

In essentials unity?

“Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”

1 Corinthians 15:1-5

“In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity.” This well-known quote among Christians is attributed to several theologians, but the more important question is: **what are the essentials that we as church should be united in?** According to the Scriptures, the gospel of Jesus Christ is “the essentials” and as of first importance.

According to **1 Corinthians 15:1-5** and **Romans 1:1-17**, we believe in the gospel of God, we are saved through faith in the gospel, we preach the gospel, and we stand on the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures.

“Gospel” (*euaggelion*) means good news, good tidings, or proclamation of the grace of God.

“First importance” (*protos*) means first in time, space, rank, influence, and honor. It’s the same word used for “foremost” in **Mark 12:29-30** when Jesus talked about the foremost commandment.

What is the gospel?

The most important and ultimate truth in the Scriptures that God is revealing to people is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. When a person does not believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures then that person is not saved.

Unity in the gospel of Jesus Christ is essential as a church and the gospel must be the ultimate reason for our unity as a church. Then the question that should follow is: **what is the gospel of Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures?** This study strives to summarize truths found in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus as first importance: **John 5:39-40, John 20:30-31**

“Believe” (*pisteuo*) means to be convinced of, to have confidence in, and to entrust oneself to. **Romans 10:8-13, John 3:16-18, John 3:35-36**

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.”

Romans 1:16-17

“But I am afraid that... your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached... or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.”

2 Corinthians 11:1-4

(Galatians 1:6-12, Philippians 4:1-3)

Jesus Christ: the God-Man

Jesus Christ: the God-Man

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth... No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him”

John 1:1-14

“For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.”

Colossians 2:9

According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ is the only begotten who is fully God and perfect Man at the same time.

The name “Jesus” (*Iésous*) means “Jehovah is salvation.”

Matthew 1:21, Acts 4:8-12

The title “Christ” (*Christos*) means the anointed one or divinely elected one. **Matthew 3:16-17, Acts 10:36-43**

“Only begotten” (*monogenes*) means one of a kind. **John 3:16**

God in the flesh: **Matthew 1:23, Colossians 1:19**

Jesus Christ: the God-Man

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 1:1-4
(Hebrews 1:1-13)

According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ as “the Son of God” reveals His holiness as God.

Son of God: **Luke 1:35, John 3:16, John 6:69**

Jesus Christ: the God-Man

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45

“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Philippians 2:5-8

According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ as “the Son of Man” reveals His humility as a human.

Son of Man: **Matthew 20:17-19, Matthew 25:31-33**

Jesus Christ: the God-Man

“The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

John 1:29

“...Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing... To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”

Revelation 5

According to the Scriptures, because Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Son of Man, He is the only one worthy to fulfill the holy sacrifice God required to save mankind from our sins.

Son of God and Son of Man worthy to save mankind:
Matthew 1:21, Matthew 16:13-17



The Death of Jesus Christ

The Death of Christ

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

2 Corinthians 5:21

According to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ took the place of us sinners on the cross and died sacrificially for the sins of mankind.

...

The Death of Christ

“Whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.”

Romans 3:25

(Romans 8:1-4)

“...But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering... As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied...”

Isaiah 53

According to the Scriptures, the death of Jesus Christ completely satisfied the righteousness of God, the law of God, and the wrath of God for the sins of mankind.

“Propitiation” (*hilasterion*) means a satisfactory sacrifice, as opposed to the word “atonement” (*kaphar/kippur*) used often in the Old Testament which means to cover.

Atonement: **Exodus 30:10, Hebrews 9:22**

Propitiation: **1 John 2:2, 1 John 3:5**

Wrath of God: **Romans 5:9, Hebrews 10:29-31, John 3:16-36, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, & 5:9-10**

The Death of Christ

“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

Romans 5:10

“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation...”

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

According to the Scriptures, the death of Jesus Christ reconciled sinners with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

“Reconciliation” (*katallasso*) means to return to favor.

The Death of Christ

“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

Colossians 2:13-14

“For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.”

Romans 14:9

(Acts 20:28)

According to the Scriptures, the death of Jesus Christ paid for everyone's debt to God's law, His Lordship over all creation, and for His ownership of Christians.

“Redemption” (*apolutrosis*) means a release caused by payment.

Redemption: **Galatians 4:4-5, Romans 6:23, Romans 8, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Titus 2:13-14**

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The Resurrection of Christ

“But for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.”

Romans 4:24-25

“Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”

Galatians 2:16

According to the Scriptures, because Jesus Christ resurrected, sinners are declared righteous through faith in Him.

“Justification” (*dikaiosis*) means to be declared righteous by a judge.

“Righteous” (*dikaios*) means to be acceptable to God, approved by God, and right with God.

Justification: **2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:7-11**

The Resurrection of Christ

“You have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.”

Romans 8:15-16 (John 1:12-13)

“To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.”

Acts 26:17-18 (Colossians 1:13-14)

According to the Scriptures, because Jesus Christ resurrected...

...sinners are adopted as God's children through faith in Him.

...Christians are set apart to God through faith in Him.

Adoption: **Galatians 3:26-29, Galatians 4:4-5, Ephesians 1:3-6, 1 John 3:1-2**

“Sanctified” (*hagiazō*) means to be set apart by God to God.
Colossians 1:13-14, 1 Corinthians 6:10-11, John 17:17-21

The Resurrection of Christ

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification... For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.”

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

1 Peter 1:14-16

According to the Scriptures, because Jesus Christ resurrected, the will of God is for Christians to be purified in Him.

