

Biblical Unity

Undermining Biblical Unity



Unity is what God wants and requires in every congregation. Unfortunately, in most cases, unity is not easy to maintain and must be diligently worked for (**Ephesians 4:3**). Sadly, there is always a possibility of one or more people who will bring about a divisive spirit within the congregation.

Throughout scripture, we will see that it was told to the early church that false teachers would come into their midst to divide and destroy them (**Acts 20:28-30; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1, etc.**). The Holy Spirit even foretold of a coming great apostasy from the faith in **2 Thessalonians 2:1-13**. With these things being foretold, we should ask ourselves:

1. How can we avoid such among us?
2. How can we know who they are?
3. What should we do with them once they are uncovered?

Through this Bible Study, we will closely study Four (4) Greek words that will assist us in answering these questions.

Four (4) Greek Words to Assist with Understanding Disunity

The Greeks used 4 words to help understand the concept of disunity or division. We will begin this study by defining each word.

Eritheia

It is defined as: “a desire to put oneself forward, a partisan and factious spirit...” The word denotes a disposition of mind that craves distinction and self-assertion. It is a disposition that leads to the disruption of the peace, harmony, and organic oneness of the group. Eritheia is also translated as “factious” or “contentious” in **Romans 2:8; 2 Corinthians 12:20; James 3:13-16; Philippians 1:15-17**. Eritheia is not division in its finished state, but the attitude that leads to and produces organic division for the purpose of self-assertion and self-seeking that desires to put oneself forward.

Hairesis

It is defined as “One’s chosen opinion or tenet; an opinion varying from the true exposition of the Word of God...” Its original meaning was simply a set choice of opinions. If this opinion remains a theory in the mind of the originator, it is harmless and not a matter of concern. But when the opinion is taught and pressed to the point of becoming practical or reduced to practice, it ceases to be heresy and becomes a schism--- which is heresy put into practice. So, whatever produces a schism or a party in the church is a heresy and condemned by God. Doddridge defines Hairese as “one so fond of his or her own darling notions , that he or she will ruin the peace of the church for them.” **(2 Peter 2:1; Galatians 5:20; 1 Corinthians 11:19)**