

Unifying Glory

God is calling us to live in the cloud of His glory. He is calling us to dwell in the smoke of His presence. He wants His people to be known as the people of the glory cloud, not the people divided into a thousand denominations.

Page 56

We Pentecostals have been prone to criticize those who used a prayer book to pray, but as I have gotten to know some of those who use that method of prayer, I have found that they also touch the heart of God. It makes no difference how we have been taught to pray. It is the intent of the heart and the sincere desire for God to which He responds.

Page 70

The reason it sometimes costs us something extra to achieve the unity we desire is that Satan, knowing that this is God's ultimate desire and His ultimate glory, will put everything he possibly can into our minds and spirits in an attempt to rob us of the very glory that God has ordained for us.

Page 83

We are one because of the upward pull, not because there is an outward pull or a downward pull.

Page 85

Unity is not intellectual; it doesn't depend on intellectual agreement; it is supernatural and depends only on the glory of God. Learn to love those who have different doctrinal positions from yours.

Page 109

What we need in this hour is more glory, not endless arguments about each point of doctrine. We are the living creatures of the Book of Ezekiel, and the living creatures were joined together, not at the head but at the wings, the place of soaring. Page 111

The place of opposition from the enemy is the mind of man, and when the anointing oil begins to flow and touches this mind of ours, there is a victory that touches us from the tops of our heads to the soles of our feet. Page 21

God wants to anoint us in this regard, and He is not lacking in anointings. He is standing in the heavens at this very moment with an eternal horn of oil, ready to anoint each of us for ministries, positions, offices and governments that we have never known. Page 23

Unity is like the ditch-digging part of coming into the glory. When the ditches are in place, the glory will flow. Page 119

Some say, "I can love everyone except ...," but there are no exceptions in God. The very person you want to make the exception is the one God wants you to reach out to and embrace with genuine love. Page 154

There is a special anointing for bringing unity among brothers. Those who are willing can receive a special touch from Heaven and be used to bring together people of diverse backgrounds and experiences. This is a worthy ministry, one of the most important of the end times.

Page 25

Receive a special anointing of unity, and let God use you to spread peace and harmony throughout the entire Body of Christ.

Page 25

Without unity, we remain a crippled and limited Body.

Page 29

Unity must be the product of our revival.

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The degree of the revelation of God's glory will be in proportion to our willingness to allow Him to bring unity among us.

Page 33

God is looking for a people who will reflect His glory to the world, and that glory includes His great love for His family and, indeed, for all mankind.

Page 33

When we are willing to pay whatever it costs to have the "precious" anointing upon us, unity will come easily.

Page 37

If you want something badly enough, you will go after it; you will work for it; and you will sacrifice for it, if necessary. If you don't care about it or you think it is unimportant, you won't bother. If you desire something, you will do everything you can to promote it, to remove barriers to it, to encourage it and to protect it once it comes to you.

Page 39

Unity is "precious," a bargain at any price.

Page 43

Sometimes, when I have had a hard time loving someone because of the unkind way they have treated me and my ministry, I have heard the Lord speak to me this phrase: "One for whom Christ died."

Page 54

You may have a touch of anointing, because God blesses us many times in the hope that we will do the right thing. He blesses us with the hope that His goodness will lead us to repentance. He is very merciful and does not withdraw His Spirit from us because we offend each other. But ... He will not give us His richest anointings unless we see that His great plan, His great purpose, is for all mankind.

Page 60

Our God is not exclusive; He is inclusive. When any group of Christians develop an exclusivity, they are no longer flowing in God's order.

Page 61

Stop remembering every grievance. Let the anointing work on your memories. Take out a Holy Ghost eraser and go to work on your blackboard. Let go of every hurt. Let go of every grievance. Forget all the times someone has done you wrong.

Page 147

God loves unity and blesses it, while the enemy hates it and does everything he can to destroy it.

Page 83

We are never right when we have an agitated spirit.

Page 108

We can be so corrective that we destroy the very life of Christ that is springing forth in a person's life.

Page 114

We can become so corrective and so "helpful" that we stifle the flow of the Spirit of God in peoples' lives. By our critical spirits, however well-intentioned, we can frustrate the flow of love in relationships.

Page 114

**Unifying
Glory**

by

Ruth Ward Heflin

Unifying Glory

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And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, even as we are one.

John 17:22

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, OF ALL NATIONS, AND KINDREDS, AND PEOPLE, AND TONGUES, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Revelation 7:9-10

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Foreword

I personally consider the message of unity within the Body of Christ to be one of the most important themes of our time. How can we expect to live together in Heaven throughout eternity if we cannot love each other down here, in the here-and-now of daily living?

Having traveled to more than sixty nations, I can say with assurance that this lack of love among Christian brothers is the most serious impediment to world evangelism today. I can also say that all of God's children, with their extremely diverse backgrounds, customs and traditions, are wonderful.

What is it then that prevents us from laying aside our petty differences to embrace the entire family of God? As only she can, Ruth Ward Heflin has here laid out the challenges that face us in this new millennium as we learn to embrace the glory, the revealed presence of God, and in doing so, begin to embrace all those He calls His own.

Harold McDougal

Introduction

Our Lord has called us to be a people of the glory revealed. He has called us, not only to know the revelation of His glory, but also to walk in and manifest that glory. The ultimate goal of God's glory is that Christians everywhere become "*one*," that the members of God's family learn to love one another.

It is wonderful to see God's glory and to have revelations and visions of the worlds to come. God gives us such revelations to fill us with the beauty of His presence and to manifest His glory in every area of our lives. His desire is that, through the experience of being lifted up into His presence, there should come an eternal work within our souls. In this way we, as individuals, can come into the wholeness and perfection that God has ordained for us from the foundation of the world. God's greatest reason, however, for manifesting His glory in the Earth is that His people become "*one*."

*Ruth Ward Heflin
Ashland, Virginia*

Part I

Unity: The Product of Our Revival

Chapter 1

The Anointing and Unity

“Thou Anointest My Head With Oil!”

