

Introduction

I appreciate the chance to bring this message to <http://omegamanradio.com> and thanks to our friend Rev. Joseph Cohen

- Eric and Noemi Ross
- The Master's Hand Christian Fellowship – <http://the-mastershand.org>
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- <http://tellone.org>
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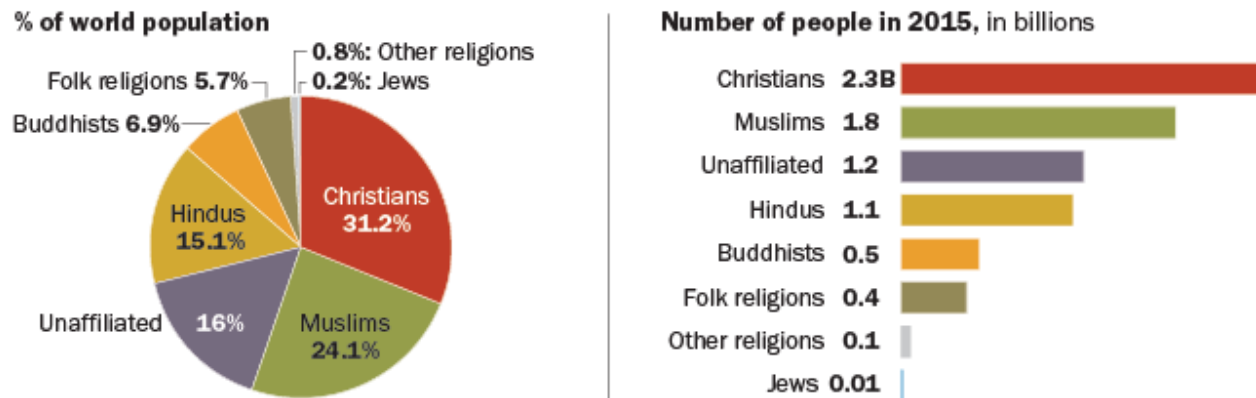
One Body

Introduction – 7 min

By some accounts, there are 2.2 billion Christians, and 1.1 billion of them are Catholics, then there are other religions that name the name of God, and then there are other religions.

(Hackett & McClendon, 2017)

Christians are the largest religious group in 2015



Source: Pew Research Center demographic projections. See Methodology for details. "The Changing Global Religious Landscape"

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What does the Bible say about being a Christian? Many people would quote Jesus and say, "narrow is the way, and few find it" and there are many more that would quote Jesus saying, "do unto others". But I don't think many people associate the two as having been said by Jesus at the same time. Well, lets read

Matthew 7:12-14 ASV

(12) All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. (13) Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. (14) For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it.

And then there is this place that says ... God our savior, who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. This is found in

1 Timothy 2:3-4 ASV

(3) This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;
(4) who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

I expect you know the context of this verse because it is widely quoted and used

1 Timothy 2:1-2

(1) I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; (2) for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity.

I don't know about you, but this is a pretty tall order. We might pray for all men, but thanksgiving for them? But what is he saying here? I think it is that rather than tweak their nose and shower them with all the reasons we don't like what they are doing, we are instead, to as much as we can, be at peace with them. He goes on to say

1 Timothy 2:8 ASV

(8) I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing.

And this really brings me to the main text which is:

Colossians 3:15 KJV

(15) And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

But before we read the context around this, what is it that separates Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Assemblies of God, ... when we are admonished to:

Titus 3:9 ASV

(9) but shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

And let me just say here, No, I am not talking about pulling together everyone's beliefs to make one world religion.

My focus tonight is on the one body, the body of Christ.

Colossians 3:10-14 KJV

(10) And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (11) Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. (12) Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; (13) Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. (14) And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Now, if we look at the word used here for Charity, in the King James Concordance, we see this word translate 84 times as love and 28 times as Charity. The word is:

ἀγάπη, agapē pronounced ag-ah'-pay

Strong's says, "From G25; *love*, that is, *affection* or *benevolence*; specifically (plural) a *love feast*: - (feast of) charity ([-ably]), dear, love."

