

Message Ten
**Avoiding Division,
Which Is versus the Oneness That We Keep,
and Rejecting Apostasy,
Which Is versus the Faith That We Contend For**

EM Hymns: 853, 1339

Scripture Reading: Deut. 12—13; Psa. 133; John 17:21-23;
Eph. 4:3-6; Jude 1-3, 19-21

- Deut 12:1 These are the statutes and the ordinances that you shall be certain to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.
- Deut 12:2 You shall completely destroy all the places where the nations whom you will dispossess have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree.
- Deut 12:3 And you shall tear down their altars and crush their pillars; and their Asherahs you shall burn with fire, and the idols of their gods you shall cut down; and you shall destroy their name from that place.
- Deut 12:4 You shall not do so to Jehovah your God.
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;
- Deut 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.
- Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
- Deut 12:9 For until now you have not come to the rest and to the inheritance that Jehovah your God is giving you.
- Deut 12:10 But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance, and when He gives you rest from all your enemies surrounding you so that you dwell securely;
- Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.
- Deut 12:12 And you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, you and your sons and daughters, and your male servants and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.
- Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- Deut 12:15 Yet you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, in all that your soul desires, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat it as the gazelle and the deer are eaten.
- Deut 12:16 However, you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water.
- Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
- Deut 12:19 Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite all your days upon the earth.
- Deut 12:20 When Jehovah your God enlarges your territory, as He has promised you, and you say, I will eat meat, because your soul desires to eat meat, you may eat meat according to all that your soul desires.
- Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;
- Deut 12:22 Indeed, as the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you may eat it; the unclean and the clean may eat it alike.
- Deut 12:23 But make sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh.

Deut 12:24 You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water.

Deut 12:25 You shall not eat it, so that it may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of Jehovah.

Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;

Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.

Deut 12:28 Keep and listen to all these words which I am commanding you so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of Jehovah your God.

Deut 12:29 When Jehovah your God cuts off the nations before you, which you are entering to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land,

Deut 12:30 Be careful that you are not ensnared in following them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not seek after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods, so that I also may do likewise?

Deut 12:31 You shall not do so for Jehovah your God, for every abomination to Jehovah, which He hates, they have done to their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burned with fire to their gods.

Deut 12:32 The whole thing that I am commanding you, you shall be certain to do; you shall not add to it, nor shall you take away from it.

Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!

Psa 133:2 It is like the fine oil upon the head / That ran down upon the beard, / Upon Aaron's beard, / That ran down upon the hem of his garments;

Psa 133:3 Like the dew of Hermon / That came down upon the mountains of Zion. / For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.

John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Jude 1 Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept by Jesus Christ:

Jude 2 Mercy to you and peace and love be multiplied.

Jude 3 Beloved, while using all diligence to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you and exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

Jude 19 These are those who make divisions, soulish, having no spirit.

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

I. According to Moses' word in Deuteronomy 12 and 13, we must avoid division and reject apostasy:

Deut 12, 13 be omitted.

- A. We must keep the unique oneness of God's people and the unique faith in the person and redemptive work of Christ.
- B. Apostasy in the Old Testament denotes giving up God and turning away from God to idols; in the New Testament apostasy is heresy, denoting the denial of Christ's deity and not believing that Jesus Christ is God incarnated to be a man—John 1:1, 14; 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:2-3.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

- 1 John 2:18 Young children, it is the last hour; and even as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come; whereby we know that it is the last hour.
- 1 John 2:22 Who is the liar if not he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.
- 1 John 4:2 In this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,
- 1 John 4:3 And every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming and now is already in the world.
- C. Apostasy, or heresy, insults and damages the person of Christ, and division destroys the Body of Christ as Christ's corporate expression; thus, apostasy and division damage the entire economy of God.
- D. Because of this, the apostle Paul charges us to turn away from the divisive ones (Rom. 16:17), and the apostle John enjoins us to reject the heretical ones (2 John 9-11).
- Rom 16:17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.
- 2 John 9 Everyone who goes beyond and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.
- 2 John 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!
- 2 John 11 For he who says to him, Rejoice, shares in his evil works.
- E. Like Moses in Deuteronomy and the apostles in the New Testament, we must be very strict concerning division and apostasy; we must keep the unique oneness of God's people and the unique faith in the person and redemptive work of Christ—Eph. 4:3, 13.
- Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:
- Eph 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

