34), and at the same time coeternal in the Father (35). Not for that reason must they be considered “derivations” or “manners of being” of the Father, nor as though in a said moment of time they started to be or exist. NO!* There is no “beginning” of the Son in the bosom of the Godhead because the Son is eternal (36). Nevertheless He is the Son: “the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father” (37); that is: ETERNALLY THE SON: IN THE BOSOM OF HIM WHO IS ETERNALLY THE FATHER!

But: —Why do the Scriptures say “only begotten”?

Does not that speak of “generation” or “begetting”?

We answer: —With all due respect to the application of the meaning “begotten” to the historical moments of Nazareth (38) and Bethlehem (39), that is, the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ; we must have in mind that here we confront another connotation of the word that cannot be tied to a calendar—date, because it is an eternal fact. Here we confront the fact of ETERNAL FILIATION. “Generation”, “begetting”, “only begotten”, when they refer to the eternal bosom of the Godhead do not have the identical application they have to the finite human sphere. In the latter, they indicate a moment of time; but not so in the sphere of the Eternal Godhead in which, though they maintain their generic sense, they lack chronological sense. The only way human language can express it, is: “THE ETERNAL GENERATION OF THE ETERNAL SON”. In other

* GNOSTICS (2nd. half of 1st. Cent.), and MANICHAEAN (end of 3rd. Cent.), spoke about “emanations” among which they placed Christ and the Holy Spirit, among other errors.

SABELIUS (end of 2nd. Cent.) maintained the “Monarchianistic” heresy, also called “Modalism” and “Patripassianism”, which denied the Trinity of Persons and affirmed that God is just one Person and their “mode” of self-manifestation is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ARIUS (about A. D. 321-36) denied the eternity of the Son, attributing to Him existence prior to the creation but not eternal, believing Him to be a “superior creature” with creative powers. His followers affirmed that the Holy Spirit came into existence by the will of Christ.

STRONG, A. H., in his classical work “SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY” (See the 24th edition, 1965, page 329), remembers that LUTHER alluding to Jn,1:1 said: “THE WORD WAS GOD, IS AGAINST ARIUS; THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, IS AGAINST SABELIUS”. AMEN!

TODAY: Unitarians; the followers of Swedenborg (A. D. 1688-1772); and Jehova's Witnesses: all deny the Trinity. Likewise Barthists and Neo-Orthodox cannot avoid falling into “Modalism”. Finally: “Christian Atheists” (Altizer T. J., Hamilton W., etc.), with their false “theology of the death of God”, with different moments and modes, as they say: God “died” when He became incarnate in Christ and died again when Christ died, so as to be “incarnate” in everybody in a so-called “resurrection” (!)

words: the Son is eternally linked to the Father in a relationship of eternal Filiation (40). “Only begotten”, in eternal dimension, is presented to our finite comprehension pointing out the fact that the eternal Filiation of the Son is coeternal with the eternal Fatherhood of the Father: without confusion of Persons nor a reduction of their coeternity!

(40) Mt. 11:27
Jn.17:5,8,24

The same occurs with the Holy Spirit, coequal in eternity with the Father and the Son (41); but nevertheless we are told: “Who proceedeth from the Father” (42). Also that the Father sends Him (43); that the Son “baptizes with the Holy Spirit” (44) and that the Son sends Him from the Father (45); so that He proceeds from the Father by the Son. We see, the Father is always First. It must be observed, moreover, that the Scriptures do not speak of the Holy Spirit in the sense of “Filiation” but rather of “proceeding from”. It does not say “only begotten”; it says “proceedeth” from the Father.

(41) Isa. 57:15,16
compare Acts2:3,4
Rom.8:2,9,16
compare Heb.9:14

(42) Jn. 15:26

(43) Jn. 14:16, 17,26;
Gal.4:6

(44) Jn. 1:33
Jn.20:22; Acts2:33

(45) Jn.15:26; 16:7

This is the place to say that the “mode” of such eternal Filiation and Proceeding is not revealed or given to any creature; it is completely closed to all sub—Trinitarian minds.

The so—called “Creeds” of the Church, such as the Nicene Creed for example, have endeavoured to express the inexpressible, saying: “GOD OF GOD, TRUE GOD OF TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE”, and so on. And if logical thought requires we confess that there is a mode, our logical limitation requires we confess that this knowledge is closed to us. This is a great and holy, unsearchable and inexpressible Mystery. But the fact is revealed in the Word and as far as the Scriptures reveal, it is lawful to search them.

Another fact should be noticed, which has been very well pointed out by Strong* and that is, that the Order given in the Scriptures does not permit us to say that the Father “proceedeth from” nor that He is “sent” by the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father, therefore, is the First Person of the Holy Trinity.

The use of the words “only begotten” for the Son and “proceedeth” for the Holy Spirit, besides their literal meaning, perhaps we can see in them, also, an implication of Order and Prelation: the Son as the “only begotten” of the Father, which relates Him directly and naturally to the Father, is the second Person; and the Holy Spirit, because He “proceedeth” from the Father by the Son, is the third Person. Each expression would indicate a place in the Order, but never must it be forgotten that it has nothing to do with chronological order or time of existence, because they are coequals in eternity. Moreover, the Father is of necessity the first in an order which is also necessary, because the three Persons are not three different and separate eternities because in that case they would be three Gods — as the “Modalists” and “Unitarians” accuse

* STRONG. “Systematic Theology”, page 333.

us of believing in. The Trinity is not of Substances nor of Gods: it is of Persons; One exclusive God in Three Persons.

The Father is officially the First Person in the sublime Mystery of the eternal co—Subsistence. And in His bosom is the “only begotten Son” and from whom “proceedeth the Holy Spirit”, this fact reveals that the One God, of all eternity is first of all, FATHER. Because He is Father, consubstantiated with Him and in Him, second in order but coeternal in Being and Personal existence in the one eternal Substance, is the SON, that is: God is the Father and the Son. And finally, proceeding from the Father and the Son, the third Person in order but equally coeternal in Being and Personal existence in the one eternal Substance, the HOLY SPIRIT, that is: GOD IS FATHER, AND SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT: ONE AND ETERNAL SUBSTANCE: THREE COETERNAL PERSONS. UNSEARCHABLE, SUBLIME, OUR GLORIOUS GOD! IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GREAT MYSTERY, WE REVERENTLY BOW TO WORSHIP: “THE ONLY GOD IN TRINITY AND THE TRINITY IN UNITY; WITHOUT CONFUSING THE PERSONS AND WITHOUT DIVIDING THE SUBSTANCE.”*

(b) Order of Offices.

The order of Offices accompanies, and renders evident, the Order of Praelation. Offices, are the functions of the Divine Persons; their mission in the bosom of the Trinity, Immanent Trinity as also Economic or Dispensational.**

(46) 1Jn. 4:8

(47) Lk. 1:78
Eph.6:23 1Jn.2:15,
3:1, 4:9-11 compare
1Jn. 4:19

(48) Jn. 15:9,10
Jn.17:24; Eph.3:19
1Jn.4:9,10

(49) Rom. 5:5
Eph.2:18; Phil.2:1
Col.1:8

(50) Eph. 1: 3-6

(51) Eph. 1:7-12

(52) Eph. 1:13,14

(53) Jn. 5:17,19 Jn.
14: 10

(54) Jn. 16:13 Rom.
8: 11 1Cor.2:10;
Gal.3:5 compare
Jn.14:17,18,23

Those Offices or Functions, manifest the fulness of the Substance and correlated to that of Praelation, that is: the Father as First Person; the Attributes of God; and are exercised by the Divine Persons in an order: Son as Second Person and the Holy Spirit as Third Person. For example: God is Love (46) and this Attribute, as all God's Attributes, is found and completely fulfilled in the Substance in each one of the Persons. But Love, according to the Order of Praelation and Offices, has in the Father the Eternal Source (47), in the Son Eternal Revelation (48), and in the Holy Spirit the Eternal Current (49).

We find a classical Scriptural example in Ephesians chapter one, which gives us the correlated ordering of the Offices of the Trinity, both Immanently and Economically. The Father, the Eternal Source, conceives the Redeeming Plan (50); the Son, the Eternal Revealer, brings it to light and fulfills it as Mediator Redeemer (51); and the Holy Spirit, Eternal Current, applies it and establishes it experimentally in those who believe (52).

(c) Order of Operations.

Finally, the Scriptures reveal the correlation of procedure or the manner of operating of the Divine Persons. The Father, as the First Person, works or operates through or by means of the Son (53). The

* From the so-called “Athanasian Creed”, even though Athanasius did not write it. As is known, Athanasius was the champion who defended the Holy Doctrine of Trinity against the Arian heresy.

** IMMANENT refers to the Holy Trinity considered in relation to the Persons in the Eternal bosom of the Godhead. ECONOMIC or DISPENSATIONAL, refers to the Holy Trinity in relation to the Persons with their creatures, that is, in Creation as in Redemption, etc.

Father and the Son, through or by means of the Holy Spirit (54). And though the Holy Spirit fills the Son, it is the Son who works through the means of that fulness

(55) Lk. 4:1,14 Acts
10: 38 compare
Mt.12:28

(56) Jn. 5:17-19
Jn.7:16,17; Jn.8:29
Jn.16:12-15

(57) Lk. 22:22a
Jn.10: 17,18
Acts2:23

(58) Jn. 8:54
Jn.13:31-32
Jn.14:13; 16:14

(55). And always in unison and of the same mind, because whatever the Father thinks, the Son and the Holy Ghost think together, and likewise whatever the Father says they say (56). And all that, without affecting their Personal liberty (57) and always glorifying each other mutually (58).

6. Unity in the Threefold Area of Order, defined.

Here too we discern the seal of Tri—Unity: Substantial Unity in Diversity of Areas of Order — (without affecting the Substance, nor Persons, nor Attributes) in full Unanimity. The Order is: **SUBSTANCE—DIVERSITY OF AREAS OF ORDER—UNANIMITY!**

(c) Unity in the Holy Trinity. Synopsis; Conclusion.

Biblical evidence permits us to affirm that Unity in the Holy Trinity is revealed in the Scriptures as a Tri—Unity, because it embraces three Areas:

(1) Singularity of Substance, (2) Diversity of Relationships, (3) Unanimity of Manifestation; and can be summarily defined thus: **UNICITY* IN DIVERSITY AND UNANIMITY.**

UNICITY, refers to the Divine Nature or Substance of the Godhead, the **SPIRIT**, in its Essential Singularity and its Immanent and Intrinsic Unity. That is:

<p>Numerically and Integrally One Substance: SPIRIT; Undivided and Indivisible.</p>	}	<p>Unity in Singularity. Unicity of Substance: Living Basis of Substantial Unity.</p>
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DIVERSITY, refers to that Unicity of Substance in its marvelous Essential Association with Plurality and Diversity of Relationships, in three Areas:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. Trinity of Persons: Father,
Son, and Holy Spirit.</p> | } | <p>Unity in Trinity.
Without dividing the Substance nor confusing
the Persons. One God in three Persons.</p> |
| <p>2. Plurality of Attributes:
Spirituality, Holiness, Love,
etc.</p> | } | <p>Unity in Diversity.
Without dividing the Substance. Without
affecting the Attributes nor diving them among
the Persons.</p> |
| <p>3. Three Trinitarian Orders:
Prelation of Persons; Offices;
Operations.</p> | } | <p>Unity in Diversity.
Without affecting the Substance, nor the
Persons, nor the Attributes.</p> |

* **UNICITY.** We use this word here for the richness of its etymology, which includes the meaning of “ONE” and “UNIQUE”. It is the best word, we believe, to qualify the Unity of the Spirit (Trinitarian and also Christian Unity), as ONE and UNIQUE, and which for this reason repels all “ecumenicity” or inclusivist ecumenical mixture.