And there is another phrase here that I want to emphasize, and that "the bond of perfectness" and this word perfectness is:

Τελειότης, teleiotēs pronounced tel-i-ot'-ace

And Strong says, "From G5046; (the state) completeness (mentally or morally): - perfection (-ness)" but here Thayer gives a more meaningful definition as:

1a) the state of the more intelligent

1b) moral and spiritual perfection

Let me give you a short example here.

Jesus had twelve disciples, and among them were fishermen, a tax collector, and a thief that had betrayed him. Yet, he sat them all down for a meal together as he faced the most difficult time in his life.

I share that to make this point,

The Propositional Statement

As Christians, it is important that we

“let the peace of God rule in our hearts”

The Transitional Sentence

But let' go to the Old Testament to see how God began to bring peace to Israel. This is our first main point.

God Said, I Will Meet with You and Commune with You

Main Body – 27 min

First Point – 9 min

God's request in the OT

Exodus 25:17-22 KJV

(17) And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. (18) And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. (19) And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. (20) And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. (21) And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. (22) And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

When we meet with God, we find peace

Psalms 85:7-13 ASV

(7) Show us thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, And grant us thy salvation. (8) I will hear what God Jehovah will speak; For he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: But let them not turn again to folly. (9) Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, That glory may dwell in our land. (10) Mercy and truth are met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. (11) Truth springeth out of the earth; And righteousness hath looked down from heaven. (12) Yea, Jehovah will give that which is good; And our land shall yield its increase. (13)

Righteousness shall go before him, And shall make his footsteps
a way to walk in.

Mercy and truth, Righteousness and peace. Now think about these, when the truth is spoken, we may find ourselves in the wrong, we may find that there is a bad consequence to our actions. When we talk about righteousness, there is a call for judgement and justice and restitution to make things right.

Where we meet with God, mercy meets truth and peace meets righteousness.

“let the peace of God rule in our hearts”¹⁰⁷⁴

We bring the injustice of the world, the offense committed against us, the consequences we face for our own actions to the very throne room of God and find Grace.

Hebrews 4:14-16 ASV

(14) Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. (15) For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (16) Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need.

Let's go on to another main point.

There is One Body Being Built Together for an Habitation of God

Second Point – 9 min

We are living in a different age. We are in New Testament times. We are living in the age of Grace. We live in the time where we all, through Christ, have access by one Spirit unto the Father. It is this spirit that we are sealed with for the day of redemption and it is by this spirit that we

“let the peace of God rule in our hearts”

We know how the world works. There are some people that we know and call friends, and there are some that we know and call acquaintances, and some that we know through business. And then there are those that we don't want to know. Those that have a very different lifestyle and we might first think of those that are bound up with drugs or alcohol. But there are also those that, by their religious beliefs, and even in the name of God, seek to destroy those that don't accept their law.

But God has a plan. A plan to build a place that He can inhabit. And it is summarized here:

Ephesians 2:16-22 KJV

(16) And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (17) And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. (18) For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (19) Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; (20) And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; (21) In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: (22) In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Now, I do know that the writer is talking about the Jews, who had been given the commandments, the law, and the gentiles who were outside of God's plan for Israel. And I do know that people from any nation could have emigrated to Israel to become partakers in God's blessing for Israel. God did always include an admonition for them to care for the stranger in the land. So, let's not get hung up here, but please take my assertion that God desire is to reconcile the world, and everyone in it to himself.

Here is the main reason for the Church to exist. It is a place for God's very presence to be made manifest. Just as God inhabited the temple in the Old Testament, today, God's desire is to inhabit the gathering of His people.

Psalms 22:3 ASV

(3) But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

And I have often heard this quoted as "God inhabits the praises of his people" but I came across an article that suggests a more accurate translation might be (Aigner, 2016),

Psalm 22:3 NIV

(3) Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises.

And this article quotes James L. Mays saying: "Having God as "my God" rests first of all on belonging to a community for whom the center of all reality is "the holy one" who is enthroned as king in heavenly and earthly temple and whose acts of salvation are the content of Israel's hymns of praise" (Aigner, 2016).