II. Division is all-inclusive; it includes all negative things, such as Satan, sin, worldliness, the flesh, the self, the old man, and evil temper—Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:10:

- Rom 16:17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.
- Rom 16:18 For such men do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach, and through smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.
- Titus 3:10 A factious man, after a first and second admonition, refuse,
- A. We should not think that division stands by itself and is not related to the flesh, the self, and worldliness—Gal. 5:19-21; Matt. 16:23-24; 1 John 2:15-16.
- Gal 5:19 And the works of the flesh are manifest, which are such things as fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
- Gal 5:20 Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, divisions, sects,
- Gal 5:21 Envyings, bouts of drunkenness, carousings, and things like these, of which I tell you beforehand, even as I have said before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- Matt 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men.
- Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
- 1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him;
- 1 John 2:16 Because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.
- B. If we are enlightened concerning the nature of division, we will see that it is not only related to all negative things but includes all negative things.
- C. To be in division is to be in death; Christianity is filled with death and darkness because the genuine oneness in life is lacking.

- D. Divisions come out of different teachings, teachings other than God's economy—1 Tim. 1:3-4:
- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
1. Whatever we teach should not be measured by whether it is wrong or right; it must be measured by whether it is divisive or not; only one kind of ministry builds up and never divides—this is the unique ministry of God's economy.
 2. It kills people to teach differently; to teach differently tears down God's building and annuls God's entire economy; we all must realize that even a small amount of teaching in a different way destroys the recovery.
 3. The only way that can preserve us in the recovery is the unique ministry; if we say that we are in the recovery, yet we teach something so lightly, even in a concealed way, that is different from God's economy, we sow the seed that will grow up in division; therefore, the only way that we can be preserved in the eternal oneness is to teach the same thing in God's economy.
 4. The different teachings of the dissenting ones are winds used by God's enemy to distract His people and carry them away from His economy—Eph. 4:14.
Eph 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,
 5. The dividing teachings are organized and systematized by Satan to cause serious error and thus damage the practical oneness of the Body life—v. 14.
Eph 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,
 6. The different teachings are the major source of the church's decline, degradation, and deterioration—1 Tim. 1:3-4, 6-7; 6:3-5, 20-21.
1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
1 Tim 1:6 From which things some, having misaimed, have turned aside to vain talking,
1 Tim 1:7 Desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither the things that they say, nor concerning what they confidently affirm.
1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
1 Tim 6:4 He is blinded with pride, understanding nothing, but is diseased with questionings and contentions of words, out of which come envy, strife, slanders, evil suspicions,
1 Tim 6:5 Perpetual wranglings of men corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, supposing godliness to be a means of gain.
1 Tim 6:20 O Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from profane, vain babblings and oppositions from what is falsely called knowledge,
1 Tim 6:21 Because of which some, professing this, have misaimed regarding the faith. Grace be with you.
- E. The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the places and in all the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33b-34:
- 1 Cor 4:17 Because of this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.
- 1 Cor 7:17 However as the Lord has apportioned to each one, as God has called each one, so let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches.
- 1 Cor 11:16 But if anyone seems to be contentious, we do not have such a custom of being so,

neither the churches of God.

1 Cor 14:33b ... As in all the churches of the saints,

1 Cor 14:34 The women should be silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they should be subject, even as the law also says.

1. We also must teach the same thing in all the churches in every country throughout the earth—Matt. 28:19-20.

Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Matt 28:20 Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.