UNANIMITY, refers to the Manifestation of Trinitarian Unity, in, among, and through the Areas of Relationship (Persons; Attributes; Orders), that is: the Manifestation of Unity of the Trinitarian Persons in their:

Interrelation, Interfellowship and Interaction.	}	Unity in Unanimity. Mind, Word, Will and Work: in Unity and mutual Glorifying of each Person.
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CONCLUSION. Unity in the Holy Trinity is revealed in God's Word as Tri—Unity, that is: UNICITY IN DIVERSITY AND UNANIMITY, which implies:

Unicity of Substance: Spirit; in Diversity of Relationships: (1) Trinity of Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, (2) Plurality of Attributes: Spirituality, Holiness, Love, among other Attributes; (3) Threefold Trinitarian Order: Prelation of Personalities, Offices (or Functions) and Trinitarian Operation; and Unanimity of Manifestation, in marvelous precision, balance and perfection: without dividing nor affecting the Substance, without confusing nor affecting the Persons, without affecting the Attributes nor dividing them among the Persons. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who possess the Substance and exercise the Plurality of Attributes, always operate in full Unity and Unanimity of Thought, Will, Word and Work, mutually Glorifying each other in their Interrelation, Interfellowship and Interaction in full Unity, Equanimity and Unanimity!

THAT IS THE MARVELOUS UNITY WHICH OUR WONDERFUL LORD AND SAVIOUR HAD IN HIS HEART AND MIND, WHEN LIFTING UP HIS EYES TO HEAVEN, HE PRAYED:

—“ ... THAT THEY MAY BE ONE... FATHER... EVEN AS WE ARE ONE.”.

3. Unity in the Theanthropic Person, the Lord Jesus Christ: Foundation Corner Stone of Christian Unity.

—“...as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee...” (1)

(1) Jn. 17:21

—“I in them...” (2)

(2) Jn. 17:23

Three facts claim our consideration:

- The Theanthropic Person and His own Unity.
- The time or moment, and manner in which He Prayed.
- The implications which His High—Priestly prayer had to His own Person.

(3) Jn. 1:1,2

1Tim.2:3-5

(A) The Theanthropic Person and His own Unity.

(4) Jn. 1:14,18

1Jn.1:1-3

(5) Jn. 17-21

(6) Jn. 13:13
1Cor.8:6b Eph.4:5
Phil.2:11 compare
1Cor.12:3

The Lord prayed in His standing as the Theanthropic Person; that is: True God and True Man (3); Eternal Word incarnate (4). So that when He prays to the Father and says: —“...as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee ...” (5), He, as the Son, can be discerned as an absolutely new and exclusive experience of Unity in the Universe. In other words: His Person is one and unique which cannot be reproduced: there is not, nor could there be another Lord Jesus Christ! (6). The reason for this can be found in the fact that the Lord assembles in Himself a threefold experience of Unity — (in Him we find that seal of Triune Unity) — which He alone fulfills: 1st., Trinitarian Unity of which the Lord takes part because of His Essential and Proper Deity; 2nd., Trinitarian Theanthropic Unity, or the Unity between Deity and the perfect humanity of the Lord prepared by virtue of the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary; 3rd., Theanthropic Unity considered in itself, or the Unity of the proper individuality of the Lord. Let us see it in its order.

(7) Heb. 1:8,9

(8) Phil. 2:6-8

(9) Jn. 3:13

1st. Trinitarian Unity of which the Lord takes part because of His Essential and Proper Deity. (7)

(10) Phil. 2:7,8a

It is obvious that this area corresponds to the Unity in the Holy Trinity, which has already been dealt with. But we must emphasize here, the fact that this Unity remains intact in the incarnation. The Lord, when He “made Himself of no reputation” (8), did not affect His Essential Deity, therefore, that is why He said: —“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” (9). His becoming of no reputation, has to do with the “form” but not with the Divine Essence; that is: He emptied Himself of His form of Glory to dwell in the form of a servant, the condition of man (10).

(11) Lk. 1:37

(12) Col. 2:8

Some, questioning the incarnation of the Word say it is impossible for the Infinite Being to be contained in the limits of the finite. In other words: it is impossible that God can be contained in humanity. —Let us say in answer, that, though this may be very impressive, there is no argument in the phrase, because it does not consider the infinite possibilities and attainments of the virtues of the Infinite.

(13) Jn. 17:5 Heb. 2:9a

(14) Col. 2:9

The merest mention of the Wisdom, Foreknowledge, Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence of God and other virtues of the Most High makes the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary vivid to our hearts and minds: “For with God nothing shall be impossible” (11). “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” (12) He who knows all things and can do all things would be found at fault if He lacked the wisdom and ability to make Himself of no reputation. God can and knows how to do it. And He has done it. Therefore, even in that form without “the glory which He had with the Father before the world was”, in the form “a little lower than the angels” (13), that is, in humanity, the Deity of the Lord remains essentially intangible. “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (14). Consequently, the Trinitarian

Unity which the Lord integrates by His Essential and Proper Deity, also remains untouched!

(15) Jn. 1:14
Rom.1:3,4a
Rom.8:3; Gal.4:4
1Tim.2:5

2nd. The Trinitarian—Theanthropic Unity; or the Unity between the Deity and the Perfect Humanity of our Lord.

(16) 1Tim. 4:1
2Tim.4:3
2Pet.2:1,2
1Jn.2:22,23
1Jn.4:1-3 Jude v.,4

It is evident, that here we refer to the historical fact of the union of the Divine Nature of the Lord —integrant part of Trinitarian Unity — and His perfect Human Nature prepared by virtue of the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary. And to those TWO Natures constituting ONE Person. This is the marvelous fact: Not two Persons, but TWO NATURES IN ONE PERSON: THE WORD MADE FLESH (15). This fact has been and continues to be the target for many assaults, which should not surprise us, because it fulfills prophetic predictions about apostatizing from the faith (16). And the worker that rightly divides the Word of Truth (17) does well to discern the depths of Satan (18) and his ever—growing subtle deceits. We cannot analyze here the multiple forms of negation, but at least we give a list of them with their common denominator in the footnote.*

(17) 2Tim. 2:15

(18) Ps. 64:6
Rev.2:24 compare
2Tim.2:16-18

(19) 2 Tim. 2:19a

(20) Mt.26:37,38
Mt.27:50 Lk.23:46

(21) Heb. 7:26
1Pet. 1:19 Jn.8:46a
Jn.14:30b
Heb.4:14,15

—“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure.”(19)

(22) Jn. 8:44

The Lord Jesus Christ is Perfect in His Divine Nature and Perfect in His Human Nature. True God, the Word, the Eternal Son; True Man, body, soul and spirit (20); holy, harmless, undefiled without blemish and without spot! (21). Seeing that both Natures are genuine, they are separable in concept but not in the historical reality of the One Theanthropic Person. Our Lord is not “two” Persons; He has “two Natures in one Person”. In the Lord Jesus Christ Trinitarian Theanthropic Unity has been fulfilled; that is, by the Word, Deity has united with human nature. The final authoritative word of the Lord Himself proves this:

(23) Jn. 17:21

(24) Isa. 7:14
Mt.1:23

(25) Rev. 19:10
compare
1Pet.1:10-12

—“as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee” (23), because in that “me” and “I”, that Theanthropic Person is integrally contained: the two Natures in one Person. And in stating: “thou Father art in me” it is made manifest that the Father through the immutable Trinitarian Substantial Unity “in” the Son and “through” the Son has become united and has united to Himself, the human nature of the Lord. If from the humanside the Lord is “Immanuel” — God with us — (24), from the Divine sphere He is: —Man with God! Precisely for that reason, “the spirit of prophecy which is the testimony of Jesus” (25), spoke of the Theanthropic Person

* As an example: Gnosticism, Docetism, followers of Cerdon, Apelles, Marcion, the Ebionites, Adoptionism, Manichaeism, Arrianism, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, Monophysitism, Modalism, Modernism, Neo-Orthodoxy, Existentialist Theology, certain forms of Kenoticism, Christian Atheism: all of which either deny or reduce one or other of His Natures; or allegorize or mythologize them to later demythologize them; etc., totally or partially and sometimes they do a little of each, and so they go adding “fossiles” and “links” to the many-faced strata of the ancestral logomachy of the “father of lies” (22). The only field where the false theory of “evolution” can find the whole range of “intermediate links”... is in the feild of HERESY! Satan has something to his credit: a stubborn dialectic perseverance pointing to just one goal: DECEIT!

(26) Zech. 13:7
Jn.10:30 Compare
Heb.2:16,17

with reference to the Cross saying: “Awake O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow — (literally: “the man of my union”*) — saith the Lord.” (26)

3rd. The Theanthropic Unity in itself; or the Individual Unity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is also of a Triune nature or Tri—Unity: (a) by the full cohesion of both Natures: (b) by his distinction and relationship; (c) by his unanimous manifestation and agreement in Himself and with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

(27) Rom. 6:9,10
Rom. 8:34
1Cor.15:20-23
Phil.3:20,21
Col.3:1

(a) Full cohesion of both Natures.

This refers directly to the hypostatical union in the one Person: full, intimate Essential Unity, naturally indivisible. Separable from the physical body by death on the Cross, it is inseparable from the glorified body in the resurrection because it can die no more (27).

(b) Distinction and relationship of both Natures.

This refers to the great mystery of that Unity. This has to do with Unity in Diversity: one Person and two Natures; without dividing the integrity of the Person and without confusing the two Natures though they are united. These are indivisible because of their full cohesion, and at the same time impossible to confuse because of their clear distinction and relationship. Scripturally, it has been revealed to us that without affecting the One Person, there is a clear distinction and intimate relationship of the two Natures within their own cohesion. For example: when the Word speaks to us about the necessary human development and growth:

(28) Lk. 2:52
compare
Heb.5:7,8

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” (28)

(29) Mt. 4:2
Mt.14:13-21
Mt.15:29-38

We also remember the classical contrasts which show the clear distinction and at the same time the relationship: —As man, He feels hunger, but as God multiplies fish and bread (29). As man,

(30) Jn. 4:6-14
Jn.7:37-39

(31) Jn. 11:32-45

(32) Mk. 4:35-41

(33) Lk. 9:58
Jn.14:1-3 Col.3:1;
Rev.3:21

He tires on the road and asks for water from Jacob's well, but as God He is the giver of the water of everlasting life (30). As man, He weeps before Lazarus' tomb, but as God He raises him from the dead (31). As man, He sleeps on a pillow in the storm—battered ship, but as God He arises and rebukes the unleashed elements (32). Foxes and birds have their dens and nests, but He is poor and has nowhere to lay his head, but He goes to prepare a place in His Father's house for those who trust in Him, and He is seated on His Throne of Glory (33). The examples can be multiplied (34).

(34) Mt. 24:36
Mt.28:18-20
Jn.18:1-6
Mt.26:50-54

Unity in Diversity: without dividing the integrity of the Person and without confusing Natures full cohesion and a clear distinction and

* Note of Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, commenting the text.

relationship, indivisible and at the same time impossible to confuse. MARVELOUS LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Another fact concurs with the Unity in Diversity of the Theanthropic Person: it is the delicate and much debated point of the two wills. Here again the so—called “Christological Problem” appears. The “Monothelites” (7th Century) and those who believe as they do, contend that only one will exists. But they cannot give a correct answer to the dilemma which this creates: — The will of which Nature?

(35) Mt. 4:1-11
Heb.2:18 Heb.4:15

If of His Divine Nature, then the human nature of our Lord is tacitly considered imperfect, and as a result, the temptation was not real, which contradicts the Scriptures (35). If of His human nature, then His Divine Nature is considered imperfect, which is absurd. Therefore “Monothelites” were and are mistaken.*

Very reverently, we must admit that if the One Person possesses two true and perfect Natures —the Divine and the human— He cannot lack either of the wills. BUT: though they can be separate in the formulation of the concept, they are really inseparable in the reality of the One Theanthropic Person; without this fact minimizing nor subordinating the will of His Divine Nature in any aspect, and without assimilating or causing His human will to disappear.

