



## ~ A Call to Unity ~

***“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.” – John 17:20-21***

There is no greater testimony of God than when people from all walks of life, culture, and opinion come together for a common goal and a common purpose for the gospel of Christ. Unity in God’s church is the greatest of Christ’s prayers second only to the prayers of the Holy Spirit. True unity reflects the person of the Godhead and enables God to work powerfully through His people by the Holy Spirit. God’s people become an army bearing the banner of Jesus. There is power in numbers.

Let’s take a single sheet of notebook paper. By itself, it can be torn in half easily by hand. If you add several more sheets, it still can be torn by hand but it becomes much harder. If you take a whole ream of paper, it is almost impossible without industrial strength machinery. We, as God’s ambassadors are the same way. If we stand alone, we are more likely to take the hits and fall. Progress is slow or almost impossible. But, with others around us linking arms and sharing the same vision and calling despite the differences of opinion, it is harder to bring the work down. It’s a force hard to stop.

***“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” – Matthew 28:19*** This is the great commission given to every single one of God’s children. The proclamation of the gospel is to be world-wide in its extent. However, the messengers of the cross cannot hope to fulfill their important mission unless they remain united in Christian unity. This is how the world sees that Christians are one with Christ in God. This unity is based in truth on God’s word and moved by His Spirit.

In the prayers of Jesus throughout John 17, we see that our spiritual life and power is dependent on a close connection with the One who commissioned us to preach the gospel. Without this union, there is no power. This was true with the early church after the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. Only as the disciples were united with Christ could they hope to have the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the cooperation of heavenly angels. With the help of these divine agencies, they were able to reveal to the world a united front and were victorious in the conflict they continually had to battle as the powers of darkness raged over them. The scriptures tell us vividly the results, ***“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” – Acts 6:7***

Today, God's church is floundering because there is not a united heart in the work He has called us to do. We are either distracted or pride has gotten in the way as people and even various ministries seem to compete with one another for money, the spotlight or recognition. Instead of victory in the advancement of the gospel, discord and jealousy hinder the work of God and put a blemish on the cause of Christ to the world. Instead of an army moving forward with the banner of Christ, we are stuck in our own pit because we refuse to lay down our own opinions and pride.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul describes various gifts that the Holy Spirit gives as He sees fit. Not everyone has every gift. The body of Christ can be likened to the human body. Each member has its own gift (ability) to offer to the work of God. Combine these gifts in a common purpose and goal, the body moves with agility and smoothness. God's work begins to move with miraculous results. It is the will of God that His people come together for His purpose. We are to lay aside our individual preferences, opinions, and ideas and come together seeking the will of God. When we do this, we open ourselves up to the power of the Holy Spirit and God is able to do a marvelous work.

God is calling His people together as an army of the Lord. Let's decide today to lay aside our distractions, our pride, and need for recognition. Let's repent and ask the Lord to give us a new heart and a new spirit so that we can be qualified to work as He is calling us to work. Let's begin praying together and working together for the cause of Christ so that He may be glorified and that the world may know that Jesus is the Messiah of the world.

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