I belabor this point because we, modern Christians, often think primarily about our own personal relationship with God. And it is right that we must come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and we are individually accountable for our personal walk with God. However, I want you, in this message, to connect with the whole body of Christ. As Mays says, "a community for whom the center of all reality is "the holy one" who is enthroned as king".

So, where we are to be "Built Together for an Habitation of God", the Church in many ways is fragmented.

This brings me to my final main point,

It is One Body, with Many Members

Third Point – 9 min

You may have noticed that when you are together with a few friends, it is easy to have a meaningful conversation because there is time for you to listen and also time for each person to interject their own comments. But what happens when the number of people in the room grows to a dozen or so? The conversation tends to fragment into smaller groups talking together and it becomes harder to flow together with one topic.

And what happens when the group grows larger, say fifty or so? It is difficult to maintain order unless you have a moderator and impossible if the group is not willing to allow moderation. In fact, we see some social action groups taking this approach of disrupting large meetings for the very purpose of preventing the group from taking action.

For us to take our place in the body, we must

“let the peace of God rule in our hearts”

And, for us to do this, we must recognize that:

Romans 12:4-5 KJV

(4) For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: (5) So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

In Christ, we all have a place. In Christ, we all have value. And, in Christ, it is OK for us to let someone else be the moderator because fighting with one another would be like stomping on your own toes.

We are one body, as it says in

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 KJV

(12) For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. (13) For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. (14) For the body is not one member, but many. (15) If the foot shall

say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? (16) And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? (17) If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? (18) But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. (19) And if they were all one member, where were the body? (20) But now are they many members, yet but one body. (21) And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. (22) Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: (23) And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. (24) For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

No schism

(25) That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. (26) And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. (27) Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (28) And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. (29) Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? (30) Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? (31) But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

And we know that this more excellent way is Love. Or as we read earlier in

Colossians 3:14 KJV

(14) And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Before we finish, there is one other way the Bible describes the Church and that is as one bread which is found in

1 Corinthians 10:16-17 KJV

(16) The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

(17) For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

It is this covenant of life in Christ that we celebrate through communion, and it is this one body that God desires as a spiritual habitation.

The Sermon Conclusion

Conclusion – 6 min

Our main text begins with the gospel of Jesus Christ:

Colossians 3:15 KJV

(15) And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Now let me briefly re-state the main points:

1. God Said, I Will Meet with You and Commune with You
2. There is One Body Being Built Together for an Habitation of God
3. It is One Body, with Many Members

God reached out to us and made a way for us to connect with him. It is for our good that he has called us to himself. And it is our action that will:

“let the peace of God rule in our hearts”

No matter what we see happening around us, God is on the throne, Jesus Christ has overcome the world, and we have a future and a hope in Him.

Pray: If you have been listening and have never accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life, simply say this prayer with me.

"Dear God,
I know I'm a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness.
I believe Jesus Christ is Your Son. I believe that He died for my sin and that you raised Him to life.
I want to trust Him as my Savior and follow Him as Lord, from this day forward. Guide my life and help me to do your will.
I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

If you prayed with me, I want to seal that with a short prayer for you.

"Father,

I thank you for these that have accepted Christ today. Lead them by your Holy Spirit to a local Church where they can learn more about you and your plan for their life, In Jesus name, Amen

Pray: For those of you that are Christians, we have a commission to preach this gospel of the kingdom. Go and read Paul's message. Make it your own. And, pray with me now.

"Father,
I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ.
Father, I know it is your desire that all would be saved and come to know the truth.
I commit myself to this work of ministry and ask you to order my steps and prepare people by drawing them in.
Prepare moments when I can share the work and love of Jesus Christ with others.
I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

For those of you that prayed with me, would you please go to prayny.org and add a prayer request so that we can connect with you and continue to pray for the fulfillment of God's plan in your life.

"Preparation time is never wasted time." Dr. Kenneth E. Hagin

"Success is always the result of following the leading of the Holy Spirit." Dr. Kenneth E. Hagin

Thank you for this time on <http://omegamanradio.com>

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