

The background of the slide is a dark blue field filled with various shades of blue gears of different sizes, some overlapping. On the left side, there is a vertical strip with a colorful, abstract, and textured appearance, featuring shades of orange, yellow, and brown. The text is centered in the middle of the slide.

# The Rest of the Pattern: The United Church



## Ephesians 4:1-6

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 **endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.



## John 17:20-23

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word; **That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; That they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.** And the glory which you gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me...**”



# The Unity of God and Christ

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word; **That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You;** That they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which you gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me...**” John 17:20-23



## Based on Personal Unity with God

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word; **That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; That they also may be one in Us,** that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which you gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me...**” John 17:20-23



# Personal Unity With God

- ✦ Spiritual fellowship with our Creator
- ✦ Not a mystical state of consciousness
- ✦ Not a unity of essence or identity



# Jesus' Personal Unity With God

“I and My Father are one.

...

If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.” John 10:30, 37-38



# Jesus' Example

- ✦ Speaking the words of God: “For He whom the God has sent speaks the words of God...” John 3:34
- ✦ Seeking the will of God: “I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent me.” John 5:30





# Jesus' Example

- ✦ Doing the will of God: “For I have come ..., not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent me” John 6:38



# Our Personal Unity With God

When we do what Jesus did, we achieve unity with God and Jesus:

- ✦ Speaking the words of God
- ✦ Seeking the will of God
- ✦ Doing the will of God



# Our Personal Unity With God

“...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” John 14:23



# Our Personal Unity With God

“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love”

John 15:9-10



# Our Personal Unity With God

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” 2 John 9



# The Fundamental Basis of Unity

“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7



# No Other Basis for Unity

- ✦ Not family
- ✦ Not friends
- ✦ Not living in the same community
- ✦ Not similar culture or background
- ✦ **ONLY** shared fellowship with God



# Principles of Unity

- ✦ Accepting the same authority

“Now I plead with you, brethren, **by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10





# Accepting the Same Authority

“Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to Apollos and myself for your sakes, that you may learn in us **not to think beyond what is written**, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.” 1 Corinthians 4:6



# Accepting the Same Authority

“Therefore I urge you, **imitate me**. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of **my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church**” 1 Corinthians 4:16-17



# Accepting the Same Authority

“Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and **keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you**” 1 Corinthians 11:2



# Accepting the Same Authority

“If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord**” 1  
Corinthians 14:37



# Can We Understand the Bible Alike?

“Only an infidel would deny that **God is able** reveal His will in such a way that we can understand it. Or admitting that He is able, would deny that **God is willing** to reveal His will in such a way that we can understand it.” D. R. Spears



# Can We Understand the Bible Alike?

“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all **speak the same thing**, and that there be **no divisions** among you, but that you be **perfectly joined together** in the **same mind** and the **same judgment.**” 1 Corinthians 1:10