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Psalm 23:5

The thing the enemy uses more than anything else to destroy the anointing of believers in general and of the servants of the Lord in particular is disunity. More than sin! More than demonic attack! More than anything else! It is the lack of unity that keeps the anointing from flowing in our individual lives and in the Church as a whole and keeps us from achieving, personally and corporately, the fullness of God for this hour.

There is hope. In every great move of the Spirit of God, as the anointing of the Holy Ghost has become richer in the midst of the people, there has always

been a melting of people's hearts toward one another and a flowing together, heart to heart, of the varied members of the Body of Christ. Brothers who have not seen eye to eye, those who have not been able to agree doctrinally, and those who have experienced bitterness and strife against each other and have allowed human conflicts to separate them from the best God has for their lives, have historically come together during times of revival because of their desire for the anointing and glory of God.

It is interesting. The anointing brings unity, and unity brings the anointing. It's like the old argument about which came first, the chicken or the egg. Some insist that it was the chicken. After all, how can you have an egg without a chicken? Others, however, are sure that the egg came first. Chickens come from eggs. It is an endless discussion, and those who have thought about it long enough realize that, no matter how you look at it, the one produces the other.

So, which comes first, the glory or unity? It works both ways. As we move further into revival, we will see a greater emphasis on the things that produce unity. We cannot, however, sit back and wait for that change to come. If we want a richer anointing in our lives, God is requiring of us that we hear His heart on this issue. He is calling us to be those who recognize the importance of unity in His family and strive to see it come to pass. It is time to stop emphasizing

the differences between us and to start stressing the things upon which we all agree. God's children must start loving one another if we are to have all that our Father has destined to be ours in this important hour.

The more glory we experience in the days ahead, the more unity will be manifested among the brethren, and the more unity we can demonstrate among the brethren, the more glory God will pour out upon us. This is what will win the world in these last days.

Why did David rejoice in that his "*head*" was anointed with oil? I think I know just what he was feeling. I'm still a little old fashioned in this regard myself. If someone is going to lay hands on me and pray for me, I still like them to put their hands on my head. Technically, I understand that we can place our hands on other parts of the body and pray, and God will answer. There is something about a hand laid on a head, however, that is different from a hand laid on a hand or a hand laid on a shoulder, a back, or some other part of the body. The place of opposition from the enemy is the mind of man, and when the anointing oil begins to flow and touches these minds of ours, there is a victory that touches us from the tops of our heads to the soles of our feet.

We need such an anointing, for much of our distaste for people who are different from us begins in our minds, in our thinking, in how we grew up, what we were taught as children and what we have heard

the glory of God bathes us, all the shadows suddenly flee away.

God's anointing has a way of humbling us. When we hear what He wants to do in our lives, we say, "Lord, how could I have ever allowed a shadow of any dark thought to pass my way? How could I have allowed any cloud of division to dim my horizon? How could this have happened?" But there is no need for an answer, because in that moment of glory your relationship with your brother has been fully restored.

The anointing and unity go together. Men who have been used of God with special anointings have been those who knew how to lay aside differences and come to the foot of the cross. It is that willingness to forgive as Christ forgives and to forget as God forgets that brought the great anointing upon their heads.

God wants to anoint us in this regard, and He is not lacking in anointings. He is standing in the heavens at this very moment with an eternal horn of oil, ready to anoint each of us for ministries, positions, offices and governments that we have never known. He is, however, examining our hearts to see where we stand in regard to the welfare of His family, how we feel about one another. He has commanded unity among us. If we desire it, He will pour out upon us a special anointing for unity.

Only God has a right to decide who will receive His anointing. When Samuel went to Jesse's house

to anoint the next king of Israel, he was impressed with the outward appearance of Jesse's older sons (in spite of the fact that he was a prophet of God). When the oldest son came forward, tall and handsome, Samuel said, "Surely, this is the one whom the Lord would anoint to be captain over His people."

The Lord said, "Not this one."

The next one came by, and he, too, looked to be qualified. In fact, all of Jesse's sons who were presented seemed to have every needed qualification. When they had all passed by one by one and none of them had been anointed, the prophet was compelled to ask, "Is there not another?"

"Oh, yes," the father answered. "There's a little shepherd boy. All he does is look after the sheep and sing sweet psalms to his God."

When David was brought in, however, the Lord said to Samuel, "This is the one," and the prophet tilted his great horn filled with oil, and David was anointed to be king over Israel.

What made David greater than the others? Why did he please God more than his brothers? It was the touch of God's love upon his life. He was not in the field plotting how he could get even with his brothers. He was fully concentrated on God. David could not boast of popular acceptance; he would not have won a democratic election; but God knew his heart. He had not yet ascended the throne and would have

to pass through a period of preparation, yet from the moment that Samuel poured the oil upon his head, he was anointed to be king over Israel.

What are we without the anointing? What ministry can we perform without that touch of God upon our lives?

It is time to move into greater anointings. Let us be anointed to stand in God's presence, anointed to praise and worship, anointed to bring deliverance to the hungry multitudes, and anointed to unite with those whom God has placed by our side.

There is a special anointing for bringing unity among brothers. Those who are willing can receive a special touch from Heaven and be used to bring together people of diverse backgrounds and experiences. This is a worthy ministry, one of the most important of the end times.

God has called each of us to live in the anointing and to go forth and bring special anointings to people all over the world. We can never do that unless we first have God's love at work in our hearts. You will never carry God's anointing to others until you are living in the fullness of the anointing yourself. That means living in unity and harmony with your fellow believers. Receive a special anointing of unity, and let God use you to spread peace and harmony throughout the entire Body of Christ.

I have been privileged to see some of the greatest revivals the world has ever known, and I can say that in spite of all the miracles and wonders that accompany revival, the high mark of every revival has been the flowing of the anointing of unity. It comes about through the subjection of one's own desires and personalities to the higher desire of the will of God. This act brings a visible anointing upon the head, and it brings a guaranteed blessing upon the soul.

Chapter 2

The Importance of Unity

“That They All May Be One!”

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 17:20-23

Our unity was the overriding theme of Jesus' prayer. He didn't just refer to it once; He mentioned it several times and in several different ways:

That they also may be ONE in us ...