2. There is no thought in the New Testament that a teaching is good for one church but not for the other churches; rather, the New Testament reveals that all the churches were the same in receiving the teachings—Titus 1:9.

Titus 1:9 Holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to convict those who oppose.

III. The genuine oneness is an all-inclusive, comprehensive oneness that includes all positive things—Psa. 23:6; 36:8-9; 43:3-4; 84:1-8, 10-12; 92:10; 133:1, 3b:

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me / All the days of my life, / And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah / For the length of my days.

Psa 36:8 They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, / And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures.

Psa 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; / In Your light we see light.

Psa 43:3 Send forth Your light and Your truth; / They will lead me; / They will bring me to Your holy mountain / And to Your tabernacles.

Psa 43:4 And I will go to the altar of God, / To God my exceeding joy; / And I will praise You with the harp, / O God, my God.

Psa 84:1 How lovely are Your tabernacles, / O Jehovah of hosts!

Psa 84:2 My soul longs, indeed even faints, / For the courts of Jehovah; / My heart and my flesh cry out / To the living God.

Psa 84:3 At Your two altars even the sparrow has found a home; / And the swallow, a nest for herself, / Where she may lay her young, / O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God.

Psa 84:4 Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; / They will yet be praising You. Selah.

Psa 84:5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, / In whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Psa 84:6 Passing through the valley of Baca, / They make it a spring; / Indeed the early rain covers it with blessings.

Psa 84:7 They go from strength to strength; / Each appears before God in Zion.

Psa 84:8 O Jehovah God of hosts, hear my prayer; / Give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

Psa 84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand; / I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God / Than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

Psa 84:11 For Jehovah God is a sun and a shield; / Jehovah gives grace and glory; / He does not withhold anything good / From those who walk uprightly.

Psa 84:12 O Jehovah of hosts, blessed is the man / Who trusts in You.

Psa 92:10 But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; / I am anointed with fresh oil.

Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!

Psa 133:3b ... For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.

A. The Lord has given us the glory that the Father has given Him so that we may be one in the Father and in the Son; this points to a oneness in the divine nature and the Divine Being; oneness is actually the mingling of the processed and consummated Triune God with the believers—John 17:21-23; Eph. 4:3-6.

John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

- Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:
 Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
 Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;
 Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- B. When the oneness is recovered, all the spiritual riches and all the positive things are recovered with it, because they all exist in the oneness—v. 3; 3:8:
 Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:
 Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
1. All the godly things and all the spiritual riches are ours on the genuine ground of oneness—Deut. 8:7-9; 12:12, 26-28.
 - Deut 8:7 For Jehovah your God is bringing you to a good land, a land of waterbrooks, of springs and of fountains, flowing forth in valleys and in mountains;
 - Deut 8:8 A land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees with oil and of honey;
 - Deut 8:9 A land in which you will eat bread without scarcity; you will not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and from whose mountains you can mine copper.
 - Deut 12:12 And you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, you and your sons and daughters, and your male servants and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.
 - Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;
 - Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
 - Deut 12:28 Keep and listen to all these words which I am commanding you so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of Jehovah your God.
 2. The genuine oneness is not a partial oneness; it is a great, complete, comprehensive oneness, a oneness in entirety.
- C. Psalm 133 is a psalm on the oneness that includes all positive attributes and virtues; if we see the vision of the oneness of entirety, all the germs of division will be killed, and we will be delivered from every kind of division.
 Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!
 Psa 133:2 It is like the fine oil upon the head / That ran down upon the beard, / Upon Aaron's beard, / That ran down upon the hem of his garments;
 Psa 133:3 Like the dew of Hermon / That came down upon the mountains of Zion. / For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.
- D. For the recovery and preservation of the genuine, all-inclusive oneness, we must destroy the high places—1 Kings 11:7-8; 12:26-33; 13:33-34; 14:22-23; 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kings 12:2-3; 14:3-4; 15:3-4, 34-35:
 1 Kings 11:7 Then Solomon built a high place to Chemosh the detestable thing of Moab in the mountain that is before Jerusalem and to Molech the detestable thing of the children of Ammon.
 1 Kings 11:8 And so he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.
 1 Kings 12:26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.
 1 Kings 12:27 If this people go up to make sacrifices in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will return to their lord, to Rehoboam the king of Judah; and they will slay me and return to Rehoboam the king of Judah.
 1 Kings 12:28 And the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!
 1 Kings 12:29 And he set one in Bethel, and he put the other one in Dan.
 1 Kings 12:30 And this thing became a sin; and the people went to worship the one as far as Dan.
 1 Kings 12:31 And he made a house of high places and appointed priests from among the people who were not from the sons of Levi.

