

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Unity with disagreement****Unity with disagreement, on: 2015/1/7 23:42**

This phrase has been coming up in my life recently and I wanted to reach out to SI and see if anyone has some insights to this concept.

"Unity with disagreement" or "You can be united with someone and not fully agree with them" or "You can disagree with someone and still be close to them".

To me, this is an interesting concept. I generally keep people in my life that mostly agree with my ideas but disagreement is always present. No two people agree on 100% of every topic. No one. Not even two.

I'm struggling with asking my question. I just know that something to what I'm trying to say remains a deep mystery to me.

The bible talks about having 'wise counselors', not just people that fully agree with you. I believe proverbs even warns against those that always agree with us.

I believe, in my heart, no real dogma, that what is different between us can make us stronger. But, I find a difficult time with finding scriptures related to this concept, partly because the whole thing feels foreign to me.

I know of one disagreement, off the top of my head, is when Paul had a disagreement with Barnabas, and they went their separate ways. Or of another of Paul and Peter about Jewish customs for Gentiles.

I have a million questions. Not sure where to even start...

**Re: Unity with disagreement - posted by rufnrust (), on: 2015/1/8 9:55**

LoveMeekHope. I may throw a thought or two your way on this. Of course, it depends on what you disagree on. We can never water down the cross and the precious blood of Jesus as the finished provision for our redemption.

The Moravians agreed to lay down the issues that separated them and focus on what they agreed on, by signing their names and committing to praying one hour out of 24 which began the amazing 100 years of non-stop prayer and the greatest mission thrust possibly in history. They agreed to stop fussing about non-salvation issues. An example in my area would be (wearing a tie is worldly, while another group believes it irreverent if you don't wear a tie) or men must wear long sleeves. Or men must have a beard to preach while others must be clean shaven.

1 Peter 4-10 As every man has received the gift, let him minister the same as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

God's grace has many 'folds', many applications. While one sees a demonstration of grace over here, there may be a function of God's grace going on that they have never encountered that they could be edified by learning of it, rather than arguing about it because they have never seen it like that before.

One thing I learned from Dr Howard Morgan is to get the 'Jesus' out of everyone you can and grow by it, instead of trying to 'straighten' everybody out. It has helped me grow and also appreciate people that I otherwise would not have. I have also made friends in God's kingdom and increased precious fellowship with saints without compromising the fundamentals of the gospel.

My effort to help.

Russell

**Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2015/1/8 10:47**

There is a section on our church website entitled, "OUR THEOLOGY", that seems to do a pretty good job of encapsulating it in my opinion. I will post that section below now-

BEGIN QUOTE

â€œIn essentials, unity; In doubtful things, liberty; But in all things, love.â€ â€” Peter Meiderlin

We like what Peter Meiderline said. It simply means that in regards to the essential doctrines of the Christian faith (e.g. the Deity of Christ) we are unified. Concerning topics that are controversial (e.g. is the creation account of Genesis 1 literal or symbolic), we have the freedom to disagree. Whatâ€™s most essential is that in all things we demonstrate love. This is not to suggest that we believe doctrine is unimportant. The apostle Paul stressed the importance of sound doctrine to both Timothy and Titus (cf. 1 Timothy 6:3 ; Titus 1:9, 2:1) and wrote many letters to churches that addressed doctrinal issues. In a day when doctrine is minimized and truth has become grey, we believe it is extremely important for the church to defend and declare truth! However, we are also concerned that â€œdenominationalismâ€ has brought division between genuine Christians where unity ought to be stressed. Therefore, we believe it is important to differentiate between what is historically considered core and essential and that which is â€œdoubtful.â€

We find the historic confessions of faith expressed through The Apostles Creed, The Nicene Creed, the Chalcedonian Creed, and The Athanasian Creed to represent the most basic and essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Therefore, we have no problem affirming them as truthful alongside the countless millions of Christâ€™s followers throughout history.

We are also essentially â€œevangelical,â€ and â€œcharismatic,â€. That simply means that we believe the Bible is the final authority for our faith and practices and that we believe the Holy Spirit still empowers people as He wills with any of the spiritual gifts found in the Scripture.

END QUOTE

In that section on the churches website the creeds are hot linked so that a person may click on it and explore each of these creeds in full.