# Principles of Unity

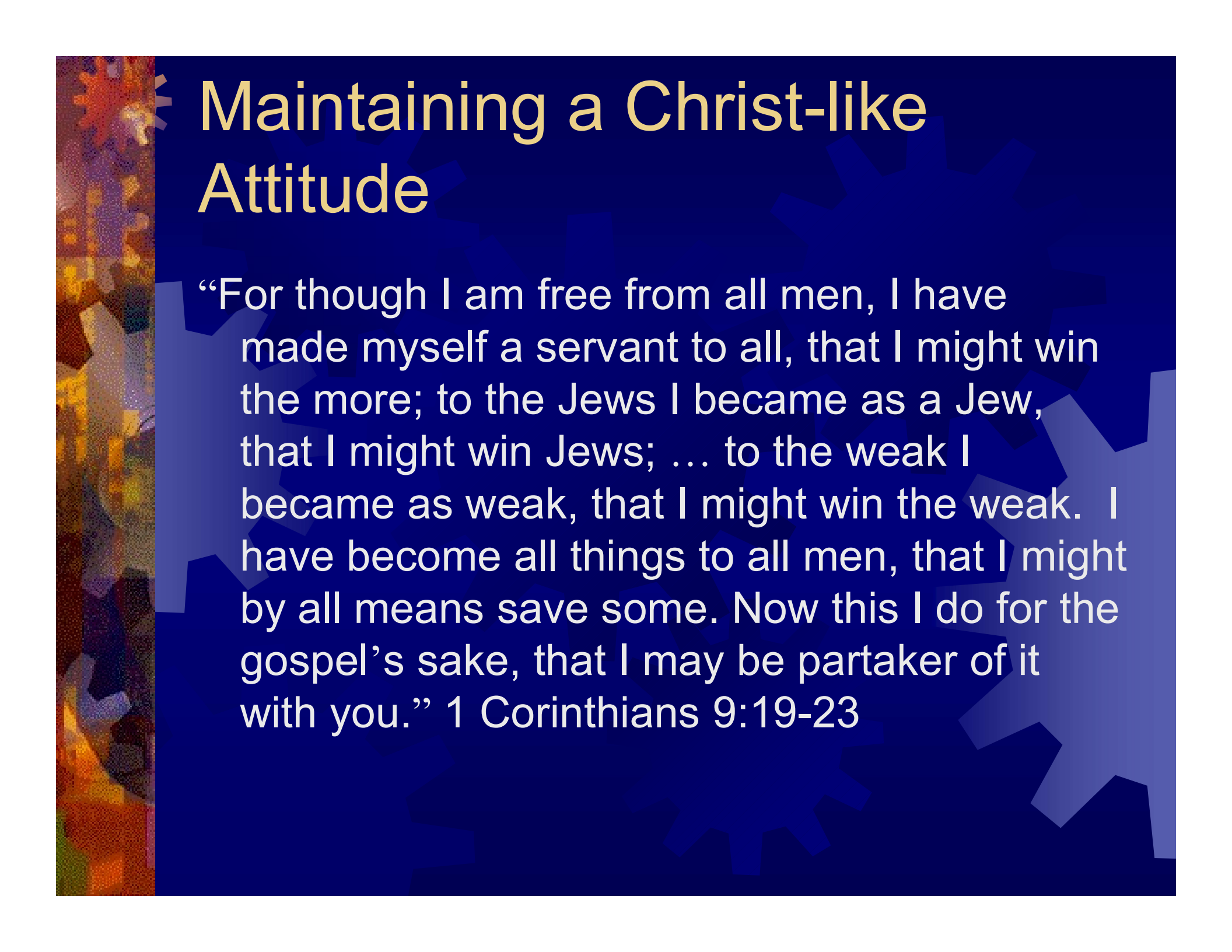
- ✦ Accepting the same authority

- ✦ Maintaining a Christ-like Attitude:

“Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge.

Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies ... But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak ... Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble” 1