They are not independent, but unified; though. that unification is not a mixture of both, because in that case each part would lose, neither does that unification deprive them of distinction.

(36) Jn. 1:14,18 Jn.
3:16,18

The sublime mystery is expressed and contained in the fact that the Humanity of the Lord does not exist apart from or independently from His Divine Nature, because they are not two “Persons” or “two Sons of God”: Scripture defines only ONE PERSON: THE SON, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD (36).

(c) His, unanimous manifestation and agreement in Himself and with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

This proves and confirms all that has been said hitherto. Scriptural declarations are final. Essential Unity is manifested in complete unity in the Lord Himself; and with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Lord Himself, in his public ministry, declared this explicitly, covering three well defined Areas of Unity: Will, Teaching or Doctrine, and Work.

1. Unity in the Area of the Will.

(37) Jn. 5:19

(38) Jn. 4:34

(39) Jn. 6:38
compare Jn.5:30

This conjugates the innermost Theanthropic—Trinitarian Unity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His will and in His actions. “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (37). “My meat is to do the will of him that

* In Constantinople (A. D. 680/81) “Monothelism” was rejected.

sent me” (38). “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me” (39).

We see: their wills are monolithically unified, but at the same time they can be distinguished without possible confusion.

2. Unity in the Area of Doctrine or Teaching of the Holy Word.

(40) Jn. 7:16,17
Jn.17:8,14
Jn.14:23,24
compare

“...my doctrine is not mine but his that sent me.” “I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.” (40)

Jn.8:26-28
Jn.12:47-50

3. Unity in the Area of Works.

(41) Jn. 5:17-19

“My Father worketh hitherto and I work” (41). “I must work the works of him that sent me ...” (42). The Holy Spirit does the same, receiving from Christ and showing it to us. (43)

(42) Jn. 9:4

(43) Jn. 15:26
Jn.16:13-15

(d) Unity in the Theanthropic Person; Conclusion.

compare
1Jn.2:20,27

As in the Holy Trinity, so we say again: Unicity in Diversity and Unanimity! Because one and only One is the Person and Two the Natures: True God and True Man, the Human subsisting in virtue of this Unity with the Divine. Without dividing the integrity of the Person and without confusing the Natures; always expressed in full cohesion. The Unity of the Lord with the Father and the Holy Spirit remaining always intact, manifesting itself in three defined Areas: Will, Doctrine and Works. MARVELOUS UNITY IN A MARVELOUS LORD!

(e) The Theanthropic Person, Foundation Stone for Christian Unity.

(44) Jn. 17:23a

(45) Rom.8:28-30
Col.1:27,28
compare

2Cor.13:5 Gal.4:19

(46) Col. 1:18,19

(47) 1Cor. 1:13a

(48) Jn. 7:21,23a

The Lord is the Personal concretion or embodiment, as the Theanthropic Person, of Unity; therefore of what He is in Himself and because of what He has done — Redeemer, Baptizer with the Holy Spirit and establisher of the Testimony — He is the Foundation Stone of Christian Unity.* For this reason, He said: “I in them” (44). He must be planted and formed in us (45). The following words are pertinent here: “...that in all things he might have the preeminence.” (46). This question is also pertinent: — WHAT HAVE WE BUILT ON SO MARVELOUS A FOUNDATION OF UNITY? — We confess ashamedly: On Unity, our disunity! It is time we admitted it. It is time to remember that Christ is not divided! (47). It is time we discerned that wonderful Unity which our wonderful Lord and Saviour had in His heart and in His mind, when He lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed saying: —“ ... as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee ...” “I IN THEM ...” (48).

(B) The time or moment, and manner in which the Lord prayed: Unity in Prayer!

* See pages 25 and 26 the Third Fundamental Principle of Unity.

This was before Calvary and therefore before the Resurrection and Pentecost.

The disciples, at that precise moment had not had the experience of perfect Substantial Unity with Christ. The Lord prayed that they might have it.

(49) Ephesians chapter 1 and 3:5-12

We must point out a singular fact here: God had the Plan of Redemption prepared from before the foundation of the world, and in that plan was foreseen the participation of the believer during the Dispensation of Grace, the participation in that blessed Substantial Unity. (49) Nevertheless, the Lord prayed to the Father for it. WHY? We find the answer in the meaning of the prayer in relation to Unity. This is a means par excellence to experience Unity and Unanimity with the will of God. So the Son, who knew the will of the Father, identified Himself, as the Theanthropic Person, with that will. And while He asks of the Father what the Son knows the Father wants to work, the Son expresses His complete conformity to the will of the Father; He expresses the deep longing of his heart, that this will may be fulfilled as something greatly to be desired!

(50) Ps. 40:8

Nothing stands between full identification. This is an identification saturated with His love to the Father, and in as much as He prayed for us, He shows His love for us. It is the voice of the Theanthropic Person, which spoke through the Psalmist, saying: "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (50)

(51) Rev. 8:3,4

The heart overflows; intercession rises as a sweetsmelling savour (51); the intimate feeling of the Son is expressed in unison — as the Theanthropic Person with the intimate vehement desire of the Father and the Holy Spirit! It is a moment in the uninterrupted and precious Trinitarian fellowship which manifests itself through prayer. It is the Substantial Unity, manifesting and expressing itself fully, in holy love and sweet fellowship in the High Priestly Prayer. BLESSED AND HOLY PRAYER!

(52) Ps. 22:16 Mt. 16:21 Jn.3:14 Jn.12:32,33

(53) Mt. 26:28
1Pet. 1:18-20 1Jn. 1:7; Rev.1:5

(54) Ps. 22:15
Jn.19:28

(C) *The Implications which His High—Priestly Prayer had to His own Person.*

(55) Ps. 22:14

These implications acquire gigantic proportions of limitless sacrificial love, when we measure them with the rod of the Cross!

(56) Isa. 50:5,6

Mt.26:67
Mk.15:17-19

(57) Isa. 53:3

(58) Ps. 42:7

(59) Lam. 1:12

(60) Ps. 22:1 Mk. 15:34

Because the Person who is praying, knows that for the fulfillment of His prayers, the Redeeming Plan has foreseen that He must be nailed alive to a Cross! (52). That His precious blood must be shed in atonement for sin! (53). That His tongue which now makes supplication will cleave to his jaw! (54). That His loving heart will be like wax! (55). That His serene face with profound sight will be buffeted, spat upon, marred and pierced by the cruel thorns! (56). And He knows that His Father will hide His beloved Face from Him! (57).

(61) Jn. 19:30(62)
Jn. 16:5-7 Acts 2:33 Compare
Is.53:10,11

(63) Jn. 17:21,22

The Cross must exhaust its demands: "all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." (58). "See if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." (59).

“My God my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (60). “IT IS FINISHED.” (61).

THAT IS THE TREMENDOUS PRICE. But only in that way will there be resurrection, ascension, PENTECOST! And He will obtain and send forth the Promise of the Spirit of Unity on His people (62).

HE KNOWS THIS. THAT IS WHY HE PRAYS. “THAT THEY MAY BE ONE ... FATHER... EVEN AS WE ARE ONE.” (63).

OUR BLESSED AND ADORABLE LORD! FORGIVE THY PEOPLE., FORGIVE OUR DISUNITIES, CONFLICTS AND DIVISIONS! FORGIVE US LORD! GRANT US GRACE TO PRESENT OURSELVES A LIVING SACRIFICE BY THE RENEWING OF OUR MIND! GRANT THAT WE MAY FEEL OUR HEARTS BURN WITH THE OUTPOURING OF THINE ETERNAL LOVE! (64).

(64) Dan. 9:19
Rom.12:1,2
Jer.31:3 Rom.5:5

4. Essential or Substantial Unity of Christians.

(1) 2Cor. 13:13

In naming Pentecost, we state that the Holy Spirit is the Substantial or Essential Bond of Unity to Christians. It is through the participation of the Holy Spirit (1), that the Substantial Unity is established in the believers. The Living Foundation Stone, the Lord Jesus Christ is planted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. When the Lord said: —“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (2), He referred precisely to His indwelling in Spirit in His own (3). And that participation of the Spirit is given to us only once and for all, in the new birth.*

(2) Jn. 14:18

(3) Jn. 14:16,20

(4) Jn. 3:7

(5) Eph. 1: 13

(6) Eph. 1: 14

(7) 2Cor. 1:22
2Cor.5:5

(a) “*Ye must be born again*” (4).

This experience is a requisite or there can be no “participation of the Spirit” because the “seal” (5), the “earnest” (6), token (earnest) (7) of the Spirit is only given to us in the new birth. Yes, we must be born again!

(8) Compare Rev. 3:17

It breaks the heart to think of the myriads of persons who call themselves “Christians” and profess to adhere to so-called Christian Churches, but who have not been born again! (8).

(9) Gal. 6:15

Let us stop here for a little, to consider the indispensable facts needed to satisfy this demand, because as it is written: —“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” (9).

(10) Gen. 1:27
Gen.2:7 compare
Gen.9:6

(11) 2Pet. 1: 4

(12) Rom. 8:16

In the new birth, the Spirit of God unites to the spirit “image of God” which is man (10), and unites man to Himself. Without becoming “partakers of the Divine Nature” as the Apostle Peter expresses this (11), we cannot know the blessing contained in the expression of Paul” —“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God.” (12). And for that fact to become a reality, the action of God and the response of man is required.

* See pages 25 and 26: “Fundamental Principles, two, four and five”.

1. The Action of God.

(13) Jn. 3:16
1Jn.4:9,10

(14) Eph. 5:2 1Tim.
2:5-7

(15) Rom.8:29,30
Col.1:27; Tit.3:4-6

(16) Jn. 16:7-11

(17) Rom 2:4
Acts20:20,21
Eph.2:4-10 2Pet.3:9

(18) Mk. 16:15
Lk.24:46-48

(19) Acts 20:20,21
Rom. 3:23,26 Rom.
5:1-5 Rom.10: 8-17

(20) Jn. 3:16-19 and
vv., 31-36 Mt.25:41;
Rev.21:8 compare
Mt.5:22
Mk.9:44,46,48

(21) Jn. 1:12,13

(22) 1Jn. 5:1

(23) Eph. 1: 13

(24) 1Jn. 3:24
compare 1Cor.3:16,
6:17,19,20 Gal.4:4-7

(25) Eph. 2:1-10
compare Acts4:12
Rev.5:6-14

The Immanent Trinity performs in the function of Economic Trinity: The Father giving the only begotten Son (13); The Son giving Himself “an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (14); and The Holy Spirit coming to regenerate us, dwells in the believer and to form the image of Christ in us. (15).

The Holy Spirit takes the initiative. He reproveth and convinces of sin (16), and then guides the convicted and confessed soul to repentance of sin toward God and to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ exclusively (17). Once this object has been reached, the Holy Spirit begets a son of God, within that soul washed in the blood of the Lord!

2. The Response—in—Action of Man.

Every sinner on hearing the message of the Gospel is confronted with the action of the Holy Spirit (18), and the conditions of the new birth summon his conscience to repentance of sin toward God and faith toward the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only possible personal Saviour. (19)

If he does not pay that price, he will not experience the new birth and will therefore not be saved nor will he participate of the Divine Nature nor possess Substantial Unity with the Lord; and eternal condemnation alone awaits him. (20)

If he pays the price; if he receives the Saviour with repentance and faith; he is begotten, born of God, made a child of God, made a partaker of the Holy Spirit and with that the Substantial Unity with the Lord is established in his heart.

