

Union with Christ

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Corporate Union w/ Christ: Unity and Diversity

- The body of Christ is **objectively** characterized by diversity (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28-29).
- The **normative**, New Testament expectations for local churches is that they are to be diverse in terms of having both sexes, both the single and the married, people of different ages, different church offices (elders and deacons), weaker and stronger believers, people with different giftings and multiple socio-economic classes represented. .
 - Because of the objectivity of the diversity within the body of Christ combined with the kind of diversity expected within individual local churches, in the vast majority of cases, it is generally misguided to seek to “actively” diversify local churches.

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- A proper understanding of the objective nature of the diversity of the body of Christ in light of union with Christ demands that there is nothing antithetical to diversity—racial or otherwise—in a local church’s practices.
 - Question: Should churches in the 21st century look like the community around them? Why or why not?
- Scripture clarifies that shared unity with Christ does not at all imply that everyone possesses the same gifts or even measures of faith, but rather, the same (new) identity, promises and dignity/worth.
- Additionally, union with Christ does not imply that everyone lives an equally sinful or holy life.

3

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- Practically speaking, if we are uniting around something other than the Christ with whom we are united, then we are doing something that could go on just fine without the Gospel.
 - The danger of the “particular issue” church

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