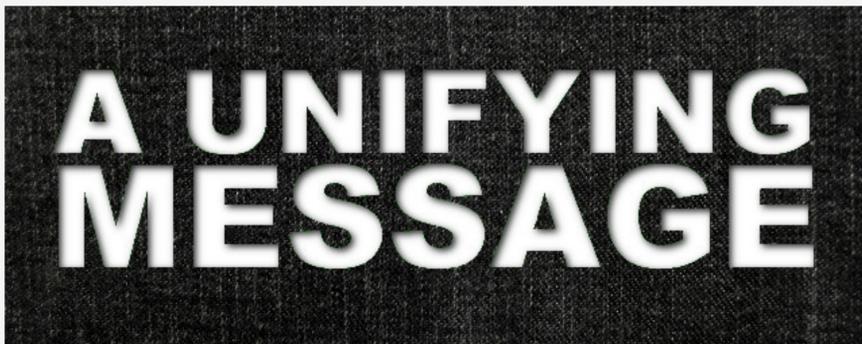


A UNIFYING MESSAGE



By Erick Rukin ¹

"...THAT YOU MAY BE PERFECTLY UNITED..." 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10

Perfectly united. Sounds like a tall order. I mean, the Bible says we're all sinners. And sinners can sure have a tough time getting along well. Are Christians any exception? Hardly. And yet we do our best to "be united." We sign up for church membership and sit under the same pastor's teaching. We sign off on a statement of faith and agree on the meanings of our church rituals. We give a tenth of our income. We commit ourselves to walking closer with God. And we feel we're a little closer to God than the rest, because we identify with our group's practices. Yet the more we focus on our practice, the narrower the field of those we allow into our company! Now the walls are up. Lots of exclusivity. So we're back to square one - sin, disharmony - division.

OTHERS HOPE DESPERATELY TO CREATE UNITY BY AVOIDING ALL DISAGREEMENT.

They want us all to join hands and sing 'blessed be the tie that binds.' And all division will magically melt away. For an hour or two if we're lucky. Ever ask yourself, "what is the tie that binds sinners?" Ask ten pastors and you're likely to get eleven different answers. So is there a way to really reconcile sinners? Can sinners not only get along, but enjoy a brotherly kinship that surpasses human understanding? If these are your questions, God has great news for you.

"GOD...COMMITTED TO US...THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION," 2 COR 5:19

God knows how to unite sinners together - and bring us all close to Himself. And He tells us. Unity happens through a message - God's own reconciling message. And far from being exclusive, God's message has the widest, most inclusive audience: the whole world.

"...THE GRACE OF GOD... HAS APPEARED TO ALL," TITUS 2:11

God calls it GRACE. His grace. Grace is God's extreme generosity. And God withholds His grace from no one. Grace includes you and it includes me too. Grace is God's good news about a gift He gave to a world of sinners, Rom 5:17. It's this grace that brings sinners close to God and keeps them close. Forever. Do we get grace because we've earned it by going through a church program, practice, ritual or code? No. We're not given grace because we've earned and deserve it. None of us measure up to grace, Rom 3:23. We all were shown grace in spite of the fact we don't deserve it. If God were to show such extravagance to sinners - and He did - He would need to "find" the cause for showing it, somewhere besides us. And thank God He did "find" the cause. In another.

"...(JESUS') ONE ACT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS...FOR ALL PEOPLE," ROM 5:18

God's grace for all was made possible by Jesus' one righteous act - by Jesus' one death. Nothing less than Jesus' death could forgive sinners, Heb 9:22. Our church attendance or adherence to church practices couldn't do it. When it comes to being close to God, God is only impressed with the Grace-work of His Son. And yet, from that cross, Jesus cried, "It is finished"! So nothing more than Jesus' death and resurrection is needed to forgive and bless every sinner with eternal life. Grace is an invitation. And ALL are included! But God won't twist your arm, His grace must be received. Received how?

"TO THE ONE WHO DOESN'T WORK, BUT BELIEVES IN HIM WHO JUSTIFIES THE UNGODLY, HAS RIGHTEOUSNESS," ROM 4:5

Simply believe Jesus' finished work gave you all the grace you needed. And, along with every other believer, God's extravagant grace is yours, Jn. 1:12. When Grace is yours, you are as close to God as you can be. And every believer shares this same grace together, Gal 3:26. Believers can receive one another as fellow receivers/sharers in God's grace. Not because we deserve such treatment. But because of grace. And this sharing in God's grace brings great opportunity for brotherly love. Nothing need get in the way.

"HE (JESUS) ... TORE DOWN THE DIVIDING WALL...IN HIS DEATH," EPH 2:14, 15

Friends, God tore down the dividing wall by Jesus' death. And the wall is down. Don't re-build what God tore down. Receive every believer. Not because you go to church together, or promise to never disagree, but because you've each received God's grace. And keep on receiving believers. What will happen? Christian unity. All because of God's unifying message.



¹ Read more of Eric's articles at [Grace Uv God Ministries](#)

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MINISTRY PURPOSE

BOLD GRACE MINISTRIES EXISTS TO:

Unite believers under the banner of God's grace (Eph 4:3-6), **share** the gospel and aid those who will proclaim it faithfully (Rom 10:14-15), **increase** believers' confidence in the power of the indwelling Christ (Gal 2:20), **love** without hypocrisy (Rom 12:9a), **proclaim** the hope of Christ's glorious kingdom (Rom 8:18-21), and **equip** the saints to share Christ's matchless grace and love with others (2 Tim 2:2).

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