— “But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (21)

— “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” (22)

— “... after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” (23)

— “... and hereby we know that he — (Christ) — abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.” (24)

Notwithstanding, man's response, in spite of the fact that it is indispensable because without it there is no possibility of being born of God, it is not computed as some merit for salvation: because salvation is a gift of pure Grace of God and the exclusive merits of the Lord Jesus Christ;

because man's response in itself is promoted by the initiative of the Holy Spirit; and finally, because that action begins by humbling a man. (25)

3. Conclusion on the New Birth.

(26) Rom. 8:9 Only in those reborn, is the prayer of the Lord fulfilled as to the Substantial Unity, for the fundamental reason that they receive the participation of the Holy Spirit. Whoever does not possess that experience is not a Christian in a Biblical sense, as it is written: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." (26)

(b) *Substantial Unity in the born again believers.*

With the participation of the Holy Spirit, Substantial Unity is established in the believer. Then the believer must realize that this Unity is also of a Triune nature or Tri—Unity, because it covers three areas:

1. Substantial Unity between the Lord and the reborn believers.
2. Substantial Unity in the very person born again.
3. Substantial Unity among born again believers.

And in the three areas, the same principle rules which we have discerned in previous chapters: Unicity in Diversity and Unanimity. One is the Substance, in Diversity of Persons and areas of relationship, in full cohesion, equanimity and Unanimity.

1. Substantial Unity between the Lord and the born again believers.

(27) 1Cor. 6:17 compare Col.1:27b This Unity is indissoluble, as it is written: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (27) But this does not imply nullification nor assimilation of the believer's human spirit, because the Substantial identification does not mean a loss of individual distinction. The Scriptures reveal a full cohesion and a clear distinction:

(28) Rom. 8:16
1Jn.5:6,10a

— "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit." (28)

(29) 1Th. 5:23
compare 2Cor.7:1

— "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless..." (29)

(30) Heb. 4:12

— "For the Word of God... pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (30)

(31) Gal. 5:16

It is very evident that in the born again believer, a marvelous Unity is fulfilled which is indivisible and at the same time impossible to confuse; that is: the Holy Spirit becomes unified with our spirit at the same time as He maintains a relationship to it. There is no division, but there is no confusion. There is cohesion and there is equanimous relationship.

(32) Rom. 6:6
Gal.5:16b,17
Col.3:5-11

But, moreover, Unity is expressed or manifest by Unanimity. Having received the Spirit, we should now walk in the Spirit. (31) But because of

the antagonism of the “flesh” or the “old man” (32), Unanimity will not be manifest if a living sacrifice of the believer does not intervene so that he can experience the will of God. (33) And this brings us to our next point.

(33) Rom. 12:1,2
Gal.2:20; 5:24
Eph.5:15-20
compare Lk.9:23
Rom.6:11-23

2. Substantial Unity in the very person of the born again believer.

Obviously this is related intimately with what has just been said, because it is comprised of all the inward and psychosomatic relationships; all the personality of the believer: spirit, soul and body.* The Holy Spirit comes to quicken our spirit and to dwell in it to illuminate all our soul and govern our body, so that the spiritual man be established (34). Substantial Unity, planted in us by the participation of the Holy Spirit, makes us “the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory” (35). “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (36). This could not be any clearer.

(34) 1Cor. 2:12-16
1Th.5:23 compare
Rom.8:12-17

(35) Eph. 1: 14

(36) 1Cor. 6:19,20
compare 1Cor.3:16
1Pet.2:9-12

It is sad to have to say that the believer is wont to let years go by — (perhaps for lack of correct teaching or understanding or lack of submission and obedience to the Lord) —, before facing the implications of the Word with regard to Substantial Unity. This should not be so. Quick to do many things, we are slow to find out which are the Lord's rights in us, and the reality of the Presence of the Spirit and His purposes for us. That is why the Word of God commands us:

(37) Eph. 4:30

(38) 1Th. 5:19

(39) Heb. 12:5,6
Rev. 3:19

(40) Heb. 12:7-16

— “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed...” (37) — “Quench not the Spirit.” (38)

It is because of these things we are rebuked, chastened and scourged by the Lord (39). It is no light matter for certain, to be a child of God! (40).

And in the measure that the Substantial Unity is experienced, the believer will know how real, deep and indissoluble is the bond, how full of consideration the equanimous relationship and intimate fellowship is, and how fruitful the unanimity!

(41) 1Cor.12:13,27
Eph. 4:3-6 compare
1Cor.10:15-17

(42) Mt. 11:29
Rom.12:9-16
Heb.12:1 1Pet.4:7-9

3. Substantial Unity among born again believers.

The One Spirit makes us One with the Lord and with the brethren: “For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body... and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (41) This is admitted with

* *Human spirit*: is distinguished by its capability to judge, or conscience; sense of intuition; and capability of worship.

Soul: is distinguished by its intelligence, thoughts, feelings and will.

But: though there is distinction, they are indivisible. Only God's Word as we have seen can penetrate them.

praise and thanksgiving. But: WHAT OF UNANIMITY? How much exercise of heart, and humbleness, tolerance and brotherly love is needed! (42) And this not only in the local Church, but in our inter—Church relationship, fellowship, cooperation and— harmony, —speaking of course of Biblical Churches of Fundamental believers, and not of “modernists”.*

And what shall we say as to Doctrinal Unanimity? Because sooner or later, whether we like it or not, underlying tensions rise among us because of our differences on Biblical doctrines and practices. This is the moment to realize that the Substantial Unity cannot yield nor capitulate passively and indifferently to the presence of incongruences or discrepancies, and contradictions among believers. The reasons are seen in future chapters; but may it be stated clearly here that as heirs and depositaries of all the wealth contained in the Substantial Unity we are found wanting when weighed in the balance with respect to the Lord's High Priestly Prayer.

Sadly enough, the only conclusion that expresses the reality of our differences in doctrine and practices can be summed up thus: UNICITY IN DIVERSITY... AND DISUNITY. May the Lord open our understanding to accept it, our conscience to admit it, and our hearts to seek His will in Him and in His Word!

How necessary it is for us to bear once again His Holy Prayer:

—“ ... THAT THEY MAY BE ONE... FATHER...EVEN AS WE ARE ONE.”

B) IN RELATION TO THE WORD OF GOD, OR HOLY SCRIPTURES, CHRISTIAN UNITY IS OF A BIBLICAL DOCTRINAL NATURE.

1. Relationship between Spirit and Doctrine and, consequently, between Substantial Unity and Doctrinal Unity.

(1) Dan. 12:8,9
compare
1Pet.1:10-12

(2) Jn. 14:26
1Cor.2:6-10

Much evil has been brought into the Church because of a lack of recognition or remembrance of the relationship between the Substantial and the Doctrinal. The reason for this relationship consists in that: Given a fact or reality, (physical or metaphysical; material or spiritual; visible or invisible), there will always be a doctrine which will announce it, interpret or explain it. For that cause, all Biblical Doctrine, whether it refers to God or not, is a reality or a fact stated in words; whether those words were stated before the occurrence as in prophetic cases (1), or after the occurrences themselves. Wherever, therefore the Spirit of God works or is manifest, there will be a doctrine; even more: the Spirit Himself will provide the doctrine which declares His work or that of the Lord Jesus Christ or the Father, or all that the Holy Spirit desires to reveal (2). Going deeply into the matter, we discern that between the Spirit of God and Biblical Doctrine there exists a vital relationship; something like the relationship that exists between man's spirit and the word, whether the word is merely conceived in thought or spoken or written. So that if the Holy Spirit Himself gives us Substantial Unity it is He who gives us Doctrine, therefore together with Doctrine He potentially gives us Doctrinal Unity. As a logical consequence, Substantial Unity and Doctrinal

* “Modernists”. See page 20 the first footnote.

Unity maintain a vital relationship. We shall see more of this in the following points.

2. Substantial Christian Unity demands and at the same time projects itself to Doctrinal Unity.

(a) It demands it, because without doctrine there is no access to Substantial Unity. The new birth proves this to be so. We have already seen that in the new birth we receive the participation of the Holy Spirit, that is, Substantial Unity. But: to be born again it is PREVIOUSLY necessary, that the saving facts be presented to the soul. A message must be given it and that message necessarily must be doctrinal. If the sinner is only told that the Lord died and rose again to save him and that he must repent and accept Christ to be saved, that minimum is upheld and deduced from a long series of previous facts which cover a large doctrinal field: Anthropology, Hamarthyology, Soteriology, etc., and without their reality, those simple and brief words will be worthless. That brief message, whether the recipient or he who gives it knows it or not, is in itself a compendium of Doctrinal Unity, without which, the sinner will not know the Saviour and therefore will not receive the participation of the Spirit and will also lack Substantial Unity.

(b) But Substantial Unity, once it is established,

it projects itself to the Doctrinal Unity of believers, and the reason can be called: THE SCRIPTURAL REASON, THE FACT THAT WE HAVE A BIBLE. Because with, in, and by the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit has given us: “good doctrine” (3); “sound doctrine” (4); “teaching of the Spirit” (5); “... the doctrine of God our Saviour...” (6); “all... doctrine” (7). Doctrine is food for the reborn and is all the Church needs to know, believe and practice. Unity of the Spirit, requires and projects itself therefore to Doctrinal Unity which is given by the Holy Spirit Himself: first in the Scriptures, and then in the ministry of teaching so that Unity should be manifest in accordance with our submission.

3. Unity between the Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures.

We need to remember here that the Holy Spirit, Who is the Substantial bond of Christian Unity, is also the Inspirer of the Holy Scriptures: —“Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (8). “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...” (9). Inspiration is therefore the bond of Unity between the Spirit and the Bible, which for this reason we call Holy and confess to be the Inspired and Inerrant Word of God. In that bond — Inspiration — resides also the Divine Authority of the Scriptures which makes them the Only Authority in doctrine and practice for the children of God (10). All the saints know this. But they do not always realize all that this implies, or they do not always remember... especially in respect

(3) 1 Tim. 4:6

(4) 2 Tim. 4:2,3

(5) 1 Cor. 2:13
compare 1Tim.4:16

(6) Tit. 2:10

(7) 2Tim. 4:2

(8) 2Pet. 1:19-21
1Pet.1:23-25

(9) 2Tim. 3:16
compare Mt. 4:4
Lk.1:68,70 Jn.16:13

(10) Ps. 12:6; 33:4
119:89,140
1Cor.4:6b 1Th.2:13
Heb.4:12

to two areas of Unity: the inter—Doctrinal Unity and the interChristian Doctrinal Unity.

4. Inter—Doctrine Unity.

Obviously this has to do with the Unity of the doctrines, one to the other, the body of Bible Doctrines as a whole, without omitting or minimizing any, and without contradicting each other. Because the Scriptures are Inspired and for that reason Inerrant therefore all its doctrines are likewise the same. The InterDoctrine Unity is the result. All is cohesion, harmony and unanimity. Such is the internal evidence of the “corpus doctrinae” one of the most precious proofs of its Inspiration: its Inter—Unity (11). In this connection, the Doctrine of Unity is not merely one doctrine among many, but is THE Doctrine that embraces all others. It could be called: The Doctrine of Unity of doctrines. For the same reason, it does not admit partializations, nor hierarchies of “vitals or non vitals”, nor additions. If it is Biblical Doctrine, it is of God, therefore it should be observed because it is Inspired by the Holy Spirit! (12)

(11) Jn. 10:34,35
Acts 15:15 1Tim.3:16

(12) 1Cor. 2:12,13
1Tim.6:13,14
Tit.2:7,8
Rev.22:18,19
compare Num.23:19
Dt.4:1,2,6,10
Lk.16:17; Jas.1:17

5. Inter—Christian Doctrinal Unity.

The Substantial bond — the Holy Spirit — because of His double connection, both with the Scriptures through Inspiration and with Christians through the new birth; logically establishes the Tri—Unity; SPIRITSCRIPTURES—CHRISTIANS. Wherever the Holy Spirit dwells, or manifests Himself or works, He will do all in complete accord with the Scriptures He has Inspired. And dwelling as He does in every born again believer, He will lead them by the same rule. Wherever the born—again believers are and act under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they will act in accordance to the Scriptures. This is axiomatic and this fact establishes Doctrinal Unity inter—born—again believers. Whosoever is in accord with the Scriptures will be in accord with all doctrine and practice; and contrariwise: those who are not agreed among themselves are not so because some, if not all, do not agree with the Scriptures. It is obvious: BIBLE DOCTRINE UNITES: ERROR OR FALSE DOCTRINE DIVIDES THE CHILDREN OF GOD! (13). Such a reality declares UNJUSTIFIABLE — both Scripturally and Spiritually, all doctrinal discrepancies among God's children; this is so evident, that it surprises even brings deep consternation that such a state should be overlooked! But this is certainly not overlooked by the Lord! It is time to admit it and proceed without loss of time to correct such a serious fault!

