People from all walks of life today have been led to believe that unity among men is vital to the harmony and salvation of our planet and humanity itself. Contrary to what many secular scholars believe, this is in total agreement with what the New Testament continually affirms.

We read in the Gospel according to John, that on the evening of Jesus' arrest, He earnestly prayed that His Disciples would be one. And in his Letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul urges believers:

> I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
>
> (Ephesians 4:1-4)

But what does "unity of the Spirit" really mean, and how does it differ from the unity we see developing among the many different religions in our world today?

To answer the first question, the Greek word used in this passage for unity simply means oneness of purpose. Regarding how it differs to the secular efforts to unite, the word "maintain" aids our understanding.

It implies that unity is something which already exists among believers, only it has to be worked out. This is why Paul exhorts us to make "every effort." This conveys the idea of action, diligence and commitment.