- 1 Kings 12:32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; he did likewise at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made.
- 1 Kings 12:33 And he went up to the altar that he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day, in the eighth month, that is, the month he had devised in his own heart; and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.
- 1 Kings 13:33 After this matter Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but he again made priests for the high places from among the people; whoever desired it, he consecrated to be priests of the high places.
- 1 Kings 13:34 And this matter became a sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as even to cut it off and destroy it from the face of the earth.
- 1 Kings 14:22 And Judah did what was evil in the sight of Jehovah and provoked Him to jealousy because of the sins which they committed, above all the sins which their fathers had committed.
- 1 Kings 14:23 And they also built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherahs on every high hill and under every flourishing tree,
- 1 Kings 15:14 But the high places were not removed; otherwise the heart of Asa was perfect with Jehovah all his days.
- 1 Kings 22:43 And he walked in all the way of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of Jehovah. Nevertheless the high places were not removed; the people offered sacrifices and burned incense still on the high places.
- 2 Kings 12:2 And Jehoash did what was right in the sight of Jehovah all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.
- 2 Kings 12:3 However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places.
- 2 Kings 14:3 And he did what was right in the sight of Jehovah, yet not like David his father; he did according to all that Joash his father had done.
- 2 Kings 14:4 However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places.
- 2 Kings 15:3 And he did what was right in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that his father Amaziah had done.
- 2 Kings 15:4 However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places.
- 2 Kings 15:34 And he did what was right in the sight of Jehovah; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.
- 2 Kings 15:35 However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of Jehovah.
1. In His wisdom God required His people to destroy all the places in which the nations served their gods; to set up a high place is to have a division; hence, the significance of high places is division—Deut. 12:1-3.
 - Deut 12:1 These are the statutes and the ordinances that you shall be certain to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.
 - Deut 12:2 You shall completely destroy all the places where the nations whom you will dispossess have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree.
 - Deut 12:3 And you shall tear down their altars and crush their pillars; and their Asherahs you shall burn with fire, and the idols of their gods you shall cut down; and you shall destroy their name from that place.
 2. To preserve the oneness of His people, God required that they come to the unique place of His choice; the high places were a substitute and an alternative for this unique place—vv. 8, 11, 13-14, 18.
 - Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
 - Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.

- Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
3. A high place is an elevation, something lifted above the common level; in principle, every high place, every division, involves the uplifting, the exaltation, of something other than Christ—cf. Col. 1:18.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
4. The record of the building of the high places under Solomon and Jeroboam has a spiritual significance; it was written for our spiritual instruction—Rom. 15:4-6:
- Rom 15:4 For the things that were written previously were written for our instruction, in order that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
- Rom 15:5 Now the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind toward one another according to Christ Jesus,
- Rom 15:6 That with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- a. According to this record, division is caused by lust and ambition; Solomon is an example of the former, and Jeroboam is an example of the latter.
- b. The high places built by Solomon and Jeroboam seriously damaged the ground of oneness—1 Kings 11:7-8; 12:26-33.
- 1 Kings 11:7 Then Solomon built a high place to Chemosh the detestable thing of Moab in the mountain that is before Jerusalem and to Molech the detestable thing of the children of Ammon.
- 1 Kings 11:8 And so he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.
- 1 Kings 12:26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.
- 1 Kings 12:27 If this people go up to make sacrifices in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will return to their lord, to Rehoboam the king of Judah; and they will slay me and return to Rehoboam the king of Judah.
- 1 Kings 12:28 And the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!
- 1 Kings 12:29 And he set one in Bethel, and he put the other one in Dan.
- 1 Kings 12:30 And this thing became a sin; and the people went to worship the one as far as Dan.
- 1 Kings 12:31 And he made a house of high places and appointed priests from among the people who were not from the sons of Levi.
- 1 Kings 12:32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; he did likewise at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made.
- 1 Kings 12:33 And he went up to the altar that he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day, in the eighth month, that is, the month he had devised in his own heart; and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.
- c. In the church life we should not have any high places; instead, we should all be on one level to exalt Christ—Col. 1:18; 3:10-11.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

- Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- d. The divisions in Christianity are caused by selfishness and ambition—Phil. 2:21; 3 John 9-10; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Kings 12:26-33.
- Phil 2:21 For all seek their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus.
- 3 John 9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us.
- 3 John 10 For this reason, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he does, babbling against us with evil words; and not being satisfied with these, neither does he himself receive the brothers, and those intending to do so he forbids and casts out of the church.
- Rom 16:17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.
- Rom 16:18 For such men do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach, and through smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.
- 1 Kings 12:26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.
- 1 Kings 12:27 If this people go up to make sacrifices in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will return to their lord, to Rehoboam the king of Judah; and they will slay me and return to Rehoboam the king of Judah.
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- 1 Kings 12:33 And he went up to the altar that he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day, in the eighth month, that is, the month he had devised in his own heart; and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.
5. Spiritually speaking, we must destroy every place other than the church and every name other than the name of Christ; this means that we must destroy our culture, disposition, temperament, habits, natural characteristics, preferences, and religious background with its influence—everything that damages the genuine oneness—Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14.
- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- Gal 5:24 But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.
- Gal 6:14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
- E. In the Lord's recovery we elevate Christ and Christ alone—Col. 1:18:
1. We can testify that, in contrast to today's Christianity, we have no high places.
 2. Having come to the church, we should have no "high places," elevations where something other than Christ is uplifted; we should have nothing other than the person of Christ and the unique way of the cross—1 Cor. 1:30; 2:4; Col. 1:20; 2:11; 3:11.

3. In the church we enjoy Christ as the rich produce of the land; our enjoyment of Christ in the presence of God becomes our worship, our church life, and even our Christian living, and we grow and mature on the ground of oneness—Eph. 3:8; 4:3, 14-16.

IV. We must be fully exercised to separate ourselves from any heresy (apostasy) and heretics (apostates):

- A. Heretics do not confess that Jesus is God incarnate (not confessing that He has come in the flesh through the divine conception of the Holy Spirit); thus, they deny the deity of Christ—1 John 4:3; 2 John 7; cf. Luke 1:31-35; John 20:28-29; Rom. 9:5.
- 1 John 4:3 And every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming and now is already in the world.
- 2 John 7 For many deceivers went out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.
- Luke 1:31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus.
- Luke 1:32 He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of David His father,
- Luke 1:33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.
- Luke 1:34 But Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I have not known a man?
- Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.
- John 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, My Lord and my God!
- John 20:29 Jesus said to him, Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.
- Rom 9:5 Whose are the fathers, and out of whom, as regards what is according to flesh, is the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.
- B. The Spirit works in the believers to confess to them that Christ came in the flesh—1 John 4:1-2:
- 1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- 1 John 4:2 In this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,
1. Anyone who rejects Christ's incarnation and thereby rejects His redemption also denies Christ's resurrection.
 2. If anyone denies Christ's incarnation, that one denies Christ's holy birth, humanity, human living, redemption through crucifixion, and resurrection; this utterly annuls the enjoyment of the life-giving Spirit as the reality of the processed Triune God—2:23.
1 John 2:23 Everyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who confesses the Son has the Father also.
- C. A heretic is one who denies the divine conception and deity of Christ, as today's modernists do; such a one we must reject, not receiving him into our house nor greeting him; thus, we will not have any contact with him or any share in his heresy, heresy that is blasphemous to God and contagious like leprosy—2 Pet. 2:1-3; 2 John 10.
- 2 Pet 2:1 But there arose also false prophets among the people, as also among you there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.
- 2 Pet 2:2 And many will follow their licentiousness, because of whom the way of the truth will be reviled.
- 2 Pet 2:3 And in covetousness, with fabricated words, they will make merchandise of you, for whom the judgment of old is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber.
- 2 John 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!