What I have found is that there are VERY FEW things worth arguing over. If it is not a core of the faith then we are free to see it differently and walk in love. In ESSENTIAL MATTERS (such as salvation by grace through faith in the blood of Christ, the infallibility and authority of scripture, the deity of Christ and The Holy Spirit, etc.) we must stand firm. Those few areas are covered in the historic creeds. Beyond that let's walk in love with brothers and sisters realizing no one has all the revelation of God this side of eternity.

When these relatively minor side issues are elevated to much higher importance than they merit we end up with pointless disagreements that turn people away from the faith. They think all believers do is argue over issues of no importance. When a person stakes out a position on one of these side issues, and then someone else offers a different opinion, the first person often feels they must "defend" their territory. I have found VERY, VERY few who could ever retract a position once they took it .... even if it became self evidently wrong. If we have the attitude that Peter Meiderlin expressed we will never enter into those fruitless arguments to begin with.

Proverbs puts it this way , "Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out." (Proverbs 17:14 NIV)

He that has ears to hear let him hear.

**Re: , on: 2015/1/9 11:08**

I think you both have healthy perspectives and I thank you for your contribution.

Then, my next question is: How do we deal with a brother/sister in the Lord that thinks 'everything' is essential? Like, their specific view of atonement. Or baptism must happen. Things that are close to essential but, in my view or hopefully yours, are not essential.

They want to emphasize their point. But you (I) believe that they are blending the two.

In my experience, even at SI, there are passionate believers who's passions tend to deteriorate the unity for the sake of their passionate belief and their passion to convince others, at any cost, even unity/love.

How do we, as a mature Bride of Christ, deal with this issues?

Saying, "The Holy Spirit", is a great answer and I'm sure it will come up. But I'd like to be a bit more practical than that. Or 'how does the Holy Spirit move within us to combat the enemy?' (by enemy I believe his title as 'accuser of brethren' is applied here)

How do we love the most in situations like these? How do we 'give no foothold to the enemy'?

**Re: Unity with disagreement - posted by Theophila (), on: 2015/1/9 17:45**

Dear LoveMeekHope,

I have learned through experience that it NEVER pays to argue anything about God or the Bible.

As disciples of Jesus, when we gather, we are to share our testimony of how the Lord is working in our lives now, not 5 years ago.

Anyone can argue about any doctrine but may the Lord give us brethren in whom He is at work. There are professors of divinity who no longer believe in God but can explain from the Greek, the Hebrew and the Shebrew what certain doctrines mean yet they do not believe in the existence of God!

The quickest way to end fruitless argument/prevent one from starting is to orient the discussion towards how the Lord is working in the lives of all present.

Warning: a great silence may follow.

**Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2015/1/10 11:58**

I think there is a real tendency among all of us to focus on one issue or doctrine that has, in some way, impacted us deeply. I have a friend who came to a very real revelation of the ability and willingness of God to heal her body. As a result of this revelation, and of a renewed faith, she was literally saved from door of death. So, sharing with others that God will heal their bodies is very important to her. As a result, this doctrine has been moved over to her list of essentials, even though it might not truly be what I would consider an essential doctrine. I have seen others classify certain teachings as essential because these teachings were held by their fathers in whatever denomination they belong. This so often leads to factious arguments and divisions among us.

I think we need to be quick to listen, diligent to study, and slow to speak where many of these arguments are concerned.

There are some absolutes about which we all must agree. The virgin birth, the fact that we are lost and in need of a savior, the atoning sacrifice of Christ as the only way to right relationship with God, etc.. In these things we must be dogmatic. They are beyond question. To what degree does the sovereignty of God conflict with the self will of man...well, maybe that one will be one which is never totally agreed upon, and that is OK in my estimation. I must realize that there are several doctrines that I think I understand pretty clearly, but there is that one or those two scriptures that still leave me with doubts as to my own understanding of the issue. So, I have to be more reserved and say that I think this way or that way as far as I know right now.

I think you have to have an attitude of love toward your brother and a humility that can admit, "I just might not have this one totally figured out yet," When someone approaches you in argument because they are sure they do have it all figured out, you sometimes have simply say, "Well, this is what I think based on my study of scripture, but I am not totally settled. So, I am not going to argue with you about it. If you want to explain to me why you see it the way you do, I will listen, but you must be willing to reciprocate." I think the discussion, the back and forth on these issues had great benefit if the heart of the person in the discussion is right. I have been forced to go to the Bible and rethink things many times because of this, and sometimes I have had to change my mind. I will never have it all right. I am settled on that.