(13) Rom.16:17-19
and vv., 25-27
1Cor.5:8 Eph.4:14,15
2Th.2:10 to
3:1,14,15

(14) Eph. 4:1-6
Rom.16:24-27

(15) 1Cor. 11:13a

(16) Jn. 10:35
Eph.4:3

6. Doctrinal Unanimity for here and now!

The reason is obvious: because we partake of One Lord and One Spirit, and the Spirit has given One Scripture (14).

Christ is not divided (15); the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures are not divided! (16): —Why should we Christians be divided, who are born of the Spirit, and who love God's Word? It would be necessary to have several “Christs” and “Spirits” with several contradictory “Scriptures”... to justify the maintenance of discrepancies. But: if born—again believers are

the genuine subjects for Christian Unity, because they have One Lord, One Spirit and One Inspired Inerrant Bible, there is no honest way of eluding this obligatory conclusion: Bornagain believers are the genuine subjects for Doctrinal Unity here and now!

(17) Jn. 14:6

(18) Jn. 15:26
Jn.16:13; 1Jn.5:6

(19) Jn. 17:17

(20) Mt. 28:20b
Jn.14:16-18
1Pet.1:23-25
compare Rom.15:4

(21) Jn. 17:17

(22) Ps. 19:12
Eph.5:26 1Th.5:23;
Heb2:11

(23) 1Tes. 4:11a

(24) Rom. 12:7b

(25) Mt. 4:4,7,10

(26) Mt. 22:29

(27) 1Cor. 4:6

(28) 2Th. 2:15

(29) 2Tim. 3:16
compare Eccl.12:10

(30) Mk. 7:9 Col.2:8

(31) Tit.1:9 Tit.2:1

(32) Mt. 7:15,16 and
vv., 20-23 2Cor.
2:17a 2Cor.4:2
1Tim.6:3-5 2Tim.3.7-
9 2Tim.4:1-5
2Pet.2:1-3
1Tim.4:1,2 Judev.,4

Moreover: the Lord Jesus Christ is the Truth (17), the Holy Spirit is the Truth (18) and the Word is Truth (19); and the three: the Lord, the Spirit and the Word, are with us for ever! (20). Jesus Christ is the Personal concretion of Christian Unity; the Holy Spirit, the concretion of Substantial Unity; and the Bible, of Doctrinal Unity! Finally, the Lord prayed to the Father: —“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” (21), and this, in every possible connotation speaks to us of cleanliness in truth and implicitly means liberation from error. (22)

7. Doctrinal Unanimity restricts us, therefore, to what is strictly Biblical: “SOLA SCRIPTURA”, is the Christian rule.

That is why we read: —“If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God.” (23). “He that teacheth on teaching” (that is: “doctrine”) (24). And “doctrine” among Christians, just one thing: BIBLICAL DOCTRINE!

—“It is written” (25), and: “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures” (26), are authoritative, absolute declarations of our Lord. The Apostle Paul also says: —“That ye might learn in us not to think... above that which is written” (27). “Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (28): this reference unites the Apostolic doctrinal verbal teaching to his written doctrinal teaching and with it, he establishes the Scriptures as our doctrinal Authority. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for corrections, for instruction in righteousness.” (29): it is equally authoritative, and subjects all things to Scriptural teaching and correction.

“SOLA SCRIPTURA” is therefore the Rule!* But that does not mean that the Fundamentalists have a “Paper Pope”, as Karl Barth, so irreverently said, he, who denied the Verbal and Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures (30). This means — among many other things — that the “Holy Scriptures”, as the Apostle Paul so reverently called them, have been given us by the Holy Spirit so that “sound doctrine” (31) may be kept from misrepresentations and manipulations of “false prophets and false teachers” which have proliferated so extensively in these last times of crude and audacious apostasy (32).

* Romanists, in giving “tradition” - which in many cases contradicts the Holy Scriptures - equal authority, contradict the clear teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Apostles. The Bible is the judge of “traditions” and not “viceversa”! (30).

8. Doctrinal Unanimity is synonymous with “Unity of the Faith”.

(33) Eph. 4:13 —“Till we come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” (33). This Scripture speaks to us of the progress and fulfillment in the knowledge of truth in the spiritual life. And makes it very clear that “unity of the faith” includes Doctrinal Unity, for two reasons:

(34) In this sense see: Lk.18:8b Acts6:7 and Judev.3 (a) Because it is a word written especially for believers and as such they already had faith as it refers to salvation; so that “faith” as it is here, has a fuller meaning which involves all the body of Biblical truth or doctrines. (34)

(35) Eph. 4:14,15 (b) Because its clear context exhorts believers in two purely doctrinal areas: —“That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness' whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head even Christ.” (35). Here we have the case judged for ever: Christians must have doctrinal unanimity. For this, they must avoid the errors of false sects; and on the other hand, must “speak the truth in love” which, together with a positive affirmation, implies that we must be liberated from errors which hinder growth in Christ.

(36) Rom. 12:16 —“BE OF THE SAME MIND ONE TOWARD ANOTHER” (36), also points in the same direction with meridian clarity, and its context adds light: “Mind not big things, but condescend to men of low estate”, which straightens out difficulties caused by temperaments or personal dispositions; and “be not wise in your own conceits”, which refers to ones understanding and suggests, together with moderation, meekness and humility, the need of obtaining true knowledge.

9. Will we pay the Price?

The Lord prayed for Unity! He gave us His presence, His Spirit, His Word, Substantial Unity. Are not these reasons sufficient to understand that we must possess Doctrinal Unity?

(37) 2Sam. 22:23 and vv., 29,31 Ps.36:5,7,9 Ps.119:18; Jer.33:3 Jas. 1:5 1Jn.2:20,27 compare Mt.11:25,26 Ps.43:3 What the Holy Spirit was able to do in and through the holy writers whom He inspired to give us the inerrant Bible, without contradictions and with inter—doctrinal Unity; can He not do through born—again believers who are yielded to Him and enlightened by Him to give Doctrinal Unity without incongruences and contradictions and discrepancies of any kind? (37).

BUT: Do we want to pay the price of submission to do His will in this matter?

—Are we willing to suffer a little for the sake of the Church of Christ? (38).

(38) Jn. 7:17
Rom.12:1,2
Col.1:24 compare
Ps.25:14
Prov.15:31-33

(1) 1Cor. 12:13
Eph.4:4 a 6

(2) Mt. 16:18

(3) 2Cor. 5:6-9
Phil.1:21-23
Heb.12:23
2Pet.1:13-15
compare Ps.73:24-
26 Ps.116:15
Lk.16:19-31

(4) Eph. 1:3-6
2Th.2:13,14
Rom.8:29 1Pet.1:2

(5) Jn. 14:1-3
Eph.5:25-27
1Th.4:13-18
Rev.3:10,11

(6) Acts 9:31;
14:23 Rev.1:4,20;
3:13

(7) Rom. 16:5
Phil.1:1 Phil.,vv.,
1,2

(8) Mt. 28:20 Acts
2:42,46

(9) Heb. 13:1
2Pet.1:22

(10) Mk. 16:15
1Cor. 9:16 1Pet.2:9

(11) Phil. 1:7, 17,
vv., 27-30
1Tim.1:3,4 Jude
v., 3

(12) Eph.4:7-12
Col. 2:6,7 Jude
vv., 20-25

(13) Compare
Rev. 3:17

(14) Rom. 16:17,
19; 2Cor.6:14-18
2Pet. 3:1-3, 15-18;
2Jn.vv.,7-12

LET US LISTEN TO HIM ONCE AGAIN: "...THAT THEY
MAY BE ONE FATHER EVEN AS WE ARE ONE."!

C) IN RELATION TO THE TESTIMONY, CHRISTIAN UNITY IS OF A CORPORAL, or ORGANIC, AND MISSIONAL NATURE.

The reason is: that it has to do with the Church of Jesus Christ,
ONE BODY FOR A TESTIMONY!

1. ONE SPIRIT, makes us members of the ONE BODY, of the ONE LORD. (1)

That is, members of the Christian Church. "My Church" (2), the Lord said. One Holy Church, made up of all the redeemed of this present Age of Grace, and which includes regenerate believers which have gone to be with the Lord (3), regenerate believers who are still on earth, and those who will be born again, here, when they hear the Word of the Gospel in this Dispensation until the number — only known to God "from before the foundation of the world" (4) is completed. That One and Holy Church, as a General Assembly of Christians will only be united by the Lord Jesus Christ to Himself, in the day of the rapture before the Great Tribulation is unleashed (5). While we await that desired day, the visible expression of the Church on the earth, are the local Churches — not the "Ecclesiastic Denominations" (6). Therefore it is here and now that Christian Unity in relation to the Testimony is operative, and that Unity is related to three areas of manifestation: the local Church; inter—Church relationship and the Testimony to the world.

2. Unity and Testimony of the local Church.

The local Assembly of believers, that is the Church which meets in the Name of the Lord in one established place, either in a temple or in a private home (7), is the first field of concretion and collective manifestation of Christian Unity.

It would seem unnecessary to say that every local Church should believe and practice the same doctrines and ordinances (8), maintain the spirit of brotherly love alive (9) and give a vigorous testimony in the preaching of the Gospel to lost souls (10) along with the defense of the Gospel in the face of all apostasy (11), confirming the Gospel also by teaching and edifying the believers (12). Nevertheless, not only must this be said, but also be greatly emphasized!, because in many local Churches one or another distinctive characteristic of a militant Biblical Church is lacking. It grieves the spirit to see enormous luxurious temples full of people who are spiritually more than poor, they are destitute (13).

And even in faithful Churches which have arisen in obedience to the Biblical command of separation from apostasies (14) often disparities of criterion on doctrines and practices are found (for example: the coexistence of two modes of baptism, according to the desire of the one to be baptized; the lack of conviction as to the form of government; the

admission of members and the indiscriminate invitation to the Lord's table, and others).

On the other hand, new “isms” threaten Church Unity. Among others, so-called “Neo Evangelicalism” with its itch for “intellectualism” and an anti-Biblical reaction towards Fundamentalists while its inclination is more and more toward the liberal and ecumenical wing of apostate Protestantism. A movement which is yielding ground in such delicate areas as the Plenary and Verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures and their Inerrancy, and follows after “oppositions of science falsely so called” (15) accepting that religious change of neo-evolutionism which has taken to calling itself “Theistic Evolution”. And lastly, imposing all over the world that new “school” of ecumenical evangelism with its unequal yoke of believers with modernist unbelievers and with “Neo Pentecostalism” and its “glossolalia” and “mass healings”, etc. All of which violates the Unity of the local Church because it divides the brotherhood in many cases. What a great need there is for adequate Bible study which would make dear so many subtle forms of deviations among believers and confirm them in God's Truth!