- D. Just as bringing to others the divine truth of the wonderful Christ is an excellent deed (Rom. 10:15), so spreading the satanic heresy, which defiles the glorious deity of Christ, is an evil work; it is a blasphemy and abomination to God; it is also a damage and curse to men.
 Rom 10:15 And how shall they proclaim Him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who announce the news of good things!"
- E. No one who is a believer in Christ and a child of God should have any share in this evil! Even to greet such an evil one is prohibited! A severe and clear separation from this evil should be maintained!—2 John 8-11.
 2 John 8 Look to yourselves that you do not lose the things which we wrought, but that you may receive a full reward.
 2 John 9 Everyone who goes beyond and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.
 2 John 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!
 2 John 11 For he who says to him, Rejoice, shares in his evil works.

V. Jude exhorts us to earnestly contend for the faith—Jude 1-3:

- Jude 1 Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept by Jesus Christ:
 Jude 2 Mercy to you and peace and love be multiplied.
 Jude 3 Beloved, while using all diligence to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you and exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.
- A. "The faith" in Jude is not subjective faith as our believing but objective faith as our belief, referring to the things we believe in, the contents of the New Testament as our faith, in which we believe for our common salvation—Acts 6:7; 1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10, 21; 2 Tim. 3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:13.
 Acts 6:7 And the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly; and a large number of the priests obeyed the faith.
 1 Tim 1:19 Holding faith and a good conscience, concerning which some, thrusting these away, have become shipwrecked regarding the faith;
 1 Tim 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
 1 Tim 4:1 But the Spirit says expressly that in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons
 1 Tim 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
 1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all evils, because of which some, aspiring after money, have been led away from the faith and pierced themselves through with many pains.
 1 Tim 6:21 Because of which some, professing this, have misaimed regarding the faith. Grace be with you.
 2 Tim 3:8 And in the manner that Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these also oppose the truth; men corrupted in mind, disapproved concerning the faith.
 2 Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.
 Titus 1:13 This testimony is true; for which cause reprove them severely that they may be healthy in the faith,
- B. Our Christian faith is composed of our belief concerning six basic items: the Bible, God, Christ, the work of Christ, salvation, and the church—Eph. 4:13:
 Eph 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,
 1. The Bible, word by word, is divinely inspired by God, as the breath of God—2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16.
 2 Pet 1:21 For no prophecy was ever borne by the will of man, but men spoke from God while being borne by the Holy Spirit.
 2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

