

**July 2015**  
**From the Desk of Rev. Chuck**  
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Dear Friends,

Last month I had a visit from a person new to Bakersfield and to Unity. They saw our banners that face Truxtun Ave and came into the office. I'd like to share some of the questions and the responses I gave to them with you this month.

**Q: *I've never heard of Unity, how long have you been here?***

**A:** What is now Unity of Bakersfield began as a small study group of individuals interested in proving the teachings of Jesus Christ. They were led by the Rev. Della Strutts, an ordained Unity minister in 1929. She helped grow the study group into a pastoral church until her death in 1958. Since that time there have been nine ordained Unity ministers that have served this community in Bakersfield over the past 86 years. I have had the honor of serving 22 + of those 86 years.

**Q. *How did Unity begin and do you have a doctrine?***

**A:** Unity began as a prayer ministry in 1889 by co-founders, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in Kansas City, Missouri. Unity was one of the many unique religious schools that became part of the New Thought Movement. The co-founders saw Unity as a link in the great education movement inaugurated by Jesus Christ; and their objective was to discern the truth in Christianity and prove it. They claimed that the truth that was taught was not new, neither did they claim special revelations or discovery of new religious principles. They saw their purpose as helping and teaching humankind to use and prove the eternal Truth taught by the Master. As a Christian based movement, Unity's focus has always been about life and teachings of Jesus AND NOT the made-made religion created about him.

The teachings and prayer work that came from Unity was based on the Doctrine of Original Blessings. That is we are all born in love, not sin. Nowhere in the New Testament do you find Jesus telling the people to bring all the new born children to the temple or river for baptism. You do find him blessing them and telling the people that the kingdom belongs to them and we should all aspire to

be like children if we wish to enter the kingdom.

**Q: *So if people are born in love and not sin how does Unity treat Jesus? And what about salvation?***

**A:** Unity understands Jesus to be a teacher of great understanding and depth of his divine nature. As a teacher we can learn by living his example, this is how we are saved from our ego self. He gave humankind all the tools they would need to uncover their true spiritual nature and have the same kind of relationship with God he did. Unity often points to the many statements in the New Testament that Jesus is saying, "Our Father and Your Father." In other words: He is telling us that we are all sons and daughters of God, not just him.

When you do away with the doctrine of sin there is no need for salvation as taught by the "Church." Unity understands the concept of sin as "self inflicted nonsense" and salvation as being a process of one's personal soul growth and awareness of their connection to God as a beloved child. Our salvation from this "sin" comes in the awareness that we can transform and transcend the human condition and live a life of abundant blessings by practicing and using the spiritual truths taught by Jesus and all the great teachers.

**Q: *So what do you mean when you say Unity is a practical and progressive spiritual program?***

**A:** We believe that all people are created with sacred worth. Therefore, we recognize the importance of serving all people of the world in spiritually and emotionally caring ways, free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, religion, national origin, ethnicity, physical disability, or sexual orientation.

Unity of Bakersfield is dedicated to helping people from all walks of life find their spiritual path so that they may fulfill their life's purpose through self-realization and awareness, self-responsibility and activity, thus creating for themselves greater sense of well-being and abundance in their lives. This is done through the active and practical application of putting the great spiritual teachings to work in one's life. When this is done, we all end up practicing the truth that will set us free.

Maybe you've been asked the same question and if so I pray the answers I gave may help you to explain what Unity is.

Have a safe and joyous July!