Verse 21

That they may be ONE, even as we are one ...

Verse 22

That they may be made perfect in ONE ...

Verse 23

What did Jesus mean when He said we should be “one”? He prayed that we would be one, “*even as*” He was one with the Father. Our fellowship must not only be with our heavenly Father, but also with the other members of His family. He loves us all alike and is saddened when we cannot love one another.

This is perhaps the most important prayer in the Bible, and it contains some of the most important words Jesus uttered during His time on the Earth. We should study the prayer, for it reveals God’s heart.

We have entered into a glorious period of revival, and are reaping the great harvest of the end time. This is wonderful, but it is not enough. At the same time, God wants His people to drop their petty differences and come together. He wants a unified family, and nothing is higher on His list of priorities.

Most of us consider the Great Commission to be the last and most important word left to us by our

Lord, and this may be true in the sense of what is important in spiritual activity. It is possible, however, that the prayer of Jesus in John 17 is of greater importance to the welfare of the whole Body of Christ on the Earth than anything else He said. Without unity, we remain a crippled and limited Body.

Jesus did not just pray for the world or for His little group of disciples. He was praying, He said, for all those who would believe on Him in the future through the efforts of those disciples. This is a prayer for all believers of all generations and, thank God, it includes us. Jesus wants us to be *“one”* with the other members of His Body.

Lack of unity among the followers of Christ is not a modern phenomenon. It was a problem in the first-century church, and it has been a problem ever since. I would be willing to say that it is *“the major problem”* we are facing in the Church today at the dawning of a new millennium. Contrary to public opinion, our greatest problem is not a lack of finances or a lack of talent. Jesus knew where we would stand in this hour when He prayed this prayer nearly two thousand years ago, and He prayed for us to be *“one.”*

Although the present revival has brought us miracles, that is not the primary purpose of God’s outpouring upon the Earth. Although new gifts and ministries are being manifested, they are not the

primary purpose of God sending His glory upon us. The primary purpose for the glory we are experiencing is to bring forth a many-membered Body that is united as “one,” even as Jesus was in the Father and the Father was in Him. Jesus said it Himself: *“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”* Unity must be the product of our revival.

The Body of Christ is made up of people from every nation of the world and from every Christian denomination, and there are vast differences among us, culturally as well as doctrinally. Still, Jesus said that we can be united. How is this possible? Unity does not come because we all believe the same things. It comes because of the glory of God. It is only in the realm of the glory that we can become one and fulfill the prayer of Jesus. When we learn this, it is easier for us to believe that unity can indeed be accomplished. It simply must happen, for nothing is more important in this hour.

We all want God’s glory, but we tend to want it for the wrong reasons. His priorities and ours are not the same. What we consider to be of “utmost importance” is often far down on His list. The most important reason for the manifestation of God’s glory is to bring about a divine joining together of brother to brother.

We all seem to have our spiritual shopping lists, but what we personally want God to do for us is not always the most important thing for the Kingdom. God's highest goal in sending His glory upon the Earth is to unite His family. This must, therefore, become our goal as well. I have been saying this for years now, but as we move further into revival, the importance of the message is becoming more apparent to all of us.

It is time that all of us begin speaking forth the burden of the heart of Jesus: "*that they all may be one.*" If we cannot learn to love one another, how can we accept what God is doing today as He pours out His Spirit upon a diverse people? These are His wildflowers, and He is calling us to accept them warmly into the family.

One year, just before I was to leave Jerusalem for Australia, one of our people had a vision of wildflowers springing up everywhere after the rain of the Holy Ghost. I had not realized how famous Australia was for its wildflowers, but when I got to Perth I met several people who were working to develop the local wildflower business. They could, therefore, understand what I was saying.

Although it has become popular to cultivate wildflowers, this was not what the Lord had in mind. What He showed us about wildflowers was that they just pop up — anywhere and everywhere. Some of

them pop up in the most peculiar and unexpected places. Wildflowers suddenly appear, for instance, in desert places in many parts of the world. We should not expect God's flowers to bloom only in the church, the synagogue or some other holy place. Some of His wildflowers will pop up in the places we least expect. Still, they are His, and because they are His, they are part of us as well.

As Christians, we have a traditional prayer that we commonly call *The Lord's Prayer*. It is part of the Sermon on the Mount. This prayer was given to the disciples to teach them how to approach God and how to be good followers of Christ. The prayer found in John 17, however, should probably be called *The Lord's Prayer*. It shows us the very heart of God and reveals His will for the Church of every generation. It shows us Jesus' desire just prior to His returning to the Father. It teaches us that if we are to know the glory of God in greater degree, it is essential that we experience greater unity with our brethren. The degree of the revelation of God's glory will be in proportion to our willingness to allow Him to bring unity among us.

It matters not what giftings and what skills and what talents a person has. If, in the midst of the giftings, skills and talents, there is only contention and strife, then the glory will not be revealed. God is looking for a people who will reflect His glory to

the world, and that glory includes His great love for His family and, indeed, for all mankind.

When the Lord began to teach us some years ago in Jerusalem how easy it was to come into the realm of glory at any given moment — how to praise until the spirit of worship comes, how to worship until the glory comes, and how to stand in the glory and receive revelation from the throne of God — He also showed us that we had much to learn about unity, that true glory only comes as we can unite in the Spirit, and that when the glory comes, it brings with it a greater unity.

Knowing a truth such as this does not automatically make it happen. Unity is such a difficult goal that it may not come immediately or quickly. Once we know the potential for something, however, we can begin to work toward it. Once we have the goal in sight, we can begin to *“press toward the mark ... of the high calling.”*

Chapter 3

The Value of Unity

“How Good and How Pleasant!”

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Psalm 133:1-3

“How good!”

“How pleasant!”

“It is like the precious ointment.”

“It is ... as the dew of Hermon!”

“It is ... as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion!”

