

A New Commandment

October 6, 2010
Kevin Butcher & Joe Hurd

Jesus said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you...by this all will know that you are my disciples if you have love for **all the one another's.**" (John 13:34,35)

I do not pray for these 12 alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in you; that they also maybe **one in us,** that the world may believe that you sent me." (John 11: 20,21)

Paul said: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, these is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are **all one in Christ Jesus..**" (Gal 3:28)

"For Christ Himself is our peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity..creating in Himself **one new man** from the two, thus making peace..reconciling them both to God in one body through the cross.." (Eph 2: 14-16)

"..put on the new man...where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, **but Christ is all and in all.**" (Col 3: 10,11)

SUMMARY:

Theologian N.T. Wright says: "Within the ancient pagan world there were many clubs, associations, various guilds and groupings of this and that kind. But there were no other groups living as though they were **the new version of the human race.**"

"The imperative of the gospel meant, above all, unity..yet church disunity was a fact of life from almost the very beginning (cf. Acts 6). Almost always, It had, right from the start, at least an element of ethnic or tribal sympathy at war with the baptismal call to **die to old identities** and **to come alive in and to the new identity – the solidarity of Jesus the Messiah.**"

" to Paul, the church was a new community sprung up in which people from all kinds of backgrounds, with no natural affinity of kin or shared business , are welcoming one another and supporting one another..**if that isn't God's power at work, Paul indicates, he doesn't know what is....**

" Paul believed that it was his task to call into being by proclaiming **Jesus as Lord,** a worldwide community in which ethnic divisions would be abolished and a new family created **as a sign to the watching world that Jesus was its rightful Lord**...and that new creation had been launched and would one day come to full flower."

NOTES:

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- How do Jesus' and Paul's words "fit" with the ethnic, racial, socio-economic and denominational (to name a few) divisions in the church today? How do you feel about the "disparity"?
- Why do we ignore the Biblical mandate to "come together"? What are some practical issues w use as excuses for staying separate? How do you think Jesus would address these issues?
- How can a non-believer accept that Jesus can heal their brokenness...when we don't allow Jesus to heal ours? Would it make a difference for a non-believer to SEE a healed, unified church.
- What steps can **you** take, as a Jesus follower, to begin to live with and love all the one another's?

APPLICATION:

ON YOUR OWN...

Please Read & Meditate Upon The Word:

Paul – Fortress Press, pp 154-174