

The Same Mind and Judgment

By Mark Mayberry
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Introduction

The slogan of the Restoration Movement may be simply stated: “In matters of doctrine, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, charity.” In other words, we should be united in matters of divine revelation (1 Pet. 4:11) and tolerant in matters of personal liberty (Rom. 14:1-4). Both of these principles are reflected in Paul’s exhortation of 1 Corinthians 1:10.

Be Made Complete

Faithful disciples should be made complete. The Greek word translated “be made complete,” means (among other things) to be restored to a former functional condition, i.e., put to right (cf. 2 Cor. 13:11). It can describe the physical mending of nets (Matt. 4:21) or the spiritual restoring of fallen disciples (Gal. 6:1). Tears in the fabric of fellowship must be restored, so that local churches can be fully functional.

The Same Mind

Faithful disciples should be of the same mind. The Greek word translated “mind” refers to either our faculty of intellectual perception, or our way of thinking, i.e., our mindset or attitude. Christians must approach life, not with minds set on the flesh, but with minds set on the Spirit (Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 6:7-8). Paul frequently admonished brethren to be of the “same mind” toward one another (Rom. 12:14-16; 15:5-6; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:1-2).

In 1 Corinthians 2:16 Paul makes this marvelous declaration: “We have the mind of Christ.” Contextually, he means that believers benefit from the gift of divine revelation (cf. vs. 6-16). Accordingly, he rooted his appeal in the gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 2:1-5). He sought to be counted worthy of this stewardship (1 Cor. 4:1-2). The truth Paul communicated to the Corinthians was universally applicable: evidenced by the fact that he taught the same message everywhere in every church (1 Cor. 4:14-17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:31-33; 16:1-2).

The Same Judgment

Faithful disciples should be of the same judgment. The Greek word translated “judgment” refers to our thought processes, viewpoints, or ways of thinking about a matter. Based upon NT usage, a certain degree of latitude is allowed regarding our judgments and opinions.

Paul's Decision to Visit Jerusalem

This word is used regarding Paul's journey to Jerusalem that came at the end of his third missionary journey. A plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, so he **decided** to return through Macedonia (Acts 20:1-5, esp. vs. 3). At each stop along the journey, the Holy Spirit warned Paul that bonds and afflictions awaited him in Jerusalem (Acts 20:22-24). Arriving at Caesarea, the prophet Agabus dramatized this truth, and the local residents began begging the beloved apostle not to go up to Jerusalem. Yet Paul was insistent, and the brethren acquiesced, saying, "The will of the Lord be done!" (Acts 21:7-14). In other words, the brethren were not in full agreement regarding Paul's decision to return to Jerusalem through Macedonia, but were united in their deep and loving concern for the aged apostle.

Paul's Counsel to the Corinthians

This word is also employed by Paul in addressing the concerns of the Corinthians. In writing to the Corinthian church, Paul urged them to avoid unscriptural divisions, and rather be of the same mind and the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). While disciples might reach different conclusions about living in a single or married state, they view marriage in the same way, as a divine gift regulated by divine precepts (1 Cor. 7:25-40, esp. vs. 25 & 40). The same thing could be said regarding the degree to which the Corinthians modeled themselves after the Macedonians concerning the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:1-15, esp. vs. 10).

Paul's Counsel to Philemon

Writing to Philemon regarding Onesimus, the runaway slave who Paul converted and was now sending back to his former master, the aged apostle encouraged him to follow a path of forgiveness, rather than one of retribution. While the apostle longed to keep Onesimus by his side, he would do nothing without Philemon's consent (Phile. 10-16, esp. vs. 14).

Usage in the Apocalypse

This word also appears in the Book of Revelation, describing kings/emperors of the Roman Empire who have one common (and oft selfish) purpose, yet are providentially used by God to accomplish His purpose (Rev. 17:12-18, esp. vs. 13 & 17).

Conclusion

The Lord has made provision for the church to enjoy peace and yet be guided by precept (Eph. 4:1-16). Let us preserve the unity of the Spirit by maintaining the right attitude and adhering to the right standard. May we faithfully follow the Restoration Principle, concisely expressed by the saying, "In matters of doctrine, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, charity." By so doing, we will be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