Unity among brothers is precious, valuable, worth striving for. If we are to be successful in achieving this unity, we will have to keep this uppermost in our minds. Unity should become, for us, more precious than diamonds. We must see it as a valuable jewel to be sought after. If this was the greatest desire of the heart of Jesus, how can we doubt its significance?

Some people don't value those around them at all. Some even fail to realize how important their loved ones are to them until they lose someone near and dear. In the days following the death of a loved one, most people come to realize that nothing is more important in life than our relationship with God and with each other. Let us not wait for death to teach us this lesson. Treasure your brothers and sisters and cultivate your relationship with them now.

Our real treasures are not kept in some vault or safety deposit box. Our real treasures walk among us. May the Holy Ghost place this message deep within our hearts. Unity is "*precious.*"

In the natural, most of us are wise enough to protect the things that are truly valuable, but in the spiritual, many don't seem to realize what they are risking. We are willing to protect jewelry, cars, homes and properties, but we can't seem to realize how precious our relationships are and how much we will suffer if they are damaged.

When we have worked for something all our lives, we are not about to let a thief take it easily. Yet, when we have worked for years to develop an intimate relationship with the Lord and with His people, we are sometimes very quick to throw it all to the wind for some very petty reasons.

Some people want great things from God, but they are unwilling to speak to their neighbor to get those great things. If getting great things from God requires approaching their sister and embracing her, they are not sure they can do that. These people are just not hungry enough for God. They just don't know the value of the anointing. It hasn't become "*precious*" enough to them. If they knew its value, they would do whatever it takes to get it. They would be willing to pay any price, and unity is one part of the necessary price.

Jesus said:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Matthew 13:44

When we are willing to pay whatever it costs to have the "*precious*" anointing upon us, unity will come easily.

God says that unity among brothers is “precious,” yet many of us have not realized how valuable a virtue it is. This may be the reason some have not endeavored to protect the unity of the Spirit as they might. Because they have not recognized what is at stake, they have not always tried hard enough to obey the scriptural admonition:

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:2-3

When people come to realize that unity is precious, when they begin to get the revelation of how important it is to have unity among the brethren, they begin to make a concerted effort to achieve that end, knowing that it is worth it.

“How pleasant!” It is wonderful when brothers can sit down together and be “in one accord” as the disciples were on the Day of Pentecost. No wonder the psalmist likened it to the “precious ointment [or oil] that was on the head of Aaron”!

Imagine what a thrill it must have been for Aaron the first time the holy anointing oil was poured over his head. It covered his head, ran down his face and down his beard onto his garments and down to their very borders. It was glorious, and the psalmist tells

us that submitting to God's desire for unity in His family will bring us that same blessing.

Most Christians, however, are not making much effort to sit down together in unity with their fellow believers. In fact, they are running the opposite way as fast as they can. They are trying their best to stay occupied so they won't have time for fellowship. Anything to avoid other people! This shows that we haven't yet understood the importance of fellowship and don't yet realize how the lack of it adversely affects our anointing. People who do this haven't yet realized how "*precious*" unity is.

You can achieve nothing in life without desire. If you want something badly enough, you will go after it; you will work for it; and you will sacrifice for it, if necessary. If you don't care about it or you think it is unimportant, you won't bother. If you desire something, you will do everything you can to promote it, to remove barriers to it, to encourage it, and to protect it once it comes to you. That's why we need to understand the value of unity. It is "*precious*."

As the High Priest, Aaron had the privilege, once a year, of coming into the presence of God on behalf of the nation. He had an anointing for the nation. This could never have come about if he had harbored hatred in his heart toward his brothers. It is only as we allow the unity of the Holy Ghost to come into our hearts that we can have an anointing for nations.

If Aaron would have added to the nation's problems, God would not have entrusted him with that high position. Israel had enough problems already. God wanted a man who could help the people resolve their problems, not someone who would add to them.

There are enough problems today in the nations without our adding to them. There are enough problems in churches without our adding to them. There are enough problems in families without our adding to them. It is time for us to cease being part of the problem and become part of the solution. Unity is "*precious*." Start appreciating it and working to make it happen.

Through Isaiah, God called for a "*repairer of the breach*," for a "*restorer of the paths to dwell in*." We have enough wreckers, enough destroyers. Let us be builders, repairers and restorers. Let us be those who heal, for a change. Let us work for this most precious unity.

Twice in the Song of Songs Christ describes His Bride as "*terrible as an army with banners*." What makes her so strong that she can go head to head with the powers of darkness? It is her anointing of unifying glory, and it is available to us today. We don't need to go on a forty-day fast to get this increase of anointing. We don't need to pray around the clock to get it. All we need to do is make a deter-

mination to love our brothers, and the Spirit of God will be present to help us with every other battle. What could be more valuable to us?

Some years ago a large organization planned and carried out a conference in Israel. Many of the greatest names in Christendom were there to minister, but something was wrong. The meetings were not as blessed as anticipated. On the final night of the conference, the organizers stood and publicly apologized to those who attended. Some of the speakers felt compelled to stand and apologize as well. "It's our fault," they had to admit, "that the blessing has not been rich upon the conference. We were striving among ourselves as to which speaker would be first and who would get the most time. Please forgive us." About that time the Spirit of God fell on the meeting, and God did what men could not do. It is when unity comes that the precious anointing oil is present. This truth is "*valuable*."

The fact that the enemy is so intent on destroying our relationships with one another should tell us something of their importance. A thief never breaks into a house to get garbage. Have you ever heard of a garbage disposal being stolen? I don't think so. The only reason a thief would ever go through garbage is to see if he can find some valuable collector's item. Otherwise, he's not interested.

Garbage cans rarely get stolen because men are just not interested in trash. Satan, the thief, is looking

for a valuable treasure. If we could only recognize the value of unity as he has, perhaps we could protect it better.

Satan wants your joy so much that he can taste it. He will do anything at all to put you “out of sorts” with the person next to you or the several people around you. If it’s not the person you live with, he will use the person across the street or the neighbor around the corner. He will search until he finds someone who irritates your spirit so that he can rob you of your joy and do harm to the whole Body of Christ.

