

**CORNERSTONE:  
A CHRIST ALONE  
CHURCH**

# OBJECTIVE

## Protection

- **Warning against a potential blind spot**
- **Our greatest appeal – love – is our enemy's greatest aim to attack**
- **Better to avoid than to solve – Don't wait to warn**
- **This is the role of the Shepherd/Pastor**

## Correction

- **If disunity were being tolerated – admonishment or rebuke needed**

# DEFINING TERMS

## Orthodoxy

- How does the church **believe** its doctrine
- Do we preach/teach 'Christ Alone'

## Orthopraxy

- How does the church **practice** its doctrine
- Do we live out 'Christ Alone'

# SELF-EVALUATION

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## Christ Alone

- Obedience to Christ is the whole of the basis for our Christian fellowship
- If the Scriptures do not say to disunify over this matter – then I will seek unity (Eph. 4:1-3)

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- Tier 2 matters remain Tier 2 matters

# SELF-EVALUATION

## Christ AND

- “Christ AND” required for obedience
- and/or fellowship
- Type of music
- Church program
- Our model of...
- Biblical theology
- Political views
- Desired demographic
- Counseling
- Not personally annoying
- Social media views
- Love/hate for...

# **SELF-EVALUATION**

**In the world... we may have EVERYTHING  
in common, EXCEPT Christ  
and we get along just fine...**

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**In the church... we may have NOTHING in  
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**Can we get along?**

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Co-exist?

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~~Co-exist?~~

Stay on separate sides of the  
church?

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~~Can we get along?~~

~~Co-exist?~~

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# **SELF-EVALUATION**

**In the world... we may have EVERYTHING in common,  
EXCEPT Christ  
and we get along just fine...**

**In the church... we may have NOTHING in  
common, EXCEPT Christ  
Can I love them?**

# **SELF-EVALUATION**

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**In the world... we may have EVERYTHING in common,  
EXCEPT Christ  
and we get along just fine...**

**In the church... we may have NOTHING in  
common, EXCEPT Christ**

**Can I love them?**

**Can I seek unity with them if Christ is  
all we have in common?**

# SELF-EVALUATION

Who is overlooking my weaknesses so to show this 'Christ Alone' love to me right now?

# MAINTAINING UNITY THROUGH CHRIST ALONE

- Truth #1.** Insistence on Unity Displays the Glory of God
- Truth #2.** Impossible Love Flows from Impossible Mercy
- Truth #3.** Disunity at Church Lies About Jesus
- Truth #4.** You Belong Together
- Truth #5.** Hope in God Creates Affection for Others
- Truth #6.** Divine Justice Empowers Full Forgiveness
- Truth #7.** People You Dislike Often Act in Faith
- Truth #8.** We Will Answer to God

# **TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD**

**Big Question: Why did God put difficult people  
in my church?**

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Big Question: Why did God put *different* people in my church?

Romans 15:1-7

- “live in harmony” = “together... with one voice”
- “therefore” is the imperative action (the ‘how to’)
- “welcomed in Christ” = “glory to God.”

**TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE  
GLORY OF GOD**

What is the purpose of the church?

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

## Designed to Explode?

- Jew and Gentile (Col. 3:11)
- Men and Women (Gal. 3:28)
- Slave and Free (1 Cor. 12:13)
- Owner and Slave (Philemon)
- Rich and Poor (James 2:1-7)
- Persecutors and Persecuted (1 Tim. 1:12-3)

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

## Designed to Explode?

- Social Status
- Economic Status
- Race
- Gender
- Marital Status
- Family Status
- Nationality
- Voting History
- Views on...
- Hobbies
- School Preference
- National News Source
- Cell Phone Usage
- Dietary choices
- Masks
- Vaccination Status
- Pets
- Pet's Vaccination Status

# UNITY, NOT UNIFORMITY

**Unity** stems from union, unify

- Based in commitment, convictions
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

**Uniformity**, lacking variation or difference

- *Latin*: 'uni' (one) + 'forma' (form)
- Based in form/appearance, not substance

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# **TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD**

**Proper Conclusion:**

**Only God could hold these together**

**Therefore, holding these together glorifies God**

**TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE  
GLORY OF GOD**

What is the purpose of the church?

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

“Christ AND” church

Focuses on Utility & Production

- Purpose of the church?
  - Does things for God
  - Does things for us

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

“Christ ALONE” church

Focuses on Beauty and Reflection

- Purpose of the church?
  - Image-bearers
  - God’s *poiema*

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

“Christ ALONE” church

Genesis 1-9

- “Image” = positive

Genesis 10 - OT

- “Image” = negative

New Testament

- “Image” = positive

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

“You are less like a machine, designed to do things for God, and more like a beautiful painting, created to display his glory.”

