



New Life Riders

Motorcyclists Serving God and Community

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Dear friends,

Where has the year gone? Can you believe it is August? In many communities the kids have already gone back to school. The great news is that we still have lots of good riding ahead of us.

There are many great opportunities this month, the Little Angels Ride on August 5, The Blue Star Rally providing service dogs for Hoosier Veterans on August 12, the Joe Matthews III, Memorial Motorcycle, Truck and Car Show on August 19, The Steve Bannon Memorial Ride & BBQ, is also on August 19, ABATE Bikers Care on August 20 and Motorcycles on Meridian, August 26. For more information on these in addition to other rides and activities, please check our website: www.newliferiders.com

I know that I have mentioned the laughter and fellowship we have had around the table at our New Life Riders meetings. Thoughts about our times together made me recall what the Psalmist said, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133:1) The word unity appears three times in the Bible, once in Psalm 133 and twice in Ephesians four. However, as a concept it unfolds innumerable times throughout the Scriptures.

Unity is important to us as Christians because King David praised it, Paul penned it in his Epistle to the Ephesians and alluded to it in other letters, like Romans and Corinthians. But most of all, unity is important because Jesus prayed for it in John chapter 17.

God loves variety. He makes each one of us quite different from the other in our mothers' wombs. We are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). Having created us, God broke the mold. So we start out as different people by nature, and the Spirit of God makes us even more unique when we ask Jesus into our hearts and become Christians. It is not the Spirit's work to clone us. We are not "cookie cutter" Christians. How dull it would be if we were! The Lord delights in diversity. A Christian gathering of like-minded people all from the same background can show evidence of uniformity, rather than unity. We do not come together because of common educational or social background, or even because we ride the same kind of bikes. It is the Spirit of the living God who brings us together. When you and I have nothing in common except Jesus Christ, then we really have true fellowship one with the other. Unity, not uniformity, is essential for a healthy ministry.

It can be easy to confuse unity with uniformity. Unity does not mean that everyone in the Body of Christ should look exactly alike, crossing every "t" and dotting every "i" in the same way. Because the New Life Riders ministry is made up of Christians coming from numerous denominational backgrounds, we realize that there is more that unites us than could ever divide us. It is coming together based on the core beliefs of the Christian faith: God who eternally exists in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Deity of Christ; the infallible, inspired Word of God and salvation by faith in Christ alone who died on the cross for our sins.

The Holy Spirit gives us different gifts: "All these gifts have a common origin, but they are handed out one by one by the Spirit of God. He decides who gets what and when." (1 Corinthians 12:11, in the Message) As you know, these gifts are not for our personal benefit, but to build up the body of Christ. When we meet together, the Holy Spirit is at work among us to meet our various needs. Each one of us has a special and unique part to play.

A famous conductor once interrupted a symphony orchestra, saying, "Stop! I can't hear the piccolo!" That conductor is like God who called us into his "orchestra" and wants to hear each one of us. Are we inaudible, or are we so loud we drown out the others? (I'm not talking about our pipes, here!)

A ministry cannot exist without the Holy Spirit. A hundred religious people knit together by good administration doesn't make a ministry. It is the Spirit of Christ who converts us and brings us to new life, it is the Spirit who brings us into the Body of Christ; it is the Spirit who gives life to the Body. Communication, love and prayer bring us together for encouragement and greater service for the Lord. A danger occurs when a group becomes so focused on its own survival that it ignores the "Call of Christ" to reach out into the community.

I came across a gem written about Christian Unity over 100 years ago. The ideas were not new even then. They were taken directly from God's Word.

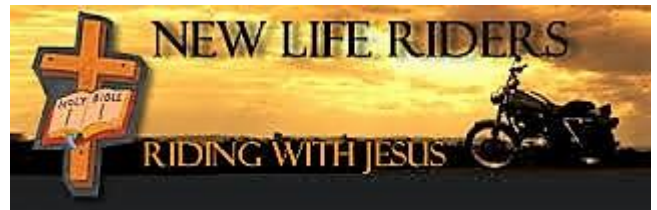
"If we are united, who can stand before us? If we divide, we shall destroy ourselves, the work of God and the souls of people." It listed seven statements concerning unity:

- 1. Let us be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of it.*
- 2. Pray earnestly for, and speak freely to each other.*
- 3. When we meet, let us never part without prayer.*
- 4. Take great care not to despise each other's gifts.*
- 5. Never speak lightly of each other.*
- 6. Let us defend each other's character in everything as far as it is consistent with truth.*
- 7. Labor to honor each other to prefer the other before himself.*

As a ministry, let us continue to reach toward the goal of unity and draw upon each other's gifts and strengths. Remember, unity, not uniformity is the key. The risen Christ seeks to be glorified in us. We are called to live for His glory. He longs for us to be one with the Father and experience oneness with each other as fellow disciples. And for good reason: Christ has the world at the center of His concern. He prays for those who believe because of our oneness and our irresistible demonstration that life in Him is glorious. I would ask you to reread Jesus' prayer in John chapter 17 with the New Life Riders in mind. Then as members together, we can make a difference in the biking community and around the world!

The New Life Riders ride with the two-fold purpose of enjoying the wind in our faces and, more importantly, serving God and the Community. You don't have to join or belong to any particular organization to be part of our ministry.

I want you and your family to know that all are welcome as we gather. Think about joining us for good food and great fellowship at our next meeting on Friday, August 4th. We will meet at 6:30 PM at Bob Evans Restaurant, 6102 Cambridge Way, located off Route 267, just north of Route 70, Plainfield, Indiana 46168.



May you be blessed as you go out to share the love of Jesus with all whom you meet.

As always, I look forward to seeing you down the road.

*God bless
Riding with Jesus,
Bob Dillon*

***Jesus said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news to one and all."
Mark 16:15 (The Message)***