

# Why Can't We Get Together?

## CHRISTIAN UNITY IS A PRECIOUS THING

Christian unity is a precious thing, and the Bible has much to say about the importance of unity of heart and mind among the members of the Body of Christ. In Philippians 1:27 we have Paul's exhortation to the believers at Philippi:

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in *one spirit, with one mind, striving together* for the faith of the gospel."

In I Corinthians 1:10 we have his plea to the factious Corinthian Christians. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ he begs them: "that there be *no divisions* among you, but that ye be *perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*"

Divisions between Christian brethren are always distressing and painful; sometimes even reprehensible, as when they are caused by nothing more than selfish personal considerations. Generally, after a division has occurred, it is more than difficult to "get together" again.

However, in another passage in which the Apostle urges his brethren to maintain unity, he says:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, *mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned,*<sup>1</sup> *and avoid them*" (Rom. 16:17).

Clearly, such a course of action is sometimes

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1. i.e., the doctrine of the "one Body."

necessary to maintain unity. With strange inconsistency, this Scriptural exhortation is sometimes *disobeyed* in the interest of *preserving* unity!

### FORGOTTEN TRUTHS

All true believers, of course, are "one body in Christ" (Rom. 12:5), and God would have us observe and enjoy this unity in a practical way. Yet, Romans 16:17 above clearly implies that there are certain circumstances under which separation—yes, separation from brethren—becomes necessary in order to maintain spiritual unity among those who would be true to God and His Word. Thus, regarding those who *cause* divisions and offences, God says, "*Mark them . . . and avoid them.*"

This passage does not stand alone. Regarding those who "walk disorderly," the Apostle says: "*We command you . . . that ye withdraw yourselves*" from such (II Thes. 3:6). In this same connection he says: "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, *note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother*" (Vers. 14,15).

Regarding those who live in immorality, and flagrantly disregard proper Christian conduct, he says in I Corinthians 5:11 that we should not "*keep company*" with such, *nor even "eat" with them*, and in Vers. 2-5 of the same passage he directs that the incestuous brother be *excommunicated*. Thus too, the "heretic," the opinionated brother who would keep pressing unscriptural doctrines upon others in the church, must be "*rejected*" after "the first and second admonition" (Tit. 3:10).

All this is the Word and will of *God*—the *same* God who urges us to "keep" and demonstrate our oneness in Christ.

### FORGOTTEN FACTS

In our booklet, *Why Berean Bible Fellowship?*<sup>2</sup> we have listed and explained the basic reasons for our withdrawal from *Grace Gospel Fellowship* and the formation of *Berean Bible Fellowship* in 1968.

As time elapses, however, important facts and issues are forgotten by many, so that some who truly love the message of grace are now beginning to ask: "*Why can't we forget the past and all get together to proclaim the message of grace?*" Others ask why we cannot all unite together in prayer and, with God's help, heal this breach.

We share this deep desire for true oneness among those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and the message of His grace, and who stand for sound doctrine and a godly separated life. But here is the "rub," and it is to respond to the above questions that this booklet has been prepared.

### THE CAUSE OF THE BREACH

When you are told that the breach between GGF and BBF is the result of a personality clash, or jealousy, or some such thing, you may be sure that your informer either is ignorant of the facts or is trying to cover up the facts related in this booklet.

For many years the fellowship among the members of *Grace Gospel Fellowship* was pre-

2. Available from *Berean Bible Fellowship* upon request.

cious indeed, and its school, *Milwaukee Bible Institute* (later *Milwaukee Bible College*, and now *Grace Bible College*, of Grand Rapids, Michigan) was, under God, producing graduates who were truly "on fire" for "the gospel of the grace of God" and "the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery" (Acts 20:24; Rom. 16:25).

