

Unity - A Divine Mandate

What did the Apostle mean by "purify your soul"?

1 Peter 1:22-23 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever...

Before Pilate and the Pharisees, Jesus stated the reason that He came into the world. What was that reason?

John 18:37 For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world – to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Jesus also stated that everyone who belongs to the truth listens to His voice. How do we listen to His voice?

- **Read** and **meditate** on **His Word**.
- **Pray** and ask for His presence and guidance.
- Introspectively **be attentive** to the work of His Holy Spirit.
- **Obey** His commandments.
- **Love** one another. Seek His presence in **reconciliation** and unity.
- **Seek** to be spiritually **mature** so that you develop "*the mind of Christ*". (1 Cor. 2:13-16)
- Others...?

Discerning truth is essential for unity in the church. Without spiritual discernment, believers may fall into error, deception, or harmful division. Scripture calls God's people not only to know the truth, but to test, examine, and uphold it.

How does discernment defend church unity?

- **Preventing division** over false or misapplied doctrine.
- **Protecting the flock** from spiritual manipulation.
- **Promoting maturity**, which leads to clarity, humility, and shared understanding.

How may we practice discernment?

- Measure claims by **Scripture** (e.g. Bereans in Acts 17:11).
- Assess outcomes through **spiritual fruit** (Galatians 5:22–23).
- Encourage thoughtful **dialogue** rooted in love and truth (Ephesians 4:15).

Encouragement

Philippians 1:9-11 *And I pray this, that your love may abound even more and more in knowledge and every kind of insight (10) so that you can decide what is best, and thus be sincere and blameless for the day of Christ, (11) filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.*