Every one of us has experienced being overwhelmed by hurts, being wounded by what another has said or done, and we are all prone to bitterness and strife caused by these things. It should be clear to us now that this is all because of our common enemy. He is ever intent upon destroying one of the most valuable things God has given us, our relationship with each other.

Some of us preachers are just as guilty as others. When we think of the things that are most precious to us, we would think of oratorical ability or special gifts, but God says that our relationships are the most important treasure we have.

Will we allow the enemy to continue to steal them from us? If we fail to consider the value of our relationship with every member of the Body of Christ,

we might. Nothing is more valuable to us in this hour than unity. Never worry about what unity will cost you because it is worth everything you may be called upon to pay. Unity is "*precious*," a bargain at any price.

Chapter 4

The Power of Unity

“By This Shall All Men Know!”

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 13:35

“*By this!*” Not by miracles, not by signs, not by preaching, not by any other thing, but “*by this,*” by unity birthed from love, “*all men [will] know*” that we are Christ’s disciples. “*This*” is what will convince the world of Christ. Unity is much more powerful than most of us have yet realized!

On the Day of Pentecost, some one hundred and twenty believers were filled with the Holy Ghost. That was a small group, but despite that fact, these men and women were able to turn the world upside down. Why? It was because very early they developed the habit of spending time

together, of fellowshiping, of strengthening each other:

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Acts 2:42-47

The members of this first group of Christians were known for their great love for one another. So great was their love that they had no problem laying down their possessions at the feet of the disciples that the needs of others could be met. This picture is very different from the one we get in many of our churches today. In this age of selfishness and self-centeredness, the church is not far behind the world. If we are to reach the world with the Gospel, it is essential that we become less like the world and more like the Christ we represent.

When Jesus prayed the prayer of John 17, He showed us how to reach the world for Him. He said that if we would only begin to show love to each other, the people of the world would see it and would know that the Father had sent Him (Jesus) for their salvation:

That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 17:23

If we want the world to believe, then we must begin to give them something obvious they can see. We must give them something tangible, something that cannot be denied. We must show them the love of God. When we love each other and we love the world, we are like a beautiful bouquet of flowers to the world.

When we Americans give a gift of flowers, we tend to think of roses. Here in this country, a gift of a dozen roses is considered to be most excellent. The English, however, prefer a totally different type of bouquet. Theirs is made up of a variety of different flowers. They have a little of this and a little of that, and all the varied colors blend together to make a very pleasant arrangement.

I love those English bouquets, for they represent what God is doing with us these days. He is

sprinkling us together, mingling us in an exquisite mixture. We are from many different backgrounds and from many different languages, but He knows how to place us together so that we form a most pleasant arrangement. This is the greatest manifestation of God's glory to the world around us. It is a sign of His presence with us and His favor upon us. Because He is love, the greatest manifestation of His power in us to the world is His love in us and His love through us.

Jesus said that our harmony and unity would make the world believe. We have tried everything else, but the world continues to ask, "If they are all Christians and all love Jesus as they claim, why is it that they cannot get along with each other?" It is a most difficult question to answer. In fact, this is most difficult question for Christians to answer today. There seems to be no logical explanation for our jealousies and divisions, and seeing how we act toward one another turns millions of people off to the Gospel.

A lot is at stake in this matter, much more than we might, at first, imagine. The very credibility of our Lord is at stake, as well as the response of the men and women of the world to Him and His message. The world cannot believe that God has sent His Son unless the love of the Son is manifested through the members of Christ's Body. If we go on fighting and devouring one another, the world will never believe.

If we continue to spend our time attacking one another, how can the world ever be converted? What are we asking them to be converted to? We keep telling people not to look at the church, just to keep their eyes on Jesus, but it just doesn't work that way. We are Christ's representatives in the Earth, and we cannot expect people to look anywhere else but at us.

As the glory of the Lord is poured out more and more upon the Earth, the sign of that outpouring will be the coming together of the scattered pieces of the Body of Christ. As God sends His presence increasingly among us, men and women will know it by what they see in our relationships with one another. The world will not be won by our talents and abilities or by our gifted oratory. Men and women will come into the family of God only as they see His love manifested through us.

Once we know and understand the importance, the value and the power of unity, we will give more time and effort to it. Working toward unity also has a powerful effect on the individual who makes the effort. Learning to forgive others will keep you sane; it will keep you anointed; it will keep the glory of the Lord flowing in your life. As we can see, however, there is a higher purpose. This is the way the world will come to know Christ.

God has not said to us, "My Spirit will be manifested through your life primarily through the great healing miracles you will perform or through

the miracles I will cause to happen in your life or through the great revelations you will receive and your ability to preach My Word." It will be through the unity we enjoy in His Spirit.

This work of unity in our hearts will be one of the major works of the Holy Ghost in these last days, and if we fail to get serious about letting Him remove every prejudice and bias from our hearts, we are in danger of missing out on His last-day move. Get this message deep into your spirit: there is power in unity, power to win the world for Christ.

Part II

Causes of Disunity

Chapter 5

The Difficulty of Achieving Unity

“That There Be No Divisions Among You!”

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:10

Nobody said it would be easy to achieve unity. Quite the opposite! In fact, many declare that this is probably the most difficult task anyone could imagine. I understand what they are saying, but I have to look away from the impossibility or improbability of achieving unity and hear what the Lord Jesus is saying to His Church. We cannot fail to achieve unity, for it is the heartcry of our Savior.

Believe me, I do know how difficult it is to achieve unity with some people. I often personally find myself in situations of this sort in which I feel inadequate. When I do, I quickly call out to God: "Help me, Lord Jesus. Let me be a bigger person. Let my attitudes be changed. Give me more grace." Then I feel His glory wash over me, and I know that I can love anyone, in any situation.

If the prayer of Jesus for unity had been impossible, He would never have prayed it in the first place. If the glory of the Lord could not be given to mortals to make us just as united as the Father is with the Son, this prayer would not appear in the sacred pages of the Bible.

