

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
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Detroit, Michigan 48208
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“Be of the same mind one toward another.”

Date: February 2006

OPENING PRAYER:

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Romans 12:16

“Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.” (King James Version)

“Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.” (New King James Version)

“Be in agreement with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation.” (Holman Christian Standard Bible)

“Be friendly with everyone. Don’t be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people.” (Contemporary English Version)

“Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.” (New American Standard Bible)

“Live in harmony with each other. Don’t try to act important, but enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don’t think you know it all!” (New Living Translation)

“Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty (snobbish, high-minded, exclusive), but readily adjust yourself to [people, things] and give yourselves to humble tasks. Never overestimate or be wise in your own conceits.” (Amplified Bible)

GOAL: To understand the spiritual importance “being of the same mind”.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Discuss and explain problems that arise when we are of a “different mind” toward one another.
2. Explore connections between “being of the same mind” and the love and grace of God.
3. Explore how Jesus Christ demonstrated “sameness of mind” with the Father in his thoughts, attitude, and actions.

ESSENTIAL INSIGHTS/QUESTIONS:

1. Has the church missed spiritual growth, opportunities and blessings because of spiritual arrogance and pride?
2. Is God's spiritual presence displaced when we are not in harmony with one another?

LESSON INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

Time: **56 A.D.** Place: **Corinth**

The Church at Rome was founded by Jews who were converted on the day of Pentecost. Paul's letter to these believers is perhaps the most powerful of all the epistles. It was written from Corinth during his third missionary journey. Paul desired to visit these Christians at Rome, which was at this time comprised largely of a Gentile population. Being unable to visit the Church at Rome, he sent this inspired document to reveal the great truths of the Gospel of Grace. This doctrine gives sound instructions to establish and encourage believer's faith.

Romans 12: 16 "***Be of the same mind one toward another***" is the unity of love. Sameness of mind for believers is having love and affection toward each other and being of the same accord. We should love our brothers as ourselves and desire their welfare as our own. When we seek the mind of Christ (Phil. 2: 5) and are transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12: 2), we become more like him. The more we evolve into the likeness of Christ, the more we will become of the same mind. This renewed mind will exhibit humility. Do not set your mind on high things which denote pride and arrogance, rather, we should set our minds on heavenly things where Christ reigns (Col. 3:1-2). Then, Christ will fashion us in His image and we shall become new creatures who are one with Him and one with one another.

DEFINITIONS:

Same: similar or corresponding; in the same way.¹ ***Autos*** (ow-tos'): Word Origin: Greek, Strong #: 846

1. himself, herself, themselves, itself (referring to all genders)
2. he, she, it
3. the same

Mind: The human consciousness that is manifested in through, perception, emotion, will and memory.² opinion or sentiment.³ ***Phroneo*** (fron-eh'-o): Word Origin: Greek, verb, Strong #: 5426

1. to feel, to think

- a. to have an opinion of one's self, think of one's self, to be modest, not let one's opinion (though just) of himself exceed the bounds of modesty
- b. to think or judge what one's opinion is
- c. to be of the same mind, i.e. agreed together, cherish the same views, be harmonious

One Another: *Allelon* (al-lay' lone): Word Origin: Greek, Strong #: 240

1. one another, reciprocally, mutually

High: *Hupselos* (hoop-say-los): Word Origin: Greek, Adjective, Strong #5308

1. high, lofty
 - a. exalted on high; eminent, exalted
 - b. with an uplifted arm, i.e. with signal power
 - c. to influence and honor
 - d. to set the mind on to seek, high things, (as honors and riches), to be aspiring

Condescend: 1. to descend to the level of one considered inferior. *Sunapago* (soon-ap-ag'-o); Word Origin: Greek, Verb, Strong #: 4879

1. to lead away with or together⁴
2. metaphor: to be carried away with
 - a. to yield or submit one's self to lowly things, conditions, and employments.

Estate: a stage; condition; or status of life. *Tapainos* (tap-i-nos'): Adjective, Strong # 5011

1. rising far from the ground
2. metaphor:
 - a. as a condition, lowly, of low degree
 - b. lowly in spirit, humble
 - c. in a bad sense, deporting one's self abjectly, deferring servilely to others

Wise: 1. having wisdom, judicious, 2. exhibiting common sense. 3. learned erudite, 4. aware; informed. 5. *Slang*; Rude and disrespectful; impudent. *Phronimos* (fron'-ee-mos); Word Origin: Greek, Adjective, Strong #: 5429

1. intelligent, wise
2. prudent, i.e. mindful of one's interests

Conceits: *Enheautois* (en-heh-ow-toys'): Word Origin: Greek, Strong # 1438.

1. An unduly high opinion of one's self. 2 Synonyms: egotism, narcissism, vanity.

1. Vine's Expository Dictionary
2. Vine's Expository Dictionary
3. Vine's Expository Dictionary
4. Vine's Expository Dictionary

LESSON CONTENT (Input and Modeling):

OUTLINE:

1. Being of the same mind is to surrender who we are to the transforming power of God's Holy Spirit

(Philippians 1:27, Philippians 3:12-16. I Peter 3:8, and Col. 3:1-17).

In Romans 12:16, The Greek word for mind is "**phroneo**". It refers to the "*human consciousness*" which manifests itself in our thoughts, perceptions, emotions, memory and will (*actions*). This scriptural passage exhorts us to "*Be of the same mind one toward another.*"

Our identity or sameness of mind is not shaped simply by who we are as individuals but also by the spiritual family in which God has placed us. Understanding the bond as 'brethren' or being a part of God's family helps us desire and demonstrate Christian unity. (I Corinthians 1:10) Such unity is for God's glory (John 17:20- 26). God desires us (through His love) to be one with Him as Jesus is with the Father. This process begins by accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Moreover, because we have died and risen in Christ as a result of salvation, we have the ability (*through the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit*) to die to our old sin nature and rise in a new Christ-like identity.

