

Series: Systematic Theology Part 4  
Title: The Purity and Unity of the Church  
Purpose: To examine what makes a church more or less pleasing to God and more or less better to join.  
Date: February 8, 2026

- I. More pure and less pure churches
  - A. Descriptions of true churches listed last week
  - B. Philippi and Thessalonica had few problems
  - C. Galatia and Corinth had major problems
- II. Definitions of purity and unity
  - A. Purity is the degree of freedom from error in doctrine and conduct and conformity to the revealed will of God
  - B. Unity is the degree of freedom from divisions among true believers
- III. Signs of a more pure church
  - A. Biblical doctrine
  - B. Proper use of sacraments
  - C. Right use of church discipline
  - D. Genuine worship
  - E. Effective prayer
  - F. Effective witness
  - G. Effective fellowship
  - H. Biblical church government (in several weeks in detail)
  - I. Spiritual power in ministry
  - J. Personal holiness of life among members
  - K. Care for the poor
  - L. Love for Christ
- IV. New Testament teaching on the unity of the church
  - A. John 10:16 - one flock and one shepherd
  - B. John 17:21, 23 - pray they will be one; perfect unity
  - C. 1 Corinthians 1:10 - be of one mind
  - D. Ephesians 4:4-6 - one body and one Spirit
  - E. Separation is always from non-believers, not believers
  - F. Paul and Peter separated - Galatians 2:7
- V. Brief history of organizational separation in the western church
  - A. 1054 AD - Eastern Orthodox split from Roman Catholic
  - B. 1517-1540 AD - Reformation split western church into Protestant and Catholic
  - C. Since 1600 AD, Protestants have splintered into hundreds of smaller groups
- VI. Reasons for separation
  - A. Doctrinal issues
  - B. Matter of conscience
  - C. Practical considerations
  - D. Are there times when cooperation and personal fellowship are prohibited?

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Outline taken from *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem, 1994 edition