*- Jamie Dunlop*

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

Implications...

1. Difficult people/relationships are not a *distraction* from the beauty of the church.

**They are the main point.**

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

Implications...

1 Peter 4:12-3

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.”

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

Difficulties are the path to the glory of God

Luke 6:32-36

If you love those who love you, what credit is *that* to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is *that* to you? For even sinners do the same.

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

<sup>34</sup> If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is *that* to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same *amount*. <sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

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# **TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD**

Difficulties are the path to the glory of God

Luke 6:32-36

Matthew 5:43-48

1 Corinthians 11:19

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Psalms 119

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

Implications...

2. The beauty of reflecting God's glory causes us to rejoice and enjoy God.

James 3:18

“The seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who  
make peace” (NASB)

“A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make  
peace” (ESV)

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

Implications...

3. The church will be primed to explode...

Acts 5:12-14

At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people [...] <sup>13</sup> But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup> And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to *their number*,

# **TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD**

Implications...

Priority of the church (to Reflect God's image)

Pleasure of the church (to Reconcile people to  
God)

Power of the church (to Reach people with God)

# TRUTH #1. INSISTENCE ON UNITY DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF GOD

Thoughts to prayerfully consider...

1. If I believe the church has a primarily utility function (does for God and others), then what do I believe about perceived “failures” of others and the church?

2. Do I believe that variation in the church on Tier 2, 3, 4 issues is a sign of failure, weakness and disunity? Or is it a sign that glorifying God holds a higher purpose in our hearts?

**TRUTH #2.**  
**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE**  
**MERCY**

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**TRUTH #2.**  
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## **TRUTH #2.**

# **IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE MERCY**

Mercy – to move forward towards the subject with the intention to alleviate suffering.

The motive flows from conviction, not emotion.

## **TRUTH #2.**

**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE  
MERCY**

**Big Question: How can I love 'those' people?**

**How can I love people that make me  
uncomfortable?**

**TRUTH #2.**  
**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE**  
**MERCY**

Acts 9:1-9

Acts 22:12-16

1 Timothy 1:12-17

## **TRUTH #2.**

# **IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE MERCY**

But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

1 Timothy 1:16

**TRUTH #2.**  
**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE**  
**MERCY**

Romans 12

**TRUTH #2.**  
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**“Christ is better than comfort.”**

**TRUTH #2.**

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**Matthew 5:46-8**

## **TRUTH #2.**

**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE  
MERCY**

**“Christ is better than comfort.”**

**Do I love those who do not “get me ahead?”**

**Do I promise God that I will grow if he  
would just make my life easier?**

## **TRUTH #2.**

# **IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE MERCY**

**“Comfortable relationships do not challenge me outside of my ‘comfort zone.’ Therefore, they cannot supply the same depth of joy as the relationships that require godliness to dwell in.”**

## **TRUTH #2.**

**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE  
MERCY**

Which produces more joy in my soul?

To be like my friends?

Or to be like my God?

**TRUTH #2.**  
**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE**  
**MERCY**

**TRUTH #2.**  
**IMPOSSIBLE LOVE FLOWS FROM IMPOSSIBLE**  
**MERCY**

# DIS-UNIFERS

Christ Alone matters that disunify

(Proper orthopraxis calls for disunity when)

## 1 **Corinthians 5:11-13**

- Professes Christian testimony
- Guilty of sin (not rumored)
- Unrepentant (implied)
- (see also Matthew 18:15-20)

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## Jude

- False T

# DIS-UNIFERS

Christ Alone matters that disunify  
(Proper orthopraxis calls for disunity when)

## Titus 3:9-11

- v.9 – “avoid the foolish...”
- v.10-11 – “as for a person who...”

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Christ Alone matters that disunify

(Proper orthopraxis calls for disunity when)

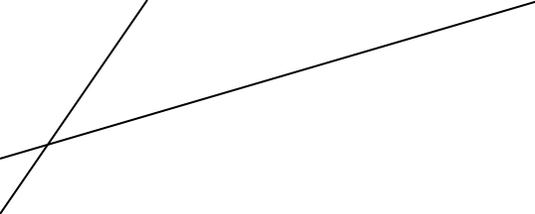
## 2 **John 10**

- This might go with false teachers
- One slide?
- 2 Peter 3:17

# WHAT IT'S NOT...

## Christ Alone

- Obedience to Christ is the whole of the basis for our Christian fellowship
- “Tier 2 matters remain Tier 2 matters
- Be careful that it is not the “who is my neighbor?” attitude
- Not – God says ‘obey your parents...’ so now eat your dinner!
- And so if you see that the above statement is wrong, then you can see the “Any good Christian would...” **attitude is wrong.**
- Disunity over ecclesiastical structure? No.
- Over church discipline issues? Yes.



# SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT METRICS