(15) 1Tim. 6:20,21

(16) Jn. 3:3, 5-8

(17) 1Pet. 2:1-5

(18) 1Th. 4:1-7

(19) 1Jn. 2:12-17

(20) Gal. 5:22,23
Eph.5:9,10

(21) Rom. 12:3-9
1Cor., chapters 12
to 14; Eph.4:7-12
1Pet.4:10,11

(22) Gal. 2:20 and
6:14 compare
Phil.3:7-16

(23) 1Jn. 3:1-3

(24) 1Th. 5:17

(25) Phil. 4:13-19

(26) Eph. 4:1-3 and
v. 17 to 5:21

(27) Eph. 1:15-20
Eph.3:14-21
Eph.5:14-21 Phil.4:1-
8

(28) 1Th. 1:6-10

(29) Mt. 24:45-47
1Pet. 5:1-4

How necessary it is also that God's people be instructed in all that involves Christian experience: beginning from the time of regeneration (16) and continuing step by step in spiritual growth in the new creature (17); sanctification (18) and the necessary separation from the world in and out of the temple (19); the fruit of the Holy Spirit manifested in the very character of believers (20); the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be exercised by each child of God (21); the “word of the Cross” in all of its depth and implications for each person and the task of each servant, whether a missionary, pastor, teacher or doctor and every Christian (22); the preparation of the born-again believers for the soon coming of the Lord for us (23); life of prayer (24); sacrificial stewardship of one's goods (25); worthy Testimony (26) and so many blessings more; intimate fellowship, spiritual knowledge and understanding; the habitual walk in the Spirit; knowing and obeying the Lord's will, etc., etc. (27). All of these holy and valuable things would promote a spiritual manifestation of Christian Unity in the local Church; and each local faithful Church would be in reality an example to others, as Paul said of the Thessalonians (28).

That is the challenge! The Word of God opened to be taught by faithful servants, to satisfy the longing hearts of brethren whose heart is open to worship and obey their Lord. Blessed are those servants who pray, suffer and labour bravely obeying the will of their Lord and giving to their family food in season and at the right time! (29). Unity of Spirit!

Unity of the Word! Unity of the Testimony! IN THE LOCAL CHURCH: HERE AND NOW!

3. The inter—Church Unity.

Doctrinally speaking, it is the logical projection of Unity of the local Church, and so it should be in practice! And may this be made as clear as daylight: inter—Church Unity, does NOT mean in any sense of the word, the; “ecumenical” promotion of a Super—World Church. Neither does it mean the organization of an ecclesiastical compare monster system of a “Papal” type of government. Nor a centralized government, nor a collegiate, or a federative one, or one of Councils, NO' Because all of that is anti—Biblical! May all this be 'made meridian clear, that the New

Testament establishes the INDEPENDENCE of the local Church in its government, discipline and administration, each Assembly answering to the ONLY HEAD: THE LORD JESUS CHRIST! (30). BUT: the independence of the local Church, does not mean isolation from other Churches, because that would affect the manifestation of Substantial Unity in the ONE BODY OF CHRIST.

The New Testament, which legislates independence, also establishes, by Apostolic order and example a brotherly fellowship, assistance and cooperation AMONG CHURCHES; and all this, without race, country, sex or social distinction among God's children (31).

For example:

- ◆ Fraternal salutations (32).
- ◆ Brotherly love in action (33).
- ◆ Sending of relief in time of need (34).
- ◆ Exchange and journeys of workers, and their support (35).
- ◆ Mutual prayers, and for missionaries (36).
- ◆ Information on the progress of the work (37).
- ◆ Exchange letters with Apostolic teaching (38).
- ◆ Joint international meetings, (Antioch—Jerusalem), to solve discrepancies in doctrine and practices (39).

CHRIST IS NOT DIVIDED! (40). NEITHER SHOULD THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST BE DIVIDED NOR ISOLATED: BUT RATHER BE IN FULL FELLOWSHIP AND BROTHERLY COOPERATION ONE WITH ANOTHER, SEEKING AND COINTINUING IN DOCTRINAL UNITY, IN BROTHERLY LOVE AND IN A UNITED TESTIMONY!

(30) Eph. 1:19–23
4:15; 5:23; Col.1:18
Rev.1:12–20

(31) Gal. 3:26–28

(32) Rom. 16:16 1Cor.
16:19 1Pet.5:13

(33) 1Th. 4:9,10

(34) Acts 11:27–30
Rom.15:24–29 2Cor.,
chapters 8 and 9

(35) Rom. 16:1,2 2
Cor.8:16–24 compare
Tit.3:12–14 1Tim.1:3
2Tim.4:10b,11
Tit.1:4,5,13 Phile.,14–
22

(36) Rom. 15:30–32
Eph.6:18–20 2Th.3:1,2
9

(37) Eph. 6:21,22
Col.4:7–9

(38) Col. 4:12–16
1Pet.1:1; 1Th.5:27

(39) Acts 15:1–32

(40) 1Cor. 1:13 3:1–9,
21–23

4. The Missional Nature of Unity: “That the world may believe...” (41).

(41) Jn. 17:21,23

Finally, we have the Lord's Prayer: “That the world may believe that thou has sent me... that thou has loved them, as thou has loved me.” (41).

Such explicit words from our Lord close our case. Whatever Christian Unity can mean, it should have a recognizable manifestation IN THIS WORLD! Substantial Unity or of the Spirit, which is of itself subjective and invisible, becomes objective in the eyes of the world through the Unanimity of Christians in doctrine and practices, teachings and testimony.

(42) Mt. 7:13,14,21–23; Lk.13:23–31 1Cor. 1: 18 Rev.21:6–8 Rev.22:11–15

This will make it possible for the world to believe and know that God has sent the Lord, that He loves us as He loved Christ and as Christ loved us! Of course, that does not mean that the whole world will become converted, nor will all be born—again, because we know that there are many who reject the testimony and will be lost (42). But Unity manifested will be a testimony which will show the world that the Lord of the believers is not of this world; and this will enable new souls to feel the desire of knowing the Saviour. “That the world may believe”, is an expression in which the word “world” (kosmos) is used as a synecdoche, that is, a figure of speech by which the “whole” is put to signify a “part” or vice versa. (43).

(43) In this sense see: Acts 24:5

The united testimony of God's children, manifesting Substantial Unity, the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in them, the presence and manifestation of the Holy Spirit, Doctrinal Unity with no doctrines or practices in contradiction from one Church to another, and the Missional Unity which would be proclaimed would manifest and propagate Christian Unity for the glory of the Lord, and would doubtless make an impact on many hearts, even in these days when iniquity abounds and the love of many or the majority has grown cold!(44).

(44) Mt. 24:12–14

(45) Mk. 15:37-39

The centurion at the foot of the Cross, on seeing that the Lord was dead, had to say: “Truly this man was the Son of God” (45). The testimony of the Apostles caused the people to glorify

(46) Acts 4:13-22

God and even the unbelieving authorities had to admit that “they had been with Jesus” (46).

(47) Jn. 13:34,35 1Pet. 2:9-12

(48) Jn. 14:23,24

(49) Compare Rom.2:24

We have been called to show forth the praises of the Lord and to manifest the holy love of Christ one toward another, so that it should be known that we are His disciples (47), and that we keep His Word! (48). Contrariwise, it would be very sad that the Name of our Lord should be blasphemed on account of a bad testimony (49). FAR BE IT FROM US! But rather: let us “walk worthy of the

vocation where with ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is One body, and One Spirit... One Lord, One faith, One baptism, One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all"! (50). "Unto Him be glory IN THE CHURCH by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN"! (51).

May the words of our Lord speak to our hearts. Confronted by them it is not possible to accept "ecumenisms" nor "isolationisms" nor "the middle of the road". Neither is it possible to be satisfied with a "status" which makes coexistence of truth and error possible without doing anything to resolve such incongruity, contradictions and discrepancies among born-again believers the People of Unity, in a Biblical manner! We shall see about this in the next chapter.

5. Conclusion on Unity in relation to the Testimony.

This can be synthesized in the same words that throughout this study we have discerned in each Area of Unity: UNICITY IN DIVERSITY AND UNANIMITY. Because the Church of Christ is ONE, it is expressed visibly on the earth in DIVERSITY or of many local Churches, which must keep complete UNANIMITY in doctrine, practices and Testimony in the world! That is what God's Word teaches! For that cause the Lord prayed for us saying: -"THAT THEY MAY BE ONE... FATHER... EVEN AS WE ARE ONE."

(4) CONCLUSION. Synthetic Thesis on the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity.

The Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity, can be defined as a COMPOUND

UNITY, which is made up of SEVEN FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES, that, for the experimental and practical fulfillment of Unity, are concreted into ONE FOUNDATION STONE and THREE INDISPENSABLE COMPANIONS. They are:

(a) Seven Fundamental Principles.

1. The Constitutional Charter: the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. (St. John chapter 17).
2. The Eternal Source, Stream and Pattern: the Unity of the Holy Trinity.
3. The Foundation Corner Stone: the Theanthropic Person, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. The Essential Bond: the Person of the Holy Spirit.
5. The Experimental Bond or the vital concretion in believers: the experience of the new birth.
6. The Bond and Doctrinal Authority: the Inspired and Inerrant Word of God, the Holy Scriptures.
7. The Bond and Missional Instrument: the Christian Testimony.

(b) The Foundation Stone and the Three Indispensable Companions.

The Foundation Stone, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Personal Concretion of Christian Unity, so as to be planted in the believers, requires three Indispensable Companions, which at the same time, establish three Areas of Christian Unity:

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT, Essential Bond, of Whom we are made partakers in the new birth, which makes us ONE with the Lord and with all other born-again believers. The Area is: SUBSTANTIAL UNITY.
2. THE WORD OF GOD or HOLY SCRIPTURES. Inspired by the Spirit Himself and therefore Inerrant and Only Authority in doctrine and practices whose message gives us access to and places at our disposal the experience of the new birth, together with Substantial Unity; and whose teaching provides us with Unity in the Faith. The Area is: UNITY IN TRUTH or DOCTRINAL UNITY.
3. THE CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY. Bond and Missional Instrument. Initiated by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and continued by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles and disciples (that is born-again believers), has to do with the Church of the Lord as A BODY, A BODY FOR A TESTIMONY. Manifests and proclaims Unity in and to the unbelieving world and propagates it through the Word and the Spirit in all who come to the knowledge of the Saviour and receive Him. The Area is: MISSIONAL UNITY.

CONCLUSION. The final synthesis of Christian Unity, can be expressed in the following concise declaration:

UNICITY IN DIVERSITY AND UNANIMITY FOR THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE CHURCH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!

“ONE BODY, ONE SPIRIT... ONE HOPE OF YOUR CALLING, ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL.” BLESSED CHRISTIAN UNITY!

IV. ITS VINDICATION

- A partializing “status”.
- A Testimony for “all the counsel of God”!

4. *The Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity, substituted for a partializing “status quo”, under the sign of “cooperation”.*

Here we deal with contemporaneous Christian reality and we reiterate that when we say “Christians” we only have in mind what the New Testament discerns as such, that is, regenerate or born again believers. It has to do therefore with penetrating the raw ecclesiastical reality among God's people, confronted by the Biblical Doctrine of Unity. In other words: we will discuss this reality among Fundamental brethren in the faith, between the saints of God.

We affirm that the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity has been substituted by a partializing “status” which waves the sign of “Christian Cooperation”. It is far from us to diminish an iota from the need and importance of fellowship and cooperation among brethren. This is desirable and precious and doubtless manifests the spiritual Unity of God's children¹. But Biblical levels of Christian Unity, are not satisfied in this present day with interConfessional cooperation, because it has been predetermined through partializing agreements which technically can be defined as “status quo”.

In fact: representatives of different Denominations in “full agreement” preestablish:

- (a) On the one hand, that doctrines common to all serve as a basis and will be upheld and/or defended, and that cooperative limits are permitted.
- (b) On the other hand, they agree that the existing inter-Confessional discrepancies with respect to other doctrines, (a matter which does not allow for any further fellowship and cooperation), remain as they have been, up to now, free to interpret according to the tradition of each group and... courteously avoiding discussion of these matters in sermons, Bible studies and other activities held together.