God intends for His Word, which gives rise to our beliefs about the nature of Christ, His work, and His church to function as a unifying influence among his people. Devoting more attention and application of our lives to the doctrine of Christ will help us mirror God's own perspective regarding what is foundational to the unity of his people. Unity must be more than external appearances. It must arise from the inward harmony of people who believe in the same God, obey the same Lord, and share the same spirit. Such people ARE perfectly joined together in mind, attitude, and thinking. The ultimate aim of Paul's appeal is that God's people live and serve in unity (I Corinthians 1: 10-17; Ephesians 4:3, 13; Philippians 2:2).

Being like-minded does not mean uniformity in thought, but a common disposition to work together and serve one another in love. (*Phil. 2: 1-5.*)⁵ "***Being of the same mind one towards another***" is the result of yielding to the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit as He transforms us day by day. In every way, our lives ought to demonstrate our continuous growth and progress in becoming more like Jesus.

2. Being like-minded is to pursue the mind of Christ.

(Romans 15:5-7, Philippians 2: 1-8, I Peter 3:8 and I Corinthians 1: 10-14).

To pursue the mind of Christ is to surrender to God's will individually and corporately as the body of Christ. (*Rom. 12: 1*) How is this to be

accomplished when the church is such a diverse body—in age, professions, economic status, attitudes and opinions? Paul admonishes us to live lives that are worthy of the Gospel of Christ. (*Col. 1:10*) We must allow God’s spiritual values to prevail in our lives so we can put to death practices that belong to our earthly nature. (*Col. 1:1-3*) Our salvation was and is secured because of Christ’s perfect obedience to God, the Father. The benefits we experience as a result of being in intimate relationship with Christ ought to motivate us to maintain unity in the fellowship by putting on the mind of Christ together. (*Phil 2: 1-5*) His perfect example ought to be reflected in our relationships with each other.

A fellowship characterized by divisiveness, strife, condemnation, conflict, selfish ambition and pride is, in no way, a reflection of the attitude of Christ! James 3:16 tell us, “*For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there*”. As true believers, we should never be high-minded or conceited, or think of ourselves more highly than we ought. (Romans 12:16, 12:3) When we are bonded in love, and on the same accord, it strengthens the Church and the faith of its believers.

To be like-minded for Christians and to pursue the mind of Christ is to share mutual love for one another. This is not easy, but when we are united in love and pursue oneness with each other, our faith and fellowship becomes strengthened. Being one in Christ is the foundation of true fellowship and is demonstrated by our unity.

Jesus was the epitome of selfless love, perfect obedience, and humility as He laid aside His divinity to redeem us. (*Phil. 2: 8*) Seeing each other through God’s eyes (*so full of love and grace*) will allow us to encourage, nurture, and walk along side each other in unity, as we become servants of the living God.

⁵ *The NIV Study Bible (Notes)*

SUMMARY/REVIEW/CLOSURE:

“You call me, ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord’ and you are right, because it is true. And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than the master. Nor a messenger more important than the one who sends them. You know these things—now do them? That is the path of blessing.”
*John 13: 13- 17.*⁶

Can you imagine Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church as a place where every member was willing to wash another member’s feet? Jesus’ example was a lesson in humility but it sets forth the principle of selfless service that was to soon be exemplified in the cross.⁷ His persistence, in spite of Peter’s initial rejection, enabled His disciples to experience His example of humility and a life-changing

demonstration of the highest meaning of “*being of the same mind one towards another.*”

We are messengers of the living Gospel of Jesus Christ! Our spirit of meekness is demonstrated in our willingness to subject ourselves to the lowest estate for the sake of others. There is a story of old that helps us to understand “meekness” as exemplified by Christ. Whenever someone took possession of a strong and beautiful stallion, getting that powerful horse to obey the voice of his master was the primary work of the owner. When this was accomplished, that horse was known as “meek”. While the world would have us believe that meekness is a sign of weakness, God helps us to understand the true meaning of meekness—POWER UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE MASTER! Only when we surrender “all of who we are” to our Lord, will we become servants of a Holy God! Jesus makes the message clear. ***“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you...Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. (John 13: 15, 17.)*** Jesus’ simple act of washing feet ought to challenge our commitment to servanthood. Then we can sing with the hymn writer...

***“O we never can know what the Lord will bestow.
Of the blessings for which we have prayed.
‘Till our body and soul He doth fully control,
And our all on the altar is laid!”⁸***

May God be praised!

⁶ The NIV Study Bible (John 13: 13-17).

⁷ The NIV Study Bible (Notes)

⁸ Hoffman, Elisha A. (2001). “*Is your all on the Altar?*” **African American Heritage Hymnal**. Chicago, IL: Gia Publications.

DISCUSSION/APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What would be the witness of the church if we were of one mind with Christ?
2. What can you do today to ensure that we are operating with the “mind of Christ” in the church?

ASSIGNMENT/JOURNAL EXERCISE:

In your efforts to be of the same mind one toward another and as you pursue the “mind of Christ”, take a personal inventory of your relationships in the church. Do your attitudes and actions towards your brothers in sisters in Christ align with Christ’s example? Prayerfully, ask God to reveal areas where you can grow to be more like Christ?

PRAYER:

TEACHING MATERIALS: