

The Unity Movement at Babel Genesis 11:1-9

“And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth” [Gen. 11:4-9].

On a plain in the land of Shinar [Gen. 11:2] the people started a “unity movement.” Instead of multiplying and spreading throughout the earth as God had commanded them [Gen. 9:7], they decided to set out with their own purpose. Adam Clarke aptly observes: “Being therefore strictly united in all things, coming to the fertile plains of Shinar they proposed to settle themselves there, instead of spreading themselves over all the countries of the earth, according to the design of God...”

The “unity movement” at Babel has its modern day counterpart in the community church movement and others who are caught up in “unity-in-diversity” efforts, seeking to unify while ignoring the doctrine of Christ (cf. 2 John 9). They were “unified” in their efforts to do their own thing in defiance of the will of the living God! Unity without God is no good. Atheists and humanists may unify in their efforts to denounce faith in God. Muslim terrorists unify in their efforts to destroy innocent human lives. The Watch Tower Society goes out in unison to spread their false doctrines. Those at Babel were unified, but they were also displeasing to God. It was not Divine unity! God destroyed their efforts, just as one day He will root up every thing that He has not authorized [cf. Mat. 15:13; 7:21-23].

The people at Babel had the numbers. Yet, this did not make them right! In the heart of Houston, Texas, Joel Osteen proclaims his enticing message to thousands every week in the enormous facility which houses “Lakewood Church.” Yet, they are all lost! God is no more pleased with Osteen's false doctrines and his multitudes than He was with the wicked world of Noah's day (Gen. 6:1-13). Many wayward congregations, which are now located where faithful churches of Christ once met, are growing in number. They are not longer the Lord's church. This is the age of the “mega church,” when large community churches number into the hundreds or even thousands. Many people reason, “We have a large crowd. We must be doing something right!” They have forgotten the words of Jesus: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” [Mat. 7:13-14].

The people at Babel wanted to make name for themselves. They wanted to do things their way instead of God's way. Many preachers and congregations want to be renowned. They want a big name. They want to do things their way instead of the Lord's way. They want instrumental music and special

singing groups in the worship, but this is not God's way [cf. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16]. They want entertainment in the Worship, rather than worshiping God in spirit and in truth [cf. John 4:22-24]. They want women in leadership roles in the church, but again, this is not God's way [cf. 1 Tim. 2:8-14]. They want to have joint services with denominations, or pulpit exchanges with sectarian preachers, but this is not the Lord's way [cf. 2 John 9-11]. They want to have an environment where a religiously mixed married couple can both feel accepted and not be offended. They want a place where unscripturally “married” couples can find comfort. All of this is wrong. It is sinful to seek to comfort those in sin by compromising the faith! Their hearts need to be pricked so that they might repent, obey the Lord, and be saved! [cf. Acts 2:36-38; 2 Cor. 7:10; Heb. 5:8-9].

The people at Babel wanted to build a tower “whose top may reach unto heaven.” Yet, they were not going to reach heaven. Those in the “unity movement” are seek a path to God that is not based on the doctrine of Christ. We cannot have fellowship with God apart from abiding in the doctrine of Christ, as John declared: “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9). Their attitude is not like that of Jesus, Who prayed to the Father: “not my will, but thine be done” (Luke 22:42). Their attitude is self-willed and despises “dominion” (i.e. authority). Jude describes them: “Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities” (Jude 8). Theirs is a way of confusion and the sure path to eternal destruction, “the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

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