Such explicit or tacit agreements, which are the reality of the day, we call here “STATUS QUO”. AND OBSERVE THIS: it leaves untouched what should be touched, that is, all the discrepancies; and touches what never should have been touched: the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity, this may be consciously or unconsciously, when the New Testament standards are lowered.

The saddest part of all is that this “status” has been imposed as though it were the “sum total” of Unity, when in reality it is a substitute for it, just to make possible an agreement for cooperation, it pays the price of reducing the demands of Biblical Doctrine of Unity, covering the discrepancies under a respectable appearance. It has well been said “an

¹ Ps. 133; 1Pet. 2:17b

- (2) Ps. 85:8
 (3) Jn. 13:34,35 2
 Pet.1:5-8; Jude vv.,
 20,21
 (4) Zech. 8:16-19
 Ps.119:165 2Th.2:10b
 (5) 1Cor. 13:6
 compare 1Jn.2:5

agreement to disagree” and which we believe to be contrary to Scripture. May the Lord speak peace to His people and to His saints, but let them not turn again to folly! (2).

In a Biblical sense, Christian cooperation should manifest: God's love, brotherly love (3), love of peace and love of truth and love for truth (4), because it is written: -“CHARITY... REJOICETH IN TRUTH” (5).

Some brethren argue that discrepancies pertain to the field of “legitimate differences of opinion” which fit within “Christian liberty” and that they should be borne with a spirit of “tolerance and charity”. But they do not realize that such generalizations allow for:

- (6) 2Cor. 3:17 Gal.5:22
 (7) 1Tim. 4:16
 2Tim.1:13,14; 2:2
 Tit.1:9
 (8) Jn. 14:17; 15:26
 and 16:13
 (9) Jn. 16:8-14 Jn.15:3;
 Eph.5:26; 6:17; Heb.
 4:12 compare Jas. 1:
 16

- (a) An undue minimizing of the delicacy of the doctrines contradicted, which are in nowise trifling nor light.*
 (b) An overlooking of the fact that “liberty, tolerance and charity” are ALL, the “FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT” (6), and as such, cannot be alienated from the TRUTH, because the Holy Spirit is the “SPIRIT OF TRUTH” (8) and He does not tolerate nor conceal error; but is here to reprove it and liberate us from it by the WORD OF TRUTH (9).

It would be necessary to find other covering to put over the perpetuation of errors, for this can never be done by seeking refuge in the Spirit of Truth, because such a thing:

- (10) Eph. 4:3
 Rom.12:16a
 Phil.2:1,2; Col.3:15
 (11) Dt. 4:2 1Cor.4:6;
 2Th.2:15 Col.4:16;
 1Th.5:27
 (12) Eph. 4:29,30
 1Th.5:19

1. Would affect Unity and the Nature of the Spirit Himself; and Christian Spiritual Unity which we are charged explicitly to keep in the bond of peace and unanimity (10).
2. Would affect the Authority of the Bible, which we are commanded to respect (11).
3. Would grieve and quench, that is: hinder the Holy Spirit's work and His giving us light. Something we are commanded not to do (12).

* DISCREPANCIES. (A brief detail, not exhaustive). Some Christological aspects, Predestination or free will; assurance of Salvation or the falling from Grace; and understanding of regeneration and new birth. Irradication of sin or progressive sanctification. Escatology: the rapture of the Church - (Pre, mid or post-tribulationism); pre, post or amillenialism. Dispensationalism or Covenant Theology. The Church and its integration and expression; “Denominational” names. Place and work of women in the Churches. The extent and application of the doctrine of separation; Ethics and Methods in the defense of the Gospel. Sprinkling of babies and its meaning; immersion or aspersion of believers and its meaning. Church government. The Lord's table and its meaning. Modern Missions and their relationship to the Churches and New Testament Methods. Doctrine and Practice of Christian Unity.

All are basic matters that have to do with the Faith and the Testimony, and determine positions and vital aspects of faith, preaching, life, works, teaching, ethics and Christian hope. BE CAREFUL! (7)

-BUT: - some would say - must we finish with “cooperation”? WE EMPHATICALLY ANSWER: NO! BY NO MEANS! WE MUST FINISH WITH THE “STATUS QUO”, NOT WITH COOPERATION! In other words: we must recognize that we have made agreements that paralyze us; and that those ties must be broken once and for all, lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes and stop being constrained in ourselves. (13).

(13) Isa. 54:2
2Cor.6:12,13

For example: -Why are the present purposes of Fundamentalist interDenominational Organizations now in existence (Ministerial Associations; Theological Associations; Mission Associations; Fellowships and Councils of Churches; etc.) not enlarged so as to permit dealing, in a brotherly and Biblical way, with so many things that up until now have been considered “taboo” because of the “status”?

Why is it not possible to hold inter-Denominational Congresses or Conventions, called especially so that our gifted brethren could deal - with LIBERTY, TOLERANCE and CHRISTIAN CHARITY which are fruit of the Holy Spirit, and on a high level and dignity - such subject as:

- The Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity and our inter-Confessional discrepancies.
- The Church according to the New Testament and our “Denominational” organizations.
- Modern Missions and their relationship to the Churches and to the New Testament Missionary Methods and to Christian Unity.
- Restoration of the Doctrine and practice of Christian Unity among born again believers.
- Etc., etc., etc.?

Are not “old and new modernism”, “ecumenism”, “Neo-Evangelicalism”, “Ecumenical Evangelism”, “Neo-Romanism”, “Neo-Pentecostalism: glossolalia and mass healings...”, “Communism” “Evolutionism”, and so many other “isms” dealt with? Is it ethical and honest to hide and not deal with our own “isms”? Are we such punctillious and spiritual “Christian gentlemen” to decide to respect our so-called “differences”... and not so gentlemanly and spiritual to bring them to a joint Bible study without endangering our cooperation and even our friendship?

We are capable of organizing inter-Denominational Councils to join together in the struggle against apostasies, but are we not capable of facing the establishment of Consultant Committees to consider the study of our mutual errors, in love?

We are capable of praying and working together for the salvation of the lost, but are we not capable of praying and working together so that the saved can arrive at Biblical Unity in Doctrine and practices, in cooperation

(14) Lk. 4:23a

and help and testimony, and so the scandal of our contradictions, discrepancies and our provincial egoism may disappear?

(15) Ps. 111:7,8
Lk.24:44-48
2Tim.3:15-17
1Pet.1:10-12 and 23-25
(16) Ps. 119:4 Lk.1:1-4; 1Cor.4:6

“PHYSYCIAN HEAL THYSELF” (14), would seem to be a refrain that turns on us reproachfully! Let us be sincere and honest with God and with ourselves, and let us examine ourselves. Confess together that the Bible is the Inerrant and Inspired Word of God (15) and our only Authority in doctrine and practice (16), AND: at the same time disagree precisely in many doctrines and practices that each “Denomination” referring to itself calls “BIBLICAL” which implicitly declares the others to be “NON-BIBLICAL”, -WHAT IS THIS, BUT OBVIOUS INCONGRUITY AND FLAGRANT CONTRADICTION? A competent observer soon discovers that such a matter is equivalent to a denial in its outworking of that which we Fundamentalists jointly confess in our Declarations!

On the other hand, it is sad to have to show our lack of agreement as to which are the normative Biblical Principles of our cooperative Testimony, in areas such as:

(17) Rom. 16:17,18
2Cor.6:14-18
2Tim.2:16-21

(a) Meaning and application of the Biblical doctrine of separation from apostasies. (17).

(18) Phil. 1:7,17

(b) Ethics and Biblical methods in the defense of the Gospel. (18).

(19) Gal. 3:26-28
Eph.4:1-16

(c) Doctrine and practice of Christian Unity, (19).

(20) Rom. 12:16
Rom.15:4-6 and vv.,
7-14; 2Cor.13:11
Phil.2:2; Tit.2:7,8

And all this flatly contradicts our mutually confessed Authority: the Word of God, which commands us to be UNANIMOUS! (20).

(21) Gal. 5:13
1Pet.2:16

Therefore, if the present “status” is not modified radically, it cannot stop its “liberty, etc.”, from falling under the suspicion of being a “cloak of maliciousness” (21), because there is room for as many errors as can fit in areas of disagreement... without anybody feeling uncomfortable or of being Biblically exhorted in any way. And this contradicts the Authority of the Holy Bible, which reveals to us the correct attitude in the Psalmist's prayer: -“WHO CAN UNDERSTAND HIS ERRORS? CLEANSE THOU ME FROM SECRET FAULTS.” (22).

(22) Ps. 19:7-14

As a result, cooperation tied to the “status” becomes marked by it with the stigma of a scandal and a disgrace:

- (a) The scandal of helping to shelter and perpetuate contradictions and discrepancies, and therefore, errors;
- (b) the shame of failing in the vocation of calling God's people to prayer and humbleness before God (23), and of separating men of God for the task of restoration to

New Testament levels, the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity among us, the Fundamentalists.

Finally, the most suprising and painful of all is that we seem to lack the capacity to react and the will to action, to take the spiritual initiative which would help solve the problem in a Biblical way.

(24) Compare Mt.25:5 The lethargy of a heavy sleep has invaded us (24). With all this, Fundamental inter-Denominational cooperation is robbed and without hope of vindicating or freeing itself of a “status” which can no longer be an instrument of blessing, such that cooperating brethren need in so many areas that urgently demand Unity!

(25) See Ps. 39:2 Silence hovers over “taboos” and keeping quiet about even good things, that are Bible truths, is of greater esteem today...(25). As a result, some brethren, who perceive the problem, fall into a total isolationism, and others who do not separate themselves, shut up into a kind of ostracism within themselves which ill hides a feeling of frustration or an excess moral fatigue or fear, which is reflected in an attitude of pessimism of a fatalistic type which inhibits them.

(26) Ps. 86:11c
compare Isa.66:5 Such symptoms and the like, make up in many cases a syndrome which perhaps reveals a conscience conflict not settled within the secret chamber of the person's vacillating subjectivism, and shows the urgent need of praying the prayer which the Word of God teaches us saying: “UNITE MY HEART TO FEAR THY NAME” (26) and not to any “status”!

And if any sporadic voice is heard, its keynote is uncertain, vacillating, incomplete in its message, which comes to one expressed in such terms that seem to ask pardon for being so daring, or which fear to exceed strict diplomatic etiquette, or fear that the word might transcend beyond its provincialism or intimate circle where it was spoken.

In this way the Bible message, which is clear, prophetic, which reproves, exhorts and is brotherly: is alienated or hidden from ALL of us who need it in this crucial hour in the history of the Church as also of the world.

(27) Jas. 4:17 And the sin of omission on the part of those who should sound the cry and do not (27), is made worse in the presence of the explicit record of the Word of God, which extoles the attitude of the valiant for truth, who do not hide the Word, no matter what the cost! (28).

(28) Ps. 40:8-11
2Tim.1:7,8 2Tim.4:2

Some other voices: either strongly advocate the maintenance of the “status quo”* ...or go to the other extreme of the

* As an example, we transcribe a paragraph from the “Christian Beacon” of February 20, 1969, page 6, in which Dr. Carl McIntire (Presbyterian) answers a letter from Dr. Robert Ketcham (Baptist) saying:

line pronouncing themselves outside and even against it, but without the least consideration of the Biblical Truth of Christian Unity. And there is no lack of those who offer as the only solution: “Forget discrepancies”, without the slightest insinuation of seeking a Biblical solution!

That all this is displeasing to God, is evident. This is why the Lord has raised up a Testimony! But this deserves a separate chapter.

5. A Testimony for “ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD”.

That is the “PHILADELPHIA” (Brotherly Love) Testimony

(1) Ps. 60:4

(2) Acts 14:17

(3) Ezek. 37:9 Jn.3:8

(4) Isa. 24:16a Acts 1:8

(5) Rev. 3:22 compare Rev.22:16

(6) Acts 20:27

“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.” (1).

