More and more it is becoming the custom at certain times of the year for churches of different denominations to come together for what they call a "Union Meeting." At these meetings ministers from various denominations will join together with one giving the opening prayer, another a devotion, and another bringing the message and so on. To the unsuspecting person all this may seem wonderful. How wonderful that these various denominations could "join hands" (as they put it) for this city wide service. It is also becoming a common practice for Baptist preachers to exchange pulpits with those of other denominations on certain Sundays. We have never joined in such services in the past, and we do not intend to in the future. We feel that such services are misleading and in the end cause more confusion and do more harm than good.

I would ask the advocates of such meetings to prove from the Bible that such meetings are pleasing to the Lord. Where does the Bible teach that truth is to join hands with error for a union meeting, whether it be on a one day service or a two week city wide revival? The Bible asks: "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (II Corinthians 6:14). Also, we read in Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" How can a Baptist who says he believes in salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9) join hands in a service with a man who believes in salvation by works? How can a Baptist who believes immersion to be the only scriptural mode of baptism join in a service with a man who believes that sprinkling is scriptural and even practices the abominable rite of baptizing babies? How can a Baptist who believes that it takes the blood of Christ to cleanse the sinner from his sins (Hebrews 9:22) join in a service with a man who believes that it takes the waters of baptism to wash away sins. One thing is evident, and that is that in such a service someone has to compromise his convictions in order to fit into such a religious hodge-podge.

Can you imagine the Apostle Paul joining in a union service with such false teachers? Certainly not. When he came face to face with false teachers who would pervert the gospel by teaching that one must be circumcised in order to be saved, he didn't soft soap the truth in order to get along. Rather he rebuked them sternly and even said that if anyone or even an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel, "Let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:7-9). John the Baptist didn't seem to have a unionizing spirit about him when he called the Pharisees and Sadducees a generation of vipers, and called upon them to repent. (Matthew 3:7-8). If they wanted to worship with John they had to change from their errors and come to the truth because he wasn't about to compromise his message to get along with them.

The usual argument is that since we are all going to the same place anyway we should all work together to get there. But, my friend, we are not all going to the same. The person who believes in salvation by works is not going to the same place as the person who believes in salvation by grace, because one is lost and the other saved. The Bible is plain in teaching that there are many religious people who will be cast into hell. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:22-23).

It would be a great blessing for many people if they would lose their religion and get God's salvation, because there is a vast difference in the two. We are not saying that only Baptists are going to heaven, (as we are sometime accused) because if a person has truly trusted Christ as his Saviour he is going to heaven regardless of his church affiliation, but if a person is saved, he is saved the way true Baptists preach, BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST.

Such services are misleading. They lead people to believe there isn't much difference between us, and that one church is as good as another. My friend, THIS SIMPLY IS NOT SO. A church that preaches error and is full of worldliness is not as good as one that stands for the truth. A union service is saying that there is no real reason for our separate existence. If churches of several different denominations can merge for a special service, then why can't they do it all the time? It is this spirit of ecumenicalism that will one day bring about the great world church over which the antichrist will reign.

We certainly believe in religious freedom and the freedom of speech for all, but we also believe it to be our duty to stand for the truth and to combat error where ever we find it. It would be inconsistent on our part and dishonoring to our precious Saviour for us to preach one thing and then to say by our actions that it really doesn't make much difference what you believe. This we would be doing if we compromised our convictions and entered into a union service.

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Why Baptist Do Not Unionize

By Jim Orrick