

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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EMPHASIZING SAMENESS

John Edwards

A sameness (uniformity, likeness or oneness) ought to characterize the Lord's people. With all the different beliefs, teachings and practices, we need to be emphasizing sameness.

THE SAME LORD. Paul wrote, *“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the **same Lord** over all is rich unto all that call upon him”* (Rom. 10:12). With all the opposing doctrines, one would think that there are many different Lords. Yet, there is but, *“One Lord”* (Eph. 4:5); one standard of authority.

THE SAME BODY. The Holy Spirit revealed, *“That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the **same body**...”* (Eph. 3:6). There is just one body (Eph. 4:4), identified as the church (Col. 1:24). When we obey the word, produced by the Spirit, we become members of the same body, *“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...”* (1 Cor. 12:13).

SPEAK THE SAME THING. Paul admonished divided brethren, *“...that ye all **speak the same thing**, and that there be no divisions among you...”* (1 Cor. 1:10). When we all

“speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11), we will speak the same thing. The fact that different things are being said shows that some are not speaking as the oracles of God.

THE SAME MIND AND SAME JUDGMENT. 1

Corinthians 1:10 records, *“...that ye be perfectly joined together in the **same mind** and in the **same judgment**.”* When all of us possess *“the mind of Christ”* (1 Cor. 2:16), we will have the same mind. We can know the mind of Christ and come to the same judgment when we read the will of Christ contained in the New Testament.

WALK BY THE SAME

RULE. The Philippian Christians were instructed, *“Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us **walk by the same rule**, let us mind the same thing”* (Phil. 3:16). The Bible is our only rule we walk by (Col. 3:17). Paul wrote, *“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy...”* (Gal. 6:16).

If we have the same Lord and are members of the same body, we ought to teach the same thing, worship the same way, do the same work and have the same organizational arrangement. When there are differences in teaching and

practice, somebody is not speaking as the oracles of God and walking by the same rule! May we all respect this sameness.

“BE YE RECONCILED”

John Edwards

Paul penned, *“And all things are of God, who hath **reconciled** us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of **reconciliation**; To wit, that God was in Christ, **reconciling** the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of **reconciliation**. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, **be ye reconciled to God**”* (2 Cor. 5:18-20). It's not that God needs to be reconciled to us, but that we need to be reconciled to God.

SIN. Because of sin we need to be reconciled to God. Sin is the transgression of God's law (1 Jn. 3:4). *“All have sinned...”* (Rom. 3:23). Our sins separate us from God. *“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear”* (Is. 59:2). Since we've all sinned, we all need to be reconciled.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

Jesus came "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17). The death of Christ has made it possible for us to reestablish a close relationship with God. Romans 5:10 teaches, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." As we behold the Christ upon the cross (Lk. 23:35), we are beholding the price of reconciliation.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

Blood is involved in our being reconciled. Colossians 1:20 points out, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself..." According to John 19:33-34, "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." Had there been no blood shed, there would be no reconciliation. This makes the blood of Christ "precious blood" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

THE ONE BODY.

The Lord has put reconciliation in the body. Paul informed the Ephesians, "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:16). "There is one body..." (Eph. 4:4), "...which is the church" (Col. 1:24). 1 Corinthians 12:13 shows how we get into the one body: "...baptized into one body..." If you've not been baptized into the one body, then you've not been reconciled to God and "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

"GLORY TO GOD"

John Edwards

"Glory to God" occurs three times in the New Testament. As creatures made in the image of God, we are duty bound to give glory to God (Gen. 1:26-27). As God's special creation in Christ, we have special responsibility to give glory to God (Eph. 2:10).

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

The birth of Christ was welcomed with "a multitude of

the heavenly host praising God, and saying, **Glory to God** in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Lk. 2:13-14). The birth of Christ was the Savior's birth (Lk. 2:11). Glory to God for "the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (Jn. 4:42).

GIVING THANKS.

Luke 17:11-19 finds Jesus healing ten lepers. Verse 18 says, "There are not found that returned to give **glory to God**, save this stranger." What did this man do to give glory to God? The Bible says he "turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God... giving him thanks" (Lk. 17:15-16). Glory to God is given when thanks is given to God.

STRONG IN FAITH.

It is said of faithful Abraham, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving **glory to God**" (Rom. 4:20). We need to be admonished, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13). When we are strong in faith, we give glory to God. How much faith do you have in the promises of God?

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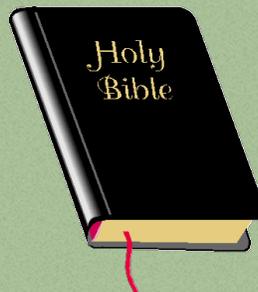
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