

CONCERNING UNITY

Consider for a moment the power of unity—“One shall chase a thousand, two shall put ten thousand to flight” (Deut. 32:30). There is tremendous power when two people are working together in harmony, rather than being all alone.

“If two of you shall agree ... it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” (Mt.18:19). In Genesis 11:6, the people had one language and one purpose. Therefore the Lord declared, “Now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.”

God thoroughly understands the power of unity, and so does Satan. The intention of the adversary is to divide and conquer. Thus, his central target of attack is against the home and marriage.

Unity in the Church begins with unity in the home—the Church is only a collection of homes. Unity is a message that is close to the heart of God (Mal. 4:5-6). Christ said, “Every house divided against itself shall not stand” (Mt.12:25).

All of today's problems go back to the home. God wants to visit our homes. The movings of the Holy Spirit are limited in the Church because of the conditions that exist in its families. Hard feelings and personal problems stop up our wells, and faith does not flow because of it. How are things at home?

If we are not growing spiritually, we will not grow in our marriage. To grow spiritually means we are becoming more and more like the One who created marriage. Growing spiritually means we are increasing in grace, peace, love, joy, wisdom, longsuffering, gentleness, forbearance, faith, temperance, patience, and all of the other attributes of God. As these virtues are produced and flourishing in our lives, we will become a more desirable marriage partner, and it will be easier to get along with others.

Unity in the Church does not only begin at home, or in a couple—unity begins in ME. Christ prayed for unity among His brethren (Jn.17:21-23). In verse 23, He prayed: “That they may be made perfect in one,” implying that perfection is only possible by coming to unity with one another.

Christian perfection is not possible without unity. Disunity reveals unresolved problems in our lives and these are the issues God wants to deal with. Remember, only by pride comes arguments. Proverbs 13:10. Christianity revolves around two basic things in life—how we treat people and how we treat God. Thus, Christianity is relationships.

Four Levels of Unity

1. Unity Within Ourselves. (Psa. 86:11). King David prayed; “Unite my heart to [reverence] thy name.” David prayed for a united heart because some of the affections of his heart were divided. There was a controversy going on in his heart. This is why he fell into adultery. Unity does not *begin* in a group of people. It does not even begin in a couple. Unity begins in each individual heart. How can we hope to get along with others when there is no unity in our own hearts? We must be at peace with ourselves before we can properly love and flow along with others. Thus, we should pray, “Lord, Unite my divided heart.”

In Ja. 4:1, it asks: “From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?”. Fightings and arguments that go on among ourselves—where do they come from? They come from the struggles that exist in our flesh, in our own hearts. The question arises: “How do we get over these battles and come to unfeigned love for the brethren?”

First Peter 1:22 gives us the answer. Each time we “obey the truth” there comes a gradual transformation in our lives. There can be no genuine love or unity until there has been responses to the light (or truth). But, Unity first begins in the individual heart.

Not every Christian is willing to fully respond to the light. This is the reason I believe that the Church at large will not come to unity, but the Bride, a group from within the Church, will come to unity and glory.

2. Unity of the Spirit. (Eph. 4:1-3). After gaining a measure of victory in our own personal lives, we come to a second level of unity—the “unity of the Spirit.” To flow with a body of believers it requires lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, and forbearance (Eph. 4:2-3), and this takes effort. Humility (lowliness) honors others before itself (Rom.12:10). Meekness shows no anger and accepts difficulties with a good attitude. Longsuffering is patience, and forbearance tolerates annoying flaws in others for a long period of time. Forbearance keeps marriages together.

In the charismatic movement of previous decades, denominations came together to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, worship the Lord, and demonstrate the gifts of the Spirit. People from every denomination joined together to thank God for the new visitation of His Spirit.

This was progress. Many thought that this could never happen! This is an example of “the unity of the Spirit.” But even in this level of unity, there is something major still missing. Though their hearts could worship as one, their minds were far from being in one accord. If you mentioned doctrine or beliefs, there was little harmony. This is the reason we must come to the third unity—“the unity of the faith” (Eph. 4:11-13).