In 1958, however, "a little leaven" was introduced into GGF's school, and then more, and more, and more. By the late 1960s, after much anxiety, soul-searching and prayer—and much discussion with the leaderships of both *Grace Gospel Fellowship* and *Grace Bible College*, some of the members of the GGF became convicted that it would be displeasing to God to continue in this already-seriously-compromised fellowship. In 1968, after ten years of futile effort to bring about a change, the *Berean Bible Fellowship* was formed to provide opportunities for Scriptural fellowship among those who desired to remain true to the truths and principles upon which GGF and GBC had originally been founded.

Again and again we have appealed to GGF and GBC to "purge out" this leaven, so displeasing to God, but to date they have not purged it out, nor even acknowledged that it has existed.

The result: More and more the Pauline message of grace and the mystery have been neutralized, not only at *Grace Bible College*, but also among many of the pastors and members of *Grace Gospel Fellowship*. Certainly few of them are still on fire for the great truths that once thrilled us all. This is particularly so of the more recent graduates of *Grace Bible College*, the school that should be sending out men and

women who are totally committed to that glorious message which God has "totally committed" to us. Indeed, the fact is that *Grace Bible College* is turning out few pastors of any kind to fill the pulpits of pastorless grace churches. Some specific reasons? Read on.

#### THE DECLENSION WIDESPREAD

Few grace believers realize how widespread the declension at GGF's school was even before BBF was formed. In our booklet, *Why Berean Bible Fellowship?*, we have shown that prior to 1970 it was already evident that no less than four instructors (including the president) at *Grace Bible College*, were directly involved, plus at least one member of the Board of Directors. Sadly, *Grace Gospel Fellowship*, the parent organization, condoned it all.

1. *John T. Dean*, GBC's president, wrote that he preferred the neo-evangelicals and their social gospel over the fundamentalists. His actions and writings since have indicated that this has not changed: he still prefers the new evangelicalism.

2. Another GBC instructor wrote an article in the Winter, 1964-65, *GBC JOURNAL*, advocating the reading of vile—really vile—sex novels by college students. *John Dean*, the Editor, published this article without criticism, and *Mr. Charles F. Baker*, President Emeritus, defended the assignment of such reading to GBC students lest they "crack up" morally after graduating from college. Think of this in the light of such Scripture passages as II Corinthians 6:17; Ephesians 5:11 and II Timothy 2:22.

3. Another amazing article appeared in the Spring, 1966, GBC JOURNAL, also published without criticism by John T. Dean, the Editor. This article encouraged Christian believers to "turn to" the United Nations, the Civil Rights Movement, apostate theologians and ungodly novelists and psychologists "for the possibility of truth arising." This, said the article, is "authentic Bereanism." Consider this in the light of what God says about Bereanism in Acts 17:11. Yet this article was defended by leaders of both *Grace Bible College* and *Grace Gospel Fellowship*.

4. Dr. Peter Veltman, Vice-chairman of GBC's Board of Directors, was—and is—also Dean of *Wheaton College*, where almost unbelievable departures from morality and sound doctrine have been permitted to appear in their student periodicals.

The April 27, 1967, issue of the *Wheaton College RECORD* showed a picture of a young man and a young woman embracing and kissing each other. The accompanying article says in part (and we quote): "Everybody's making love . . . in the library . . . in the 1860 room . . . lying down on the grass . . . under the steps . . . even in Coach Coray's camping tents."

Without one single word of caution, much less any condemnation of wrongdoing, the article closed: "Everybody's making love. Don't miss out on all the fun. It doesn't matter where you do it. It doesn't matter when you do it. It doesn't matter how you talk about doing it. Just do it."

Another article in *Wheaton's RECORD* of September 19, 1969, declared that "the portrayal

of sexual intercourse, both on stage and screen," is an exposure to "the beauty of sexuality," and "should foster a more natural attitude than our present obsession." How appalling!

But even this is mild compared to articles that appeared in the *Wheaton ARGUS* (Vol. 2, Nos. 3 and 4). Some of the titles and comments: "You Can Reject Hell and Retain Orthodoxy." "Hell, even if it does exist, is non-essential." God is "unknowable," and the "knowledge of that spirit which man chooses to call God is . . . perhaps merely a product of his psychological make-up." "We Don't Need an Infallible Bible."