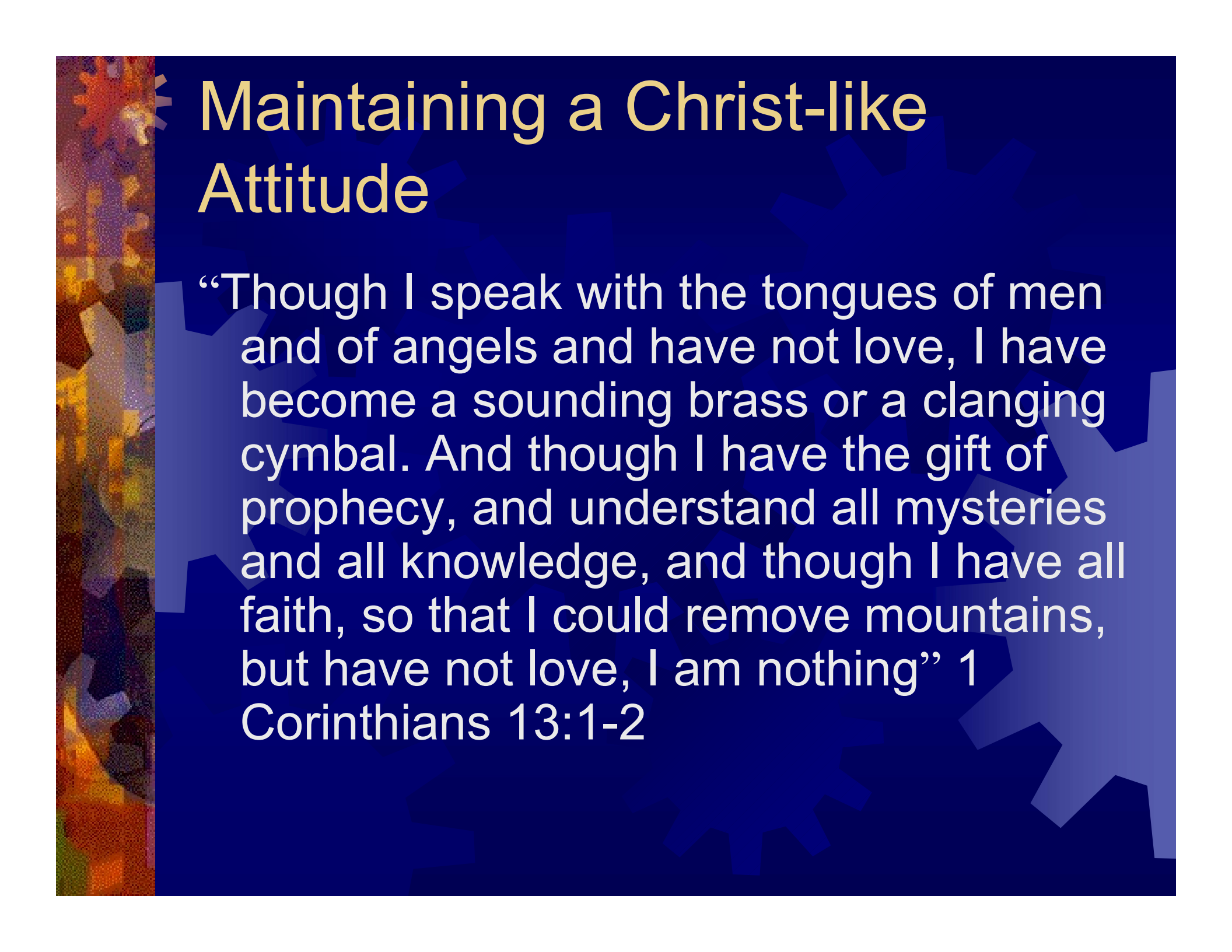
Corinthians 8:1, 9, 13



# ✦ Maintaining a Christ-like Attitude

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; ... to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.” 1 Corinthians 9:19-23





# ✦ Maintaining a Christ-like Attitude

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing” 1  
Corinthians 13:1-2



# Principles of Unity

- ✦ Accepting the same authority
- ✦ Maintaining a Christ-like attitude

**When these two things are active,  
unity is inevitable**



# Impediments to Unity

## ☀ Sin

“Behold the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you.” Isaiah 59:1-2

# Sin

- ✦ Takes us out of fellowship with God and Christ - 1 John 1:7

- ✦ Destroys unity with each other:

“For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, ... lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;” 2 Corinthians 12:20



# Sin

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are ... **hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissentions, heresies, envy**, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like, of which I tell you beforehand ... that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21



# Sin

“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine you have learned, and avoid them.” Romans 16:17



# Impediments to Unity

- ☀ Negligence in Fellowship:

“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind...”

