

## Many Faiths

Once, as we drove into a small central Arkansas town, we were greeted with a sign which read, "Welcome to Our Town, A Town of Many Faiths". After we had passed the sign, my wife asked, "Doesn't the bible say that there is one faith?" I answered back, "Yes, that's what the bible says." She thought it strange that a town would boast about something that was contrary to what the bible teaches, and I agreed. As you drive through the little town, a town similar in size to the small town we live in, you begin to realize that it is in fact a town of many faiths. I counted at least five church buildings within rock throwing distance from each other. Our town is not much different, if you look at the sign that is located just west of our fellowship building, you'll see an example of our religious diversity. That Arkansas town's religious pride is typical of our country's attitude toward religious diversity. Built upon the principle of freedom of religion, our country allows and promotes a diverse religious community, one of which allows you and I to meet and worship without worry of harassment. However, this concept is indeed at odds with what the New Testament teaches concerning faith, worship and service to God.

The passage that my wife called in question when we encountered the "many faiths" sign is found in the letter to the Ephesians. Note what Paul, inspired by the Spirit wrote, *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."* (Ephesians 4:1-6). As you can see from this passage, God's idea for the religious community is "oneness" rather than diversity.

It should be our sincere desire that we can all follow Jesus, worship God, and serve Him in unity as outlined in His Word. Wouldn't it be great if we could put up a sign that read, "Welcome to Our Town, A Town of One Faith"?

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