Unity is not an impossible dream. It is not a futile ambition. Despite the fact that while we strive so hard to bring unity to the Body of Christ, others seem to be striving to tear down the little unity that already exists, our cause is not hopeless. God is planting eternal values within our souls that will, indeed, bear fruit — regardless of what others say or do.

Sometimes, when I have had a hard time loving someone because of the unkind way they have treated me and my ministry, I have heard the Lord speak to me this phrase: "One for whom Christ died." If God loves men that much, then you and I have a responsibility before Him to love them as well. When

love is not to be found in our hearts, we are forced to cry out to God and ask Him to put it there.

We are all familiar with the biblical admonition:

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Romans 12:18

We all know what we *should* do, but sometimes it seems that there is just not enough lying in us to be able to “*live peaceably with all men.*” God, however, is accepting no excuses in these last days. He wants a people anointed with the oil of unity, those who will stand in the priestly office before the Lord covered with oil from the tops of their heads to the soles of their feet. When His glory is upon us, we can love anyone.

Some lady may say, “But, if you had a husband like mine...” If you feel that way, I want to tell you that God has enough love for your husband and ten others just like him. If you will just open your heart to the Lord and let Him fill you with His love, you will become the catalyst to bring your husband to the point of change. The same is true for those men who have difficult wives.

My moments of exasperation with people are becoming, thankfully, fewer, but in those moments the Spirit of God has always been faithful. It is the Father’s will that we excel, and we cannot do it with

hearts full of anger and bitterness. God is calling us to live in the cloud of His glory. He is calling us to dwell in the smoke of His presence. He wants His people to be known as the people of the glory cloud, not the people divided into a thousand denominations.

When the Lord whispered into my spirit those words: “one for whom Christ died,” my heart melted. No matter what I think of some persons, if the Lord died for them, who am I to say anything about them? Who am I to lift up my voice against them? Who am I to be frustrated or agitated with them? Who am I to feel that I have come to the end of my rope with them? If Christ died for them, then it is for me to forgive and forget any wrongs they may have done to me.

The enemy of our souls makes sure that we hear all the bad things someone has said about us just before we meet that person somewhere. That’s not God trying to warn us. It’s the enemy trying to bring disunity. When it happens to me, and I see the person approaching, I cry out to God to help me react properly, to show forth His love — despite the hurtful things that have been said or done against me.

When His love is poured out upon us, a heart that has been cold, a heart that has felt reserve, a heart that has been hurt and in pain, suddenly begins to melt. By the time we see that person, we can look him

in the eye, reach out and take his hand and say, “God bless you, brother.” And we can say it with every bit of sincerity, with all the faith behind it, that the blessing of God will indeed go forth into his spirit. We can do it because God supernaturally helps us in that moment. Where would we be without His love?

Many of us have settled the major issues in our Christian walk and would never be found in places of sin. There are many things we would never do because we want to please God and provide a good testimony for those around us. But most of us are guilty of unkindness toward others. We would never be caught drunk, but we do sometimes allow a root of bitterness to take hold in our hearts against some brother we perceive as difficult. The writer of the Hebrews warned:

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Hebrews 12:15

A “*root of bitterness*” will not only “*trouble you,*” but “*many*” can be “*defiled*” by it. The Kingdom of God suffers when we allow bitterness to fill our thoughts and spirits, and our own spiritual well-being is threatened. The issue is not what others have done. The issue is the condition of our own hearts.

When you feel bitterness begin to take hold of you, that is the time to cry out to God and allow Him to help you. Going to church and rejoicing in every service will help you rid yourself of these unwanted feelings. Praising God in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening will also help.

If you get disturbed in your spirit and are angry with someone, or if you are harboring bitterness or jealousy in your heart, it is not only necessary to ask God for His help, but you must also be willing to repent of your wrong feelings. We don't say, "Lord, forgive me," nearly enough, just as we are slow to ask forgiveness from each other.

Sometimes we begin a day well, but then something is said that rubs us the wrong way, and our day is spoiled. Many times the people who said the thing that offended us didn't even mean it the way we took it. Still we are offended. People say the most unusual and unexpected things.

Many years ago, after my Uncle Bill had ministered one night in a great meeting, a lady came up to shake hands with him. He was startled when she said, "Brother Ward, what a big nose you have!" He had just preached his heart out for an hour and prayed for the sick and ministered to the people for another hour, and all the lady could think of was how big his nose was. I believe that when she stepped in front of him, she was overcome by his

greatness and was left speechless and could only think of his face. The devil would have used that to destroy my uncle, but he took no offense by it.

What disturbs you may be just as silly as that. People often don't mean anything bad by the things they say. We need to give them the benefit of the doubt. After all, if we want everyone to give *us* the benefit of the doubt, we should be willing to do the same for others.

When we slip up and do or say something offensive, we hope that everyone will just forget it. After all, we do well most of the time. When someone else slips up, however, we are ready to make great demands on him and to exact perfection from him — or else. It works both ways, and if we insist on being unforgiving, we will not be forgiven. Jesus said it very clearly:

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Luke 6:37

There is nothing greater than being able to lay your head on the pillow at night knowing that your heart is clear, that you are holding nothing against your brothers, difficult as they might be. It has been my custom for many years now to teach our people not to allow the sun to go down on their wrath. I believe

this is one of the most important biblical principles. It is, however, just a starting place. We would do well not to hold anger even until the sun goes down.

If you feel compelled to turn your head or to look down the street or to cross the street to avoid meeting someone, or if you actually feel compelled to run the other way or excuse yourself quickly because you have something in your heart against a brother, you will not receive a full anointing from the Lord. You may have a touch of anointing, because God blesses us many times in the hope that we will do the right thing. He blesses us with the hope that His goodness will lead us to repentance. He is very merciful and does not withdraw His Spirit from us because we offend each other. But ... He will not give us His richest anointings unless we see that His great plan, His great purpose, is for *all* mankind.

Some believers notice that they are not being blessed as they once were, and many times it is easy to see why. Any bitterness, any anger, any lack of love, will impede the flow of the anointing.

