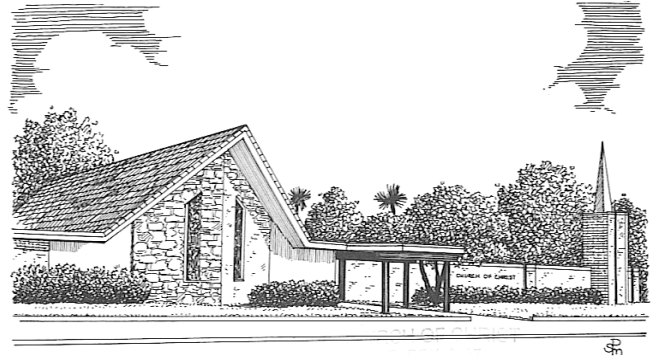


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March 3, 2024



Palm Springs Church of Christ

Palm Springs, CA

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Unity and the Problem of Sin

There is always a balance that Christians must seek to maintain. On the one hand, we are to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 6:1-4). On the other hand, we are to deal plainly with sin, whether personal or congregational, and this has the potential to create tension. The balance can be delicate. Yet two things are clear in Scripture: 1) Christ wants a united body, and 2) We are all guilty of sin (Rom 3:23), and sinners sometimes try to work around what they know they ought to do. Sometimes it is difficult to figure out how to make this work. Please think through this with me.

Christ wants a united body. Jesus prayed for His disciples who would believe through the teaching of the apostles (which includes us), “that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:20-21). That is clear enough, so if Christ’s disciples are going to be faithful to Him, then they, too, will be seeking the unity for which the Lord prayed. We call for unity because Christ did. We pray for unity because Jesus did. It’s a matter of being faithful disciples to the expressed will of the Lord and seeking to follow His example.

There is something else to consider. Calls for unity are not calls for keeping silent about sin. We are not to teach unity of the Lord’s body in order to control a particular narrative and keep others from standing for the oppressed, for example (see, for example, Acts 6:1). Rather, Christ’s disciples are to be united together in their opposition to all wrongs. A united body addresses the problems that keep division alive; it does not sweep the problems under the rug then seek to keep others from talking about what is not comfortable or difficult. That actually promotes division and stands in opposition to Christ. Instead, as with Paul, we are to strive to declare “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:17). That’s not always easy, but it is necessary.

While Christians are to walk in love, walk as children of light, and walk carefully (Eph 5:1,8, 15), they are also told in the same context, “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them...” (Eph 5:11-14). If a particular sin is plaguing God’s people, then we do ourselves no favors by ignoring it. Repentance requires the recognition that Isaiah saw in himself: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips...” (Isa 6:5). I surely have to raise my hand here and join in Isaiah’s cry. Thank God He wants to forgive or there would be no hope for me. Yet by recognizing our sin and the sins of those around us, we are then in a position to receive forgiveness and tell others the good news. “Here am I, send me.”

In other words, the Lord, by wanting us to be united, is not saying never to expose evil for what it is. Sin stands against the unity of God’s people. If we are to stand united, then we must do so together in opposition to what is wrong as well as in support of what is right. If we find that we are complicit in sin, then we must repent and seek forgiveness. We are to do so personally, but we are also to do so even as congregations. Think Revelation 2 and 3, where the Lord addressed the problems of the congregations while still commending those who were doing right. These are not mutually exclusive.

The devil need not be the topic of discussion for him to be happy. If we ignore the devil and what he stands for, then we will be silent about that which separates us from God, and the devil wins. This we cannot afford. We need to see him as that roaring lion seeking to devour so that we can actively resist him (1 Pet 5:8-9).

The issue here, then, is not about grumbling and complaining, as we are clearly taught not to do (Phil 2:14). Nor is the issue here about pointing fingers and fighting over who is to blame for what problems may exist. The issue is that we must recognize sin for what it is and stand together against it. This takes humility, personal repentance, sometimes congregational repentance, and a desire to build others up so that all may be saved.