3. Unity of the Faith. (Eph. 4:11-13). The unity of the common faith requires a higher degree of maturity than the unity of the Spirit. It is one thing for all the denominations to worship together, but quite another thing for them to agree together in their common beliefs (1 Cor.1:10). The unity of the faith is the ability to have the same views on all the major truths of Christianity. This requires the surrender of our opinions. The greatest enemy of unity is the natural mind. Walls that divide people are located in the mind and in the heart.

The Holy Spirit does not have a variety of opinions as we do. He only says one thing. So, we can see that our minds are getting in the way. Are we willing to allow God to change our minds, even if it goes against our traditions, or the way we were taught?

Sometimes people are willing to “die” for their beliefs, but we better be sure that we are suffering and dying for God's cause, not our own.

It will take the fivefold ministry to bring the Church to unity. God is restoring and bringing these five ministries back to the Church ... “for the perfecting of the saints ... till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:12-13).

In particular, the teaching ministry will be instrumental in bringing oneness of mind to the Church in the last days. God will not use us in this last hour if we are going to assert our own ideas and opinions. He will only stand behind and confirm HIS message.

Truth brings division—it is supposed to! It divides soul and spirit, it separates the sheep from the goats, the holy from the unholy. Some do not want to be holy. This is the reason not all Christians will come to unity. Unity and a clear mind belong only to the holy (Mt. 5:8). Only those who are committed to doing the whole will of God possess understanding. In Jn. 7:17 it states: if any man is willing to do God's will, he will know the doctrine, whether it is from God or not. Full commitment to God brings discernment.

4. Unity of the Brethren. (Psa.133:1-3). “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” This wonderful unity is likened unto the precious anointing oil that ran down Aaron's head and his garments. To appreciate the meaning of this special anointing oil, it is necessary to study the ingredients that composed this anointing and their spiritual meanings. This is found in Exodus 30:22-25.

In Song of Solomon 4:13-14, there are nine herbs and these nine herbs correspond to the nine fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23:

With this in mind, we may now find the interpretation of several key ingredients that made up this special anointing oil of Exodus 30:22-25. Myrrh speaks of meekness; Sweet cinnamon represents goodness; calamus is gentleness. Cassia represents tears, olive oil speaks of peace.

These are the components of that precious anointing oil that brings unity: meekness, goodness, gentleness, tears, and peace.

Brokenness, mellowness, compassion, understanding, and peace all go into the realization of unity. This is true Christianity and maturity—when the brethren of the Lord can flow together in this level of unity and compassion for one another. This is where the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore. This is the ultimate of Christianity. Love is the bond of perfectness (Col. 3:14).

Four Ways of Proving Our Love For God

1. By Waiting for Him— Isaiah tells us that God has wonderful things prepared for all those who wait for Him (Isa. 64:4). Paul says, “the wonderful things God has prepared for those who love Him” (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9). What is the difference between loving God and waiting for God? There is no difference! Proof that we love God is demonstrated in waiting for His time and His schedule for our life. Time is the real proof of our commitment to Him.

2. By Feeding His Sheep—“Peter, if you love me, feed my sheep” (Jn. 21:15-17). In order to have sustenance to feed God's people, we must be willing to pass through the necessary processes. “Peter, you can prove that you love Me by staying in the circumstances I have placed you in so that you can obtain a vital message to give to My people.”

3. By Keeping His Commandments—“If you love me, keep my commandments” (Jn.14:15,21; 15:14). It is one thing to say that we love God, and even worship Him for hours. Yet, if we will not do what He tells us to do, this indicates that we do not love Him. Actions, not words, impress the Lord (Luke 6:46, Mt. 21:28-31).

4. By Loving Our Brethren—Most of the commandments in God's Word involve our treatment of others. How we treat people is the way we treat God (Mt. 7:13; 25:34-45). We cannot possibly love God whom we have not seen if we do not love our brethren whom we do see (1 Jn. 4:20-21, Ja. 1:27).

Let's ask God to deal with every area of our life where our heart is divided, and the causes for disunity.

Humility is a great key for unity, and meekness, and wisdom. God bless you abundantly.