We know of no repudiation of all this by *Wheaton's* dean, Dr. Peter Veltman, who is also the Vice-chairman of the Board of Directors of *Grace Bible College* and may well be in line for the presidency, should something happen to John T. Dean.

5. *Grace Gospel Fellowship* publicly commended J. B. Phillips' book, "Your God Is Too Small," both in a published letter and in the January, 1968, issue of GBC's TRUTH magazine. One could scarcely find a more apostate apostate than J. B. Phillips: an ecumenist, who believes that God is the Father of all men and that "good" Jews, Catholics, agnostics and atheists are "unconscious Christians." He teaches that men are "not so much sinful as bewildered," and proclaims a social gospel, teaching that it is God's purpose that men should seek "not so much individual salvation" as "a worthwhile cause in which to participate."

The GGF Council was given clear, written

evidence of all this, but has never repudiated its position on this book.

6. The solemn ritual dedicating GBC's *Bul-tema Memorial Library* on April 4, 1968, did anything but honor the great man of God after whom the Library has been named. Much less did it honor Christ. Part of the program was the responsive reading of a litany dedicating the Library to "the learning of thy holy Word and all of man's wisdom," and petitioning the Lord: "Bow down thy heavens, O Lord, and come down and make this house [the Library] now and forever thy dwelling place."

7. In a taped message at the 1968 GGF Convention, Professor Raymond Reich, another GBC instructor, urged GGF pastors to invite modernists, Roman Catholic priests and even atheists to lecture in their churches so as to then "reach them for Christ." Neither *Grace Bible College* nor *Grace Gospel Fellowship* has repudiated this serious departure from the plain teaching of the Word of God in such passages as II Corinthians 6:14-18. Think of having some apostate plant his unscriptural seeds in the minds of your congregation! This would surely *not* be obeying Paul's injunction in Acts 20:28.

8. Still another GBC instructor, Dr. Dale DeWitt, wrote an article on the glory of man for the September, 1969, GBC COMMENT. In this article he perverted Psalm 8:5 to make it read that man is "*but little lower than God Most High!*" The additional words, "Most High," and the exclamation mark are his own additions, and Hebrews 2:7 *proves* that the word "angels" in

this Psalm *cannot* be rendered "God" without perverting the Scriptures.

Imagine making man *but little lower than God* and thus *God but little higher than man!* Can this be called anything but blasphemy? Yet Dr. Dean published this article without criticism and our beloved brother Charles F. Baker, in his determination to defend the college, defended this article, though in a half-hearted and contradictory way.

The fact that all this happened some eight to ten years ago is really beside the point, for none of it has ever been rejected or disapproved by either GGF or GBC, and the Word of God says: "*Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*" That this is so has now been sadly demonstrated by *Grace Bible College* and by some GGF pastors.

There it is: By 1970 at least *four* GBC instructors (including its president) and one member of its Board of Directors were already involved in the declension—not to mention the involvement of the GGF and GBC official boards and of all in both organizations who have condoned all this. Perhaps they have not considered that they will have to answer for this at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

#### SINCE 1970

GGF and GBC have responded to these charges mostly with blanket denials and the complaint that the college has been attacked. Certainly they have not proved *any* of the charges to be false or inaccurate.

But have these protests helped to at least

retard the spread of the leaven at GBC? Let's see.

It was *after* 1970 that we began to hear rumors and receive letters about *Sensitivity Training* (which goes by perhaps a dozen different names) at GBC. By March, 1972, we had abundant evidence that such courses were indeed part of GBC's curriculum; that mixed groups of students were meeting in "interpersonal relationship" classes, pledged to keep their secrets between themselves alone—not even their parents were to know what they were discussing. We also had much evidence that these sessions were largely made up of confessions and discussions about sex. Protests about this were met with denials that any such thing existed, even though we had presented voluminous evidence from 26 pages of their own classroom papers. Is it not appalling to think of young men and young women confessing their innermost secrets about sex to one another—and to consider what the results of such confessions must inevitably be.