“He (God) left not Himself without a witness” (2). His Holy Spirit, that “bloweth where it listeth” (3), blowing from the “uttermost part of the earth” (4), sent forth a cry, a burden to the Churches (5), identified as the “PHILADELPHIA” (Brotherly Love) TESTIMONY! This is not exclusive of any particular Church or of any particular company of believers, but it identifies ALL Fundamental Churches on the face of the earth, who, on their knees before the Throne of Grace and on their feet in confrontation with the apostasies of the last days are agreed to testify together with a firm and holy protestation for “ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD” without partializations or transactions!(6).

(7) Rev. 3:7-13

A Testimony that makes up the triumphant march of the historic-prophetic projection for the Testimony of that small Church in “Philadelphia” to which the Lord said: -“And hast kept my Word and hast not denied my Name”!, to whom He promised victory over “the synagogue of Satan” (apostasies) and liberation FROM the hour of

-“... In this matter of the baptismal regeneration, infant baptism, the Larger Catechism, and the like, we must recognize that these areas which are not within the scope of our American Council activity. You are a Baptist and God bless you in it. Let me be a Presbyterian, and may God bless me in it. But let us both be Christians, for it was on this basis of our all being believers that the American Council and the International Council of Christian Churches were erected simply as limited and well-defined agencies for co-operation and not for the performing of church or ecclesiastical administration or functions. Are we forgetting all this? And are you GARBC's raising questions and pressing matters at this point that destroy the Council's very fabric, making it impossible for Episcopalians and Lutherans and may I even say, Presbyterians, to be a part of it, for what you have said here about infant baptism in relation to Bishop Dees applies fully to the teachings of the Westminster Confession and the forms which have been developed in Presbyterian history in the administration of infant baptism. Please, Bob, please let us let these things be where we originally put them when the Council was formed. All stand for the fountain filled with blood, and no water can save or help any soul for whom Christ died.”
This is a clear proof of what we call “status quo”.

temptation which shall come upon all the world (the Great Tribulation). (7).

(8) Rev. 3: 11

“Philadelphia” received no reproach from the Lord, but was warned: “Behold, I come quickly, hold that fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” (8). If we discern this warning prophetically it acquaints us with the latent danger and the centre of diabolical attacks against the faithful - especially on the eve of the coming of the Lord -: **TO REMOVE CHURCHES FROM THEIR CORRECT BIBLICAL STAND!** And it is needful to say: the present “status quo” discussed in the previous subtitle, has the living germ of that latent danger!, because it attracts Denominational Churches together “for the truth”... without disquieting any of them or asking any of them to promote a Biblical solution to the anti-Biblical “isms” where the underlying errors that divide them, can be found.

Therefore any Church that boasts of being Fundamental in these last days of the Church Age, should without hesitancy reexamine its Testimony in the light of the Lord's warning; and be precise on this point if it really holds fast to a clear position in voice and action, with regard to the purity of the Church in doctrine, practice, life and testimony, to the Word and the Name of the Lord!

(9) 2Cor. 13:8
compare 3Jn.vv., 1-8

(10) 2Jn. v., 8

(11) Mt. 16:3

(12) Lk. 21:28-36
1Th.5:20 2Pet.1:19-21
compare 2Pet.3:1-3;
Rev.22:7

(13) Mt. 4:8,9
Jn.12:31b; Jn.14:30
1Jn.2:15-17

(14) Dan. 9:26,27 and
11:31-45 2Th.2:6-12;
1Jn.2:18 Rev. chapter
13

(15) Mt. 24:15-22
Rev.7:14 and
chapters 11 to 18

(16) Mk. 13:32-37
Jn.14:1-3; 1Th.4:15-18

(17) 1Th. 1:10 and
5:9,10; Rev. 3:10

(18) Lk. 12:32-40

(19) 2Tim, 4:8

(20) 1Jn. 3:1-3
compare Jas.5:7,8
2Pet.3:8-14; Jude vv.,
20,21

ENOUGH OF PARTIALIZATIONS AND “STATUS QUO”! It is time to speak and work so as to pass from compromising cooperation to a complete cooperation with the Truth. (9). The Lord desires us to receive a full recompense! (10).

There is urgency in this charge! Because the coming of the Lord is near. The “signs of the times” (11) are multiplying before our very eyes. The prophetic summits of the Word of God are bristling with the red clouds of dawn and the sunbeams are lighting up History. We would be wise not to underestimate its oracles! (12).

(a) The “world” or “kosmos”: organized according to the “prince of this world”, Satan (13), is preparing at a fascinating rhythm for the day of anti-Christ (14) and the -unparalleled affliction of the Tribulation “the Great” (15).

(b) The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which will not go through such affliction, because its Redeemer will come to rapture it from “oikoumene” (inhabited earth) (16), before these horrors come (17): **-MUST IT NOT PREPARE TO RECEIVE ITS CELESTIAL BRIDEGROOM IN THE AIR, WORTHILY?** The “little flock” which is on its last watch (18) and loves and expects His coming (19), **WILL IT NOT HONOUR THE WORD WHICH SAYS: “AND EVERY MAN THAT HATH THIS HOPE IN HIM PURIFIETH HIMSELF EVEN AS HE IS PURE”?** (20). **OF COURSE IT WILL!** All reborn persons and the Fundamental Churches they compose,

(21) 2Cor.7:1 1Th.4:3-7; Tit.2:11-14

who confess, not only in creeds but from the bottom of their hearts “that blessed hope”: WILL SANCTIFY THEMSELVES! (21).

A logical question is fitting to be asked here: What implication or application does the purification or the pre-nuptial sanctification of the Church have, concerning the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity? The answer comes spontaneously:

- IN THE LOCAL CHURCH, purification demands consolidation of an inward Unity by means of Bible study and prayer, so as to eliminate all that is found contrary to Holy Scripture, in its doctrines, practices, life and testimony.
- AND IN INTER-CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS, purification demands a consolidation of Christian Unity, by means of the same procedure: Bible study and prayer, seeking as brethren together the solution from God's Word for all inter-Confessional discrepancies which constitute our “isms”.

(22) Acts 20:27

“ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD” (22) is our banner, shield, way and goal in this task. Let us have done with partializations of a “status quo” in which, let us ADMIT IT!, there underlies, together with its erroneous refuge, the subtle intention of “justifying” what cannot be justified: our incongruences, contradictions and discrepancies!

(23) 2 Th. 3:1 vv., 3-5; 2Th.2:13-17

That “the Word of the Lord may have free course and and be glorified” (23) among us, the Fundamentalists, may this be our prayer and mutual exhortation. May the Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity be restored in our “Declarations of Faith”, in its New Testament dimension. May the present day cooperation come out once for all from the “status quo” swamp, and be transformed into a dynamic and triumphant march which will permit us to advance like a charging army, along the road which still remains, to obtain the great objective, because time is short: UNITY IN DOCTRINE, PRACTICES AND TESTIMONY, OF ALL WHO CONFESS THAT THE HOLY BIBLE IS OUR ONLY AUTHORITY IN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICES!

And this which seems the maximum, and for some an unobtainable ideal or a utopian dream...: IS THE MINIMUM which our Christian conscience can demand of us, because our professed FUNDAMENTALISM OBLIGES US MORALLY AND SPIRITUALLY TO ADJUST OURSELVES IN ALL THINGS TO THE HOLY WORD OF GOD!

(24) Acts 15:1-33

The historic hour has come, when the Church must again travel the road FROM ANTIOCH TO JERUSALEM (24) which our

brethren of the first century travelled enlightened by the Holy Spirit and guided by the road signs of the Apostles. Their holy and gracious example should be followed by us without delay' we who live the eleventh hour of the Church here, who, like them: have been washed in the same Precious Blood of the Lamb of God and regenerated by the same Holy Spirit (25); we too need to meet so as to conciliate doctrines and practices, adjusting them solely to what is established in Holy Scripture!

(25) Rom. 3:25 and 5:9; Eph.1:7
1Pet.1:2,19; 1Jn.1:7
Rev.1:5; Jn.1:12,13
1Jn.5:1 and v., 18b

(26) Ps. 50:5
Rom.12:1,2 1Pet.5:6-10

(27) Jn. 14:21-26
Jas.1:18-25; 1Jn.2:5

(28) Mt. 10: 37,38
Mt.11:6 Mt.16:24,25
Lk.9:23; Lk.14:25-27,
vv., 33-35 Rom.6:6
Gal.5:24,25 Gal.6:14

The time has come to make a complete living sacrifice of entire submission to the Lord (26) and in complete obedience to His Word (27).

The Cross stands at the crossroads and the dilemma and judgment upon us today is whether we will take it up or turn it down, as it concerns the denial of ourselves and the acceptance of His Sovereign Will. (28).

**BACK TO THE LORD, AND BACK TO THE BIBLE,
IN ALL THINGS!**

Let us return to the Lord in full submission and to His Word in full obedience! May we who are brethren in Christ Jesus meet at His feet!

(29) Ps. 43:3 Ps.143:10

(30) Ps. 119:33-40

(31) 2Th. 3:5

This is the hour for Biblical Doctrine of Christian Unity.

This is the hour for joint prayer meetings for full Unity of the Church of Christ. So that the Lord Himself may guide us in each step to be taken. That He may “send out His light and His truth” (29) and “incline our hearts unto His testimonies” (30) and “direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ” (31).

(32) Rom. 6:13
Jas.4:6,7; 1Pet.5:5-11

(33) Rom. 15:4-7 Col. 3:13-17

(34) Eph. 4:13-16
compare Jas.1:1-6
1Pet. 4:7-11
1Pet.2:21,25

It is time to yield ourselves to Him as instruments of righteousness (32) so that He may work in us His good and acceptable and perfect will!

Only this way will we receive strength and ability to bear with each other in holy love, exhorting one another (33) as we travel together the way of Unity which we still have to cover following the holy footsteps of the Lamb of God! (34).

(35) Ps. 42:7
Lam.1:12,13

(36) Mk. 15:33,34

(37) Jn. 11:47-53
Jn.18:13,14; Jn.19:1-19

- **THERE IS NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE!**, if the Lord is to find us in His coming “for” us, just as He desired, when:
- prepared to climb to the summit of unparalleled suffering (35);
- when the night of the centuries hovered over him before that noonday hour of solitude (36);

- ready to give His body to the nails and the Cross which the earth had provided, ungratefully, though perhaps intuitively wise in its ignorance (37);

(38) Gen. 3:24
Zech.13:7

- ready to be pierced by the flaming sword of Highest justice (38);

(39) Ps. 22:1-21; Isa.
chapter 53

- and before His tongue was to cleave to His jaws and His heart was to melt like wax within Him, before He was marred and bleeding (39), or offered in an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor (40);

(40) Eph. 5:2 1Jn.2:2

OH! BLESSED LAMB OF GOD, OUR SUBLIME REDEEMER!

Thou didst have time to raise Thine eyes to heaven, and seeing what Thou alone dost see through infinite space, the sparkling stars and clouds of glory: and thinking of the little humble sheep and lambs of Thy little flock, and full of tender love and compassion Thou didst Pray for them as no one ever could:

(41) Jn. 17:1 and vv.,
21-23

-“...THAT THEY MAY BE ONE... FATHER... EVEN AS WE ARE ONE... THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE”! (41).

BROTHER IN CHRIST, YOU WHO READ THESE PAGES: DO YOU NOT FEEL THIS WAY?

Is there no burden in your heart for the Unity which is still lacking among Gods people? Do you not hear the cry? Do you not perceive that He is coming soon and it is urgent that born again believers must prepare, with the Churches we form part of? De you not realize that an incipient dialogue is insinuated in the presence of the open Bible? A dialogue of prayer and Bible study, seeking all the will of God?

The Eternal Love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, is appearing in fervent Brotherly Love. The Lord is at the door and He is calling us!

SURELY WE WILL NOT DENY HIM, WILL WE?