Philippians 4:1-2



# Negligence in Fellowship

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” Philippians 4:3-4





# Negligence in Fellowship

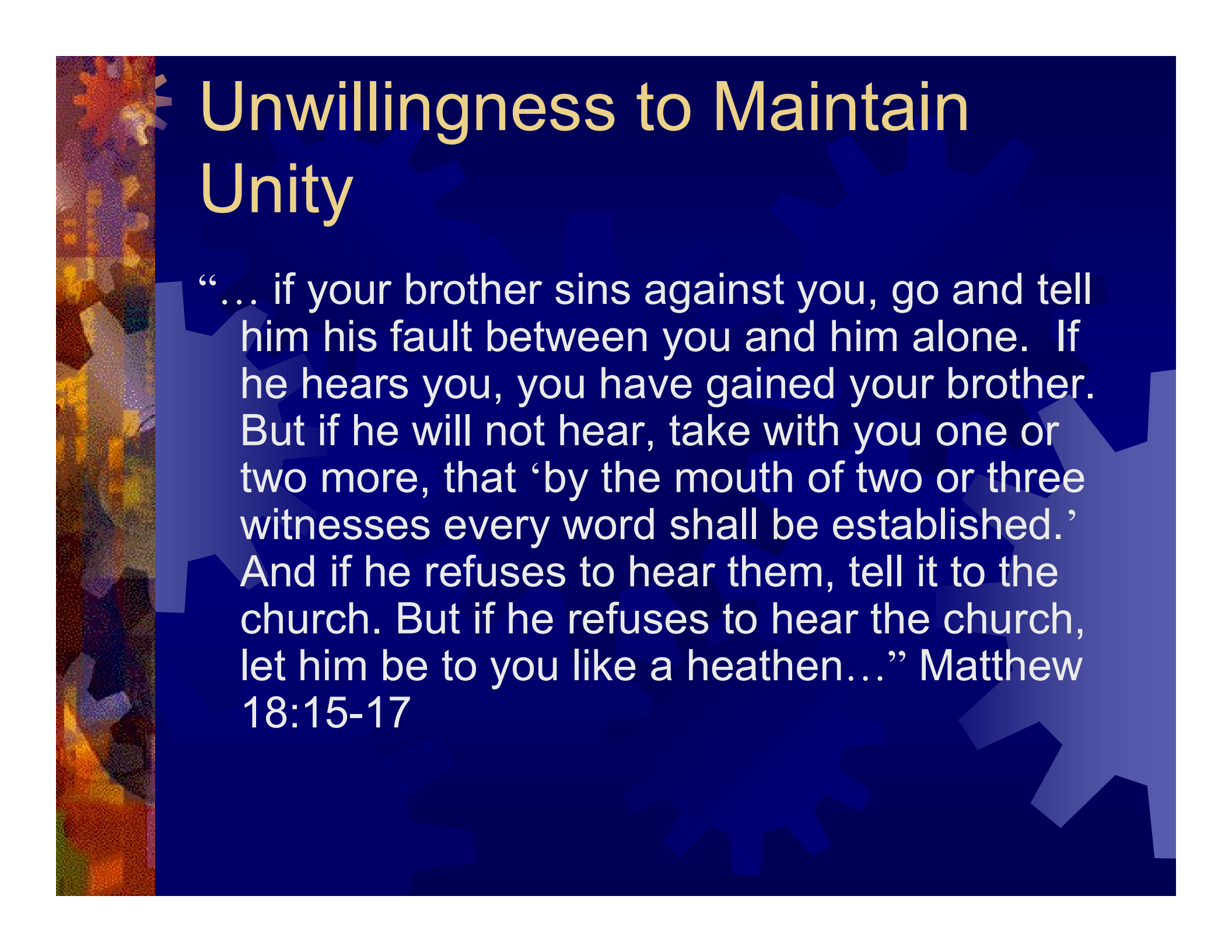
“Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,  
The joy I feel, the bliss I share  
With those who anxious spirits burn  
With strong desires for Thy return.  
With such I hasten to the place  
Where God my Savior show His face  
And gladly take my station there  
And wait for Thee. Sweet hour of prayer!”



# Impediments to Unity

- ☀ Unwillingness to Maintain Unity

“... if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:24



# Unwillingness to Maintain Unity

“... if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.’ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen...” Matthew 18:15-17



# Solutions to Conflict

- ✦ Appeasement “Solution”
- ✦ Diplomatic “Solution”
- ✦ Political “Solution”
- ✦ Legal “Solution”
- ✦ Military “Solution”
- ✦ Christian Solution



# Impediments to Unity

- ✦ Sin
- ✦ Negligence in Fellowship
- ✦ Unwillingness to Maintain Unity



# Unity

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head... It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing – life forevermore.” Psalm 133