In 1973 *Berean Bible Fellowship* published its booklet, *Sensitivity Training and the Bible*,<sup>3</sup> warning fathers and mothers in the grace movement of this serious threat to young people who attend *Grace Bible College*.<sup>4</sup> But there is no evidence that our warning had any effect upon the college except, perhaps, to drive sensitivity training underground for a time at GBC.

All this is only "the tip of the iceberg" and, beloved reader, "God is not mocked." His

3. Also obtainable from BBF upon request.

4. We realize that not *all* GBC students attended these classes, and that *some* who did have doubtless survived, but this does not diminish the seriousness of the moral threat.

repeated warnings about unpurged leaven are not lightly made. Unless quickly rooted out, the leaven of unsound doctrine and practice *will continue to spread* until it has leavened all of *Grace Bible College* and *Grace Gospel Fellowship*.

#### WHAT'S LEFT?

Occasionally we hear *Grace Bible College* defended with the plea: "It's the only school we have." This is not so. We have several Bible schools where the Word of God is honored and rightly divided—and GBC is not outstanding among them. *The only school we have?* No indeed. Grace believers who know and care are well aware that the neo-evangelicals have long ago taken GBC away from us.

What's left now at GBC? Has the "whole lump" finally been leavened? Probably not yet, but the picture is not bright. Pastor Baker and Pastor Elifson have not been regular instructors for some time. These were the two dispensational and theological stalwarts.

The May, 1978, issue of COMMENT announced that "Six members of our faculty and staff will not be with us next year." One of the staff members is retiring after many years of faithful service, but where have the rest gone? How deeply were they committed to the message GBC was founded to promote?

Well, one "will be a convention pianist for a number of weeks," says COMMENT, "and would like to continue in that type of ministry throughout the year."

Another, who had been teaching Bible and Theology at GBC, "has now accepted a position

with *Inter-Varsity Fellowship*," an organization committed to carrying out the so-called "Great Commission."

Another, a former secretary to the President and Faculty, "would like to secure a position as a travel agent, a dream she has had since high school days."

Still another was (as of May, 1978) "unsure of his plans and...waiting upon the Lord for special guidance."

Just one will continue her musical ministry through a local church—we trust a going grace church.

We are not condemning any of these people. We are rather asking what all this says about the strength or weakness of GBC's commitment to the message it was established to proclaim. It would seem that most of the above were *not* deeply committed to it.

And what of the *new* instructors who have come to GBC? The same issue of COMMENT informs us that one comes from *Moody Bible Institute*, another from *Singspiration* and *Back To The Bible Broadcast*, and two more from *Hope College* and *Calvin College*, respectively the colleges of the Reformed and Christian Reformed denominations.

This is all fine if these instructors have since come to a clear understanding of the Mystery and its message of grace, but we find not one word to reassure us that *any* of them have been converted to this message. Surely they would not learn about it at *any* of the above organizations, for all of them are working under the so-called "Great

Commission," with its water baptism and sign gifts.

We wonder how many of GBC's instructors are really *gripped* by the Pauline message of Grace, or even understand it clearly. Pastor Vernon Schutz is now a part-time instructor in Bible, and Brother Sam Vinton, Jr., a permanent faculty member, but will these brethren, who *do* understand, do all in their power to bring GBC back to its former soundness, doctrinally and dispensationally? We can only pray they will try, for even this will take much courage indeed.

So much for the May, 1978, issue of COMMENT.

