

**Prayer List of the Sick and Afflicted:**

Ray Sturgill is staying with his daughter, Jennifer, in Mooresville. Following the first of the year he is scheduled to have a stint inserted to address his coronary artery blockage.

Cindy Murray's husband Randy is dealing with an irregular heartbeat, dizziness and shortness of breath.

Tim Burdsall is scheduled for shoulder surgery next week.

Iris Hash's son, Bobby Epeards, is doing better with his heart issues and recently had a pacemaker installed.

Delores Hendrickson is still struggling with a bad cough and is having some vision issues caused by dry macular degeneration in her eyes but is feeling some better.

Charlie Henard's niece, Brittany Henard, is battling terminal cancer.

Karen Sproles is still dealing with pain in her knee.

Jean England, daughter of Karen Sproles, is still having stomach issues.

John Richardson is battling with bloating and stomach issues.

**Pray For Our Shut-Ins:**

Gloria Hale, Karen Sproles, Iris Hash, John & Terry Richardson

**Pray For The Mission Works We Are Supporting:**

John Grubb (Mission work in Asia), Daniel Goshorn and family (Mission work in Peru). See latest mission reports on the bulletin board in the back of the auditorium.

**Benevolent Opportunity:**

We will be collecting canned meats, e.g. tuna, salmon, etc., during the month of January. These items will be donated to the Martinsville school food pantry.

**Monthly Pitch-in Dinner:**

Our next pitch-in dinner will be today, following the AM services. Following the pitch-in, at 1:00 PM, we will have a service in song.

**2025 Planning Meetings:**

The men and women of the congregation will meet at the building on Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 AM for breakfast. Following breakfast, the men and women will hold separate meetings to plan works for the 2025 calendar year.

**Radio Program:**

Please remember to tune in every Sunday morning at 8:00 AM to WCBK 102.3 FM to hear our radio program which is entitled: "Preparing For Eternity".

**God's Plan For Our Salvation**

Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).

Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).

Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).

Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).

Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).

Faithful Christian Living, after the above five steps (I Peter 2:11, 12; Rev. 2:10).

January 5, 2025

***MORGAN STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST***

**540 E. Morgan Street  
Martinsville, IN 46151  
(765) 342-6027**



**Schedule of Services:**

**Sunday**

Bible Study – 9:30 AM

Worship – 10:30 AM

Evening Service - 6:00

**Wednesday**

Bible Study – 6:00 PM

**Thursday**

Ladies' Bible Study – 11:00 AM (March through October)

**Radio Program:**

"Preparing For Eternity"

Sunday Mornings 8:00 AM, WCBK 102.3 FM

**Website:**

[www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org](http://www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org)

Gospel Preacher – Bob Hawkins

## FOUR BASIC TRUTHS ABOUT GOD'S PLAN FOR UNITY

*John Chowning*

Over the past two hundred years there has been much study and genuine concern about the subject of unity, especially among those associated with the American Restoration Movement. This is as it should be because of Jesus' intense concern for it and the extraordinary importance He placed upon it in His prayer to His Father in [John 17:20-23](#). Here, it is written:

*“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”*

From this passage, consider these four basic truths about unity.

**Truth #1: There is a plan for unity.** Jehovah had an eternal purpose for humanity's salvation ([Eph. 3:11](#)). Included in that eternal purpose is the unity of all New Testament Christians. Just as there is only one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all ([Eph. 4:4-6](#)), there is only one divine plan for unity. Since it is God's plan, it is perfect. Human ingenuity is not needed to create a plan or to “improve” God's plan. And, as the early chapters in Acts demonstrate, when God's perfect plan is followed, unity results.

**Truth #2: God's plan for unity is only for New Testament Christians.** Jesus is quite specific — “*those who believe on me through their word*” ([John 17:20](#)). God's plan is only for those who continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine ([Acts 2:42](#)). There is no Biblical plan for unity with non-Christians. There is no “open border” policy in the kingdom of heaven. Followers of Christ are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers because righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, believers and unbelievers, the temple of God and idols have no communion (no legitimate common ground) with each other. The Good Shepherd's one fold ([John 10:16](#)) is only for God's sheep; it does not include any goats to be in with the sheep. Therefore, God's plan for unity also demands division; there is no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness ([Eph. 5:11](#)).

**Truth #3: God has a pattern for unity.** Just as God gave Moses a pattern for the tabernacle, there is a pattern (a template, a blueprint) for unity. Jesus identifies this pattern as being “one just as we are one” ([John 17:22](#)). The unity of His Father that Jesus speaks of here is not based upon the fact that they shared the same nature; rather, it is the unity of purpose that He and His Father shared. The God of heaven and His Son had the same goal — the salvation of humanity through Christ's obedience to His Father's will. At no time in His earthly life did Jesus ever deviate from that path. The unity of believers is not some pie-in-the-sky theory; it is patterned after the blood, sweat, and tears of Jesus' obedient example. It comes from the crucible of reality, not utopic imaginations.

**Truth #4: Sanctifying truth is the prominent characteristic of Jesus' example.** Jesus never deviated from the path of obedience to God. He never strayed from the fellowship of a common purpose with His Father because He sanctified God's word. His example demands careful consideration. Jesus and His Father were one because of the extreme *reverence* Jesus had for God's written word. “The Scripture cannot be broken” ([John 10:35](#)) expresses Jesus' reverent handling of God's word. Jesus never wrested the Scriptures by twisting God's word to say what He wanted it to say.

Jesus' sanctification of truth is seen in His *contentment* with God's word. He obeyed the charge of [Deuteronomy 4:2](#) to not add to or subtract from the commandments of the Lord. He never identified with the Pharisees who *added* to God's word. He never identified with the Sadducees who *subtracted* from God's word. He never identified with the Herodians who *politicized* God's word. He marginalized any who would break even one of the least commandments and teach others to do likewise. He exalted those who seek to obey every jot and tittle of it ([Matt. 5:19](#)).

Jesus' sanctification of truth is seen in His *prioritization* of God's written word. It was preeminent in His life — even in the most extreme circumstances of His life. For example, in the wilderness after forty days of fasting, He declared (in essence) that He would choose starving to death over disobeying God's word ([Matt. 4:1-4](#)). He submitted Himself to the suffering and agony of Calvary because “it is written” pre-eminently governed His life ([Luke 24:46](#)). The truth of the matter is that the authoritative word of God governed His life from cradle to grave. It was the food that fueled Him ([John 4:34](#)). It was His pre-eminent passion ([John 5:30](#)). It was His reason for existence ([John 6:38](#)). It is the unmistakable example that He set. This is God's exclusive pattern for unity.