2. God is uniquely one but triune—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 3:14-17; Rev. 1:4-5.
- Matt 3:16 And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon Him.
- Matt 3:17 And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.
- Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
- Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,
- Eph 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood
3. Christ was the very God in eternity (John 1:1) and became a man in time (v. 14); His deity is complete, and His humanity is perfect; hence, He is both God and man (20:28; Rom. 9:5; John 19:5; 1 Tim. 2:5), possessing both divinity and humanity.
- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- John 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, My Lord and my God!
- Rom 9:5 Whose are the fathers, and out of whom, as regards what is according to flesh, is the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.
- John 19:5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the thorny crown and the purple garment. And he said to them, Behold, the man!
- 1 Tim 2:5 For there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus,
4. Christ first became a man in incarnation (John 1:14) and died on the cross for our redemption (1 Pet. 2:24; Rev. 5:9); then He rose from the dead for our regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3), ascended to the heavens to be the Lord of all (Acts 2:33, 36; 10:36), and will come back as the Bridegroom to the church (John 3:29; Rev. 19:7) and the King of kings to all the nations (v. 16); these are the main aspects of the work of Christ.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- 1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.
- Rev 5:9 And they sing a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
- 1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- Acts 2:33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.
- Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.
- Acts 10:36 The word which He sent to the sons of Israel in announcing the gospel of

- peace through Jesus Christ (this One is Lord of all)
- John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
5. A sinner must repent to God (Acts 2:38; 26:20) and believe into Christ (John 3:16; Acts 16:31) for forgiveness of sins (10:43), for redemption (Rom. 3:24), for justification (Acts 13:39), and for regeneration (John 3:6) in order that he may have eternal life (v. 36) to become a child of God (1:12) and a member of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27); this is our salvation through faith (Eph. 2:4-9).
- Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, Repent and each one of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Acts 26:20 But declared both to those in Damascus first and in Jerusalem and throughout all the country of Judea and to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance.
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.
- Acts 10:43 To this One all the prophets testify that through His name everyone who believes into Him will receive forgiveness of sins.
- Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
- Acts 13:39 And from all the things from which you were not able to be justified by the law of Moses, in this One everyone who believes is justified.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- John 3:36 He who believes into the Son has eternal life; but he who disobeys the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him.
- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
- 1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
- Eph 2:5 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
- Eph 2:7 That He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;
- Eph 2:9 Not of works that no one should boast.
6. The church, composed of all the genuine believers in Christ, as the Body of Christ (1:22-23; Col. 1:24), is universally one (Eph. 4:4), and a local church as the expression of the Body of Christ is locally one—one city, one church (Rev. 1:11):
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;
- Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
- Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

- a. This does not mean, however, that a real believer in Christ who does not agree with one city, one church is not saved; he or she is saved, but there is something lacking, not for salvation but for the proper church life.
 - b. By standing on the proper ground of the church, we are choosing to love all the brothers, not only those who are meeting with us.
- C. This faith, not any doctrine, has been delivered once for all to the saints; for this faith we should earnestly contend—1 Tim. 6:12.
 1 Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith; lay hold on the eternal life, to which you were called and have confessed the good confession before many witnesses.
- D. We build up ourselves upon the foundation of this most holy faith by enjoying the entire Blessed Trinity so that we may become the New Jerusalem as the totality of the eternal life—Jude 19-21; cf. John 4:14b.
 Jude 19 These are those who make divisions, soulish, having no spirit.
 Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
 Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
 John 4:14b ... but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water springing up into eternal life.
- E. The entire Blessed Trinity is employed and enjoyed by us as we exercise our spirit by “praying in the Holy Spirit” to keep ourselves “in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life”—Jude 20-21:
 Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
 Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
1. *Unto eternal life* (v. 21), or *into eternal life* (John 4:14b), is a particular expression; *unto*, or *into*, speaks of destination and also means “to become.”
 Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
 John 4:14b ... but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water springing up into eternal life.
 2. By exercising our spirit to enjoy the Blessed Trinity and contend for the faith, we become the New Jerusalem as the totality of the eternal life—Rev. 22:1-2a; 21:10-11.
 Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
 Rev 22:2a And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; ...
 Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
 Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Study Questions

1. According to Moses’ word in Deuteronomy 12 and 13, what are the two major things that we must avoid?
2. What is the all-inclusiveness of division?
3. What is the all-inclusiveness of oneness?
4. How can we be fully exercised to separate ourselves from any heresy and heretics?
5. What is our Christian faith, and how can we earnestly contend for it?