It is easy to simply dismiss people as being too difficult to deal with, but God doesn't want us to do that. Our inheritance is directly connected with the inheritance of others in the Body of Christ. I cannot expect to enter alone and receive a great reward. My reward is linked to the whole family. I am a co-inheritor with you, and you with me. I must see to it

that you make it in, just as you must care about my making it as well.

God wants a spiritual people who use Calvary as their example. Calvary is about mercy and forgiveness, and as Christ loved us and demonstrated that love for us, so we should love one another.

We would be glad to love people if they changed their ways, but Christ loved us when we were not only sinners; we were enemies of the cross. Still, He died for us. He is teaching us to deal with difficult people, and He will help us when we cannot help ourselves.

I often find myself singing the chorus, "I need You, Lord, more than yesterday." Others are singing, "I need Thee every hour." We might wait for thirty years for some of our friends to change, and they may never change, but we can change so that what they do no longer bothers us. God is calling us to do it or risk losing His great promises for our lives.

One of the things I have appreciated so much about the Charismatic movement is that it has endeavored to include everyone. While I happen to have come from a strong Pentecostal background, I can say that I respect the Charismatics for their policy of inclusion. Our God is not exclusive; He is inclusive. When any group of Christians develop an exclusivity, they are no longer flowing in God's order.

“For God so loved the world ...” He always includes. He reaches out and finds the one who is lost. He has included us all in His great plan of glory and power. His desire is that none should perish, *“but that all should come to repentance.”* His desire is that none should be excluded, but that all should be included in the glory. That’s why the prophet Isaiah said:

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:9

Peter the Apostle taught:

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Acts 10:34-35

In his revelation on the Isle of Patmos, John learned:

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Revelation 21:24

Whole nations will be saved. That is almost beyond our ability to comprehend, but God said it would be so. During the revival of these last days, we will see oceans of people declaring for the first time that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. If you are unprepared to accept these people as members of your family, ask God to help you now.

Chapter 6

Barriers to Unity

“I Am of Apollos!”

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

There are many thousands of doctrinal and denominational divisions within Christianity that present barriers to unity. It seems strange, but those who have been saved longer are the ones who have difficulty understanding the new things God is doing. Those who are from a certain background find it difficult to believe what God is doing among their people. For instance, one Jewish brother in Jerusalem was thrilled when he heard what God was doing among the Catholics and how God was blessing various Protestant denominations. When we suggested to him, however, that we pray together at the Wailing Wall and believe God for the salvation of the Jews, he got so angry that he actually got out of the car and left us. He couldn't understand how the Jews could be blessed, even though he was a Jew and God had done it for him.

Many who have come out of the Catholic Church at some point find it hard to believe that God is working among Catholics, and those who came out of various Protestant denominations struggle to be-

lieve that revival is coming to their former churches. Isn't that strange? It took a work of the Holy Ghost to bring every one of us into this place of glory, so why should we find it difficult to believe that He is able to bring others in also? Are we so much better than they? Of course not.

Some of those who were kicked out of their churches because they wanted to have liberty in the Spirit now find it difficult to believe that God is working in those same churches. Haven't we been praying for that to happen? If we have been asking God to do it, why should we be surprised to see that He is answering our prayers? Persecutors often got saved in Bible days, just as Saul of Tarsus was totally changed. Why should we limit God today?

The problem seems to be that a person knows his own groups too well. He knows their every fault and failure, so he finds it difficult to believe that they are being saved. This focus is wrong. It must not be on the church or on the people and on their failures; it must be on the Lord, on His ability, and on His promises. Why should we be surprised with anything He does? He is the God of the impossible, so let Him do impossible things.

Some people have a genuine passion for missions. They can make room in their hearts and love passionately the people of many other countries. When it comes to their next-door neighbors, however, or

the members of their own church, they simply cannot accept them. They know them too well. They can sing, shout, dance and rejoice over what God is doing somewhere else, but when it comes to believing God to do it in their own town, that's something altogether different. Why is that? God makes no such distinctions. He has called us to give the same care, the same concern, for every member of His Body.

During the time we were worshiping in the Catholic church on Mt. Zion, some people in the city wouldn't think of coming to the church. I am sorry to say that in the dawning days of a new millennium many people still have this same narrow attitude.

In our ministry in Jerusalem we reach out to Arabs, Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Armenians, Syrians, Orthodox and Greeks alike. Other ministries sometimes think of them in negative terms. We try to see all of God's people as He sees them and to recognize that they are just as much a part of His plan of redemption as we are.

The coming of the Lord is so near. Do we dare risk Him coming to find us hating or distrusting others? Do we dare risk Him coming to find us divided and working against each other? I think not.

My background did not prepare me in any way for this ministry to all people. When I went out as a missionary to Hong Kong in the late 1950s, I had never attended any church other than a Pentecostal

one (except for a funeral). I had never been to an interfaith meeting, had never heard of a united prayer meeting, and had never been in an interdenominational church meeting. The change in my own life came about through a divine working of the Holy Ghost within me. God can do it and *will* do it for each of us, if we can gain a desire for it through an appreciation for the whole Body of Christ.

Before going overseas, the only hymnal I knew was our Pentecostal hymnal. God was beginning to move among the historic churches, however, and I embraced that move. Since then, my life has been enriched with Episcopalian hymns, Presbyterian hymns, Baptist hymns and many others. I love to sing some of the Orthodox songs and the Catholic Charismatic songs. Thank God for the privilege of sharing with brothers and sisters of many other groups. All of God's children are wonderful.

People have attended our camp and gone away saying, "We can accept the leadership of this camp, but we cannot accept many of the people who attend." What a statement! As far as I am concerned, any individual who would say such a thing needs to get to the altar and get more of God. That's not a compliment to us. It's an insult to God.

Sometimes a woman chooses not to follow through with her wedding plans because she learns that the man she is engaged to marry doesn't like her family. These women (or men, as the case might be) are

wise to realize that such a relationship cannot work in the long run. If we love someone, it is imperative that we learn to love their whole family.

Some ladies choose to overlook this bad attitude in their men and go ahead with the marriage. This is a serious mistake. We are part of a family, and if people don't like our family, it is difficult for us to maintain a proper relationship over time. My body is not a finger or a hand. I cannot separate some part of it and expect it to work properly. My hand is part of the whole.