“Sanctification” (*hagiasmos*) means to be purified by God for God.

1 Thessalonians 5:21-24, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, Hebrews 12:4-10, Philippians 1:6

The Resurrection of Christ

“Even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

Ephesians 2:4-7

“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”

John 11:25-26

According to the Scriptures, because Jesus Christ resurrected, Christians will be glorified spiritually and physically in Him.

“Glorified” (*sundoxazo*) means to be honored together or to approve/rule together. **Romans 8:10-18, Philippians 3:20-21, Colossians 3:1-4, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

Salvation by the Triune God

Saved by the Triune God

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.”

Revelation 4:1-11

(Romans 11:33)

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!”

Romans 10:13-21

According to the Scriptures, faith in the triune God requires acknowledging His holiness and believing what He has made known though we may not be able to fully comprehend nor explain Him.

Holiness of God: **Revelation 4:1-11, Isaiah 55:8-9, Deuteronomy 29:29**

“Faith” (*pistis*) means the conviction of the truth.

Revelation of God: **Romans 1:18-19, Hebrews 1:1-2, John 5:39-40, John 14:25-26, John 16:13-14**

Saved by the Triune God

“We know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.”

1 Corinthians 8:4-6

(John 20:17, Titus 2:13, 1 Corinthians 3:16/6:19)

According to the Scriptures, there is only one true God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

One God: “One” (*heis*) means numerically single.

Deuteronomy 4:35-39, Mark 12:29-30, Isaiah 45:5-6

The Father is God: **1 John 1:3, 2 Peter 1:17, 1 Timothy 1:2**

The Son is God: **Revelation 22:12-13, 2 Peter 1:1, Hebrews 1:5-13, John 5:16-18**

The Holy Spirit is God: **Acts 5:1-4, John 14:16, Mark 3:28-29**

Saved by the Triune God

“You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power... this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.”

Acts 10:34-44

(Titus 3:4-7)

According to the Scriptures, Christians are saved by the grace of the one true God through faith in Jesus Christ the Anointed One of the Father with the Holy Spirit.

The title “Christ” (*Christos*) means the anointed one or divinely elected one.

“Anointed” (*chrío*) means to be given a special task by God. **Matthew 1:18-23, Mark 1:1-11, John 1:32-34**

Saved by the Triune God

“For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son... And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”

1 John 5:5-13

(Matthew 3:13-17, John 16:5-15,
Matthew 26:26-28)

According to the Scriptures, faith in the one true God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and their testimony results in eternal life to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Salvation by Grace through Faith

By Grace through Faith

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ... For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Ephesians 2:1-9

“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly... while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us... For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son...”

Romans 5:6-10

According to the Scriptures, Christians are saved entirely by the grace of God alone through faith in Christ alone because we were dead in our sins (helpless, ungodly, sinners, and enemies).

“Dead” (*nekros*) means destitute of power or spiritually dead. “Helpless” means without strength in God. “Ungodly” means disrespectful to God. “Sinners” mean devoted to evil. “Enemies” means hostile to God.

“Saved” (*sozo*) means to rescue or deliver from danger or destruction. “Grace” (*kharis*) means undeserved or unmerited favor. “Faith” (*pistis*) means conviction or faithfulness to the truth.

Salvation by God alone: **Colossians 1:13-14, John 1:12-13, 2 Timothy 1:8-9**

By Grace through Faith

“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (John 12:46)

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 6:23 (Romans 3:23)

According to the Scriptures, God revealed to all our condemnation because we were blinded to the light of His gospel; God made salvation possible/available for all because we could not escape our condemnation.

Jesus is the Light: **Acts 26:15-18, John 1:4-9, John 8:12**

World's Condemnation vs. Salvation in Christ: **John 3:16, 1 John 2:1-2, Titus 2:11-14, Matthew 11:28.**

By Grace through Faith

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.”

Ephesians 1:3-5

(John 3:16-19, John 6:44 & 65)

According to the Scriptures, God chose Christians and compelled Christians to repent and come to Jesus Christ because we all loved darkness.

God's choice: **Matthew 11:27-30, Romans 3:10-24, 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Romans 2:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, Romans 9:15-24, 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, 2 Timothy 2:10, Ephesians 1:3-6, Acts 2:37-39, Acts 13:46-48**

By Grace through Faith

“...But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

1 Corinthians 2:1-16 (1 John 5:19-20)

According to the Scriptures, God gave Christians the mind to understand Jesus Christ because we were unable to comprehend His gospel.

God-Given Understanding: **Luke 24:44-48, Romans 3:10-11, 1 Corinthians 1:18-24, Colossians 1:3-7**

By Grace through Faith

“Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 12:3

(Philippians 1:27-30)

According to the Scriptures, God gave Christians the faith to believe in Jesus Christ because we were unable to believe in His gospel.

God-Given Faith: **Hebrews 11:1-6, Hebrews 12:1-2, Romans 12:1-3, Acts 13:44-48**

By Grace through Faith

“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus... Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8 (Philippians 1:27, Hebrews 13:15)

Saved by God's Grace Alone: **Ephesians 2:1-9, Titus 3:3-7**

Assurance of Salvation: **Romans 8, John 10:27-30**

According to the Scriptures, the assurance of our salvation is based on the truth that it is completely by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and we had nothing to do with it. Therefore, there is nothing we can do to lose our salvation or to become undeserving of it. The only thing Christians should do is to live a life worthy of the gospel in continual praise to God.