Let us stand together for all that is right and against all that is wrong. This starts with personal commitments to sanctifying Christ as Lord in our hearts (1 Pet 3:15).

Doy Moyer; vestaviachurchofchrist.com

**We have a commitment, empowered by the Holy Spirit,
 To give glory to God
 To be unified in reaching others**



**Welcome to the
Palm Springs Church of Christ**

Welcome friends, old and new! With pleasure and joy, let us praise God and have Christian fellowship with one another.

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. (Ephesians 6:18)”

Pray for our Church family:

Please continue to pray for the improved health of: Mae Britton, Kerry Britton, Lynette Brink, Sue Collins, Wanda Goodenough, Byron Isaac, Brenda Jones, John Leonard, Roy McDonald, Jerry Munn, Dail Paramore, and Francis Pati.

Pray for family & friends:

Please keep Tammy D’Arcy in your prayers as she is undergoing treatment for breast cancer. Pray for: The Westom family as they mourn the loss of Donn Westom who recently passed away, Marjorie Counts who is in hospice care and Dustin Parker’s dad, Mike who continues to recover from a stroke. Pray for the improved health of: Mary Fields, Keith & Lisa Britton, Kathy’s husband Kevin, Derek Fields, Dail’s friends Marie C. and Teddy K.

First responders: Please keep those who are serving their communities in your prayers: Alisha K. (EMT); Joanna Carter (Nurse), Luther Carter (Naval Officer), Jody Huggins and Jory Huggins (Patrol Officers); Dr. Janice Massey of N.C.

Military:

Jeff Mercer’s son-in-law Brandon Deusenberry, Glenn Fields, and Kathy’s family T. Burgess and T. Cairo.

Prayer Warriors Corner

Dear God, thank You for giving Your precious Son to die for us, that we might have numerous free blessings. The greatest blessing is the hope of eternal life with You. In the name of Your dear Son, Jesus. Amen.

Power For Today: Sue Latham; 6/28/2022
Read: 1 John 5:1-12

News:

Daylight savings time begins: Prior to going to bed Saturday evening 3/9 - *Spring Forward One Hour!*

Potluck news: We will be having a potluck today following worship service. Each individual household, please bring a main dish and a side dish or dessert.

Please continue to keep Solomon, the father of Amy Miller, in your prayers, as he recently had a stroke and is in rehab.

The Community Food Bank: Peanut Butter and Ramen packs are where the greatest need is at this time. Other non-perishable items are: soups, canned vegetables, canned beans, 1 lb. packs of rice or beans, canned tomatoes, canned pasta sauce and quart size storage bags. Thank you for your continued support, your donation is greatly appreciated.

In Search of the Lord’s Way: Watch excellent Bible-based messages every Sunday, 7:30 a.m., on KCWQ, VHF channel 2 or UHF channel 26. Also Available ANY TIME online with YouTube. Just enter: SearchTVMinistry and pick a sermon. <https://youtu.be/FxMzZ6ZKMdQ>

Scripture reading: John 17:20-23

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Sermon title:

“Jesus Leads Us Away From Religious Confusion”



Birthdays:

Lizet Olea: 3/1
Enrique Olea: 3/24

Ladies Bible Class: Thursdays @ 10:30 a.m.

Bible study: Sunday @ 9:30 a.m.

Worship service: Sunday @ 10:30 a.m.

WORSHIP ORDER

WELCOME / OPENING PRAYER

176: Lamb of God (1-2)

382: Why Did My Savior Come to Earth? (1-3)

COMMUNION & OFFERING: Mark 14:22-25

470: Victory In Jesus (1-3)

Brief Intermission

989: Soon and Very Soon (1-3)

SERMON

INVITATION

916: What a Day That Will Be (1-2)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLOSING PRAYER

Sermons on line: For the most recent locally recorded sermon, simply go to the Palm Springs Church of Christ webpage and click on the “sermons” category at the top of the page.

<http://www.crenshawchurchofchrist.com>

Tri Lakes Church of Christ in Monument, Colorado