But surely GBC doesn't conduct Sensitivity Training classes any more, does it? Perhaps not *as such*, but consider this: Sensitivity Training is a psychological approach to personal and interpersonal problems. It holds to the dictum of old paganism and modern psychology, "Know thyself."<sup>5</sup> Well, according to the November, 1978, issue of COMMENT, we now have *three* psychology professors at GBC instead of one! The new additions are doubtless *Christian* psychology professors, but then, so is Jack Dean, and he has already led *Grace Bible College* far down the path of modern psychology. Witness all the articles by students in TRUTH and COMMENT that have testified about "coming to know myself," "coming to accept myself as I am," etc. Indeed, in the Feb.-Mar., 1979, issue of TRUTH, Jack Dean states: "I'm just now beginning to be able to do what I would consider to be a fairly

5. A most unscriptural objective. See *Sensitivity Training and the Bible*. See also Jeremiah 17:9; Jeremiah 9:24; John 17:3 and Philippians 3:10.

good job of *integrating Biblical thought with the field of Psychology*. Yet, I'm sure I have a long way to go. At least I feel comfortable dealing with the problem." (Italics ours). This doesn't sound too different from that dedication of the *Bultema Memorial Library* to "*the learning of thy holy Word and all of man's wisdom*."

As soon as we integrate psychology with the Bible and add "all of man's wisdom" as our authority, or even our guide, we are in deep spiritual trouble—as GBC is now.

Nor is this all. Dr. Dean no longer believes that Christians possess two natures. He says,<sup>6</sup> "I used to think that after I was saved God gave me a new nature, the spiritual nature, but He never took away my fleshly nature . . . I thought I had two natures." So now Jack Dean no longer possesses the old nature!

But are not the College and *Grace Gospel Fellowship* sound dispensationally? Are they? Here too both have drifted far. In the *Grace Gospel Fellowship* section of this same recent issue of TRUTH, there is an article on *prayer*, published without criticism by John T. Dean, Editor, in which the writer says the following:

"Then Matthew 21:22 rang inside my head. 'Whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing ye shall receive.' Either I believed that or I didn't. Two years ago I'd have claimed I believed this—but seldom applied it. Now, as a result of women's prayer studies, when I pray I really expect results."

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6. In a taped message delivered at the 1977 GGF Annual Convention.

And *this* is "rightly dividing the Word of truth"? What dashed hopes, shaken faith and questioning of the Word must inevitably follow the application of Matthew 21:22 to our day! We are grateful that *we* do not get all we ask for, even believing, for Romans 8:26 says: "*We know not what we should pray for as we ought.*"<sup>7</sup>

Saddest of all, the article goes on to say: "Several Grace churches [GGF churches, that is] have made studies on prayer. Some used Evelyn Christenson's book *What Happens When Women Pray*," and then the writer names a leading "grace" church that has had "wonderful response with this study." But Evelyn Christenson's book is not only thoroughly undispensational; it also promotes the new evangelicalism. And right under this article appears an invitation to join *Grace Gospel Fellowship*!

Should we wink at all this and get back into fellowship with GGF and GBC? Their representatives keep telling their audiences that all we "grace" people ought to be united as one—but don't misunderstand; they mean "united as one *under us*—*Grace Gospel Fellowship*."

But should we treat all these God-dishonoring irregularities as minor matters, then, and drift lazily downstream with the leaders and supporters of GGF—who will surely suffer a rude awakening when they are called upon to answer for their indifference at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Should we join GGF and GBC in their downward course? God forbid!

These are days when there should be con-

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7. See *Unanswered Prayer*, by C. R. Stam.



secrated men all over the land—and the world—  
afame with *"the preaching of Jesus Christ  
according to the revelation of the mystery,"* and its  
riches of grace, but *Grace Bible College* is not  
producing them. Indeed she is helping to lull  
GBC pastors and members into an ever deeper  
sleep.

We hold many GGF pastors and members in  
sincere affection, but must remind them again  
that it is high time to "sit up and take notice"—  
*and* to take action, separating themselves from  
this God-dishonoring confusion and taking their  
stand with those who, with all their faults, are  
determined by God's grace to maintain sound  
doctrine and conduct and, also by God's grace, to  
be workmen whom God can approve, "rightly  
dividing the Word of truth."

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