We Pentecostals have been prone to criticize those who use a prayer book to pray, but as I have gotten to know some of those who use that method of prayer, I have found that they also touch the heart of God. It makes no difference how we have been taught to pray. It is the intent of the heart and the sincere desire for God to which He responds.

Some have been taught to pray kneeling, and that's the only way they can touch God. Some have been taught to stand and pray with hands lifted before the Lord, and that's the way they need to pray. Some people like to stretch out on their face and pray, and that's fine. There is biblical precedent for all of these types of prayer.

Some people prefer to pray with other people in groups, while others prefer to pray alone. Both are

wonderful. I love to pray driving the car, riding on the plane, and walking down the street. God is looking for a people of communion and fellowship, and we need to stop judging others because they don't pray exactly like we do. Rise above these petty concerns and recognize that God is working through a great variety of people everywhere.

In every great revival, God has raised up a group of people who were willing to work together. They realized that it made no difference what denomination they belonged to. As the revival faded, however, those very people have often formed their own new denominations because they could not find others with whom they totally agreed. This pattern has been repeated over and over again, complicating our relationships as believers. I love the chorus we sometimes sing:

*I don't care what church you belong to
Just as long as for Calvary you stand.
If your heart is as my heart,
You're my brother.
So, give me your hand.*

God is calling us to rise up to a greater consciousness of His family and to become concerned with the welfare of the whole family. This was

Jesus' prayer, His heart, His will: *"That they all may be one."*

Periodically, one American evangelist will attack another and will do it publicly. These things ought not to be. Why is it that we cannot be wise like politicians? If they can say, "It would not be wise for me to comment on that situation," why can't we say the same thing? If the President's press secretary can say, "No comment," why can't we learn to do it too?

When President Ronald Reagan's press secretary, Larry Speaks, was conducting his final press conference, the newsmen who had covered him had composed a little song in his honor. It said: "How many ways can you say, 'No comment?' Nine thousand, nine hundred, and ninety-nine." Oh that the church would learn this same gift of silence!

When people ask us, "What do you think about ...?" we feel that we always have to offer an opinion. Why is that? We never seem to run out of opinions. It is time to put some of our opinions on the altar and let them be consumed with the fire of sacrifice. "No comment!" That would be the best answer we could give to many questions we are asked these days.

I know it's fun to express an opinion and nice to have people think highly of us for our opinions, but there is a higher way in God. It is the way of love, and we cannot walk in it without the help of the Lover of our souls.

There is no more serious sin in these days than hurting each other. Jesus said:

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matthew 18:6

It is necessary to walk very softly before the Lord in this regard and to guard our lips to keep from displeasing Him. David prayed:

Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

Psalm 141:3

For many years I felt that I was pretty liberated in this regard, having worked since the early 1960s with the people of what later became known as the Charismatic Renewal. I surely didn't realize that there was still an area of prejudice in my heart ... until ...

There was a very fine family with a different doctrinal position living in Jerusalem. I thought that it didn't bother me. I was always good to them, and if we could help them in any way, I was glad to do it. When I went back to Jerusalem from one of my trips to America and discovered that one of our main peo-

ple had been spending more time with this family than usual, it bothered me.

When I realized what I was feeling, I had to shake myself and ask, “Why should this disturb me? I wasn’t changing my own beliefs to agree with their doctrinal position, but I was reminding myself that no matter what different doctrine another believer holds, I should still have an open heart, an open face and an open spirit to be able to embrace that one with the love of God in Christ Jesus.

When any of us discover that we still harbor ill will toward other believers in some area, we should immediately ask the Spirit of God to give us an enlargement of heart so that we can reach out and embrace all people. When confronted with all these barriers to unity, each one of us must ask our God, the God of mercy and peace, to deliver us from them.

As we experience more of this present move of God and see Him doing the totally unexpected, He is calling us to lose our tendency to criticize and condemn those who are not like us. Jesus Himself said:

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned.

John 3:17-18

If God doesn’t condemn a man, who are we to do it? Jesus was the friend of publicans and sinners, and

probably many Christian organizations would have shunned Him because of it. How limited we have become in our thinking in this generation! What small hearts we have! God is calling us to be enlarged, and it is only His glory that can effect this change in us. "From glory to glory, He's changing me."

You would think that our recent success in the ministry would draw us together, but success does not necessarily bring unity. When we are successful, in fact, it seems only to divide us further. If we are successful, we don't feel the need for each other, so we allow ourselves to drift apart even more.

Success makes us feel that we can be independent rather than being dependent on one another as God has ordained. It is time to get out the iron and press all the wrinkles out of the bridal garment. Time is short, and this is God's hour to unite.

Chapter 7

The Enemy of Unity

“The Thief Cometh Not, But for to Steal, and to Kill, and to Destroy!”

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

The divisive spirit at work against the Church has come from the very pit of Hell. Satan loves nothing more than to turn brother against brother, sister against sister, church against church, and community against community. This is his work. He is “*the accuser of our brethren,*” and he accuses us before God and man “*day and night*” (Revelation 12:10).

When we begin to get the revelation of how precious unity is and how the lack of it can adversely affect our anointing, the enemy will start fighting

us with all his strength. When we speak about unity and try to encourage unity, he will try in every way he can to cause us to back down. We must not pay him any attention. If our heart is united with the Lord, and we are determined to be united with our brothers, God will honor us for our position, and the enemy is the one who will have to back down.

None of us is immune to the incessant attacks of the enemy. Disunity is his work, and he is faithful to it. Every time God brings us into a new place of anointing, a new place of revelation, or a new place of experiencing the glory of God, the enemy of unity is determined that we will not go to bed with what we have received. He wants to stop our progress now, before we go any further, so he will always have someone present to say something or do something to agitate our spirits so that he can steal away that which God has given us.

Each of us must make a conscious decision not to allow this to happen. If we want to know and have the glory of God manifested in our lives, if we want to live in it and move in it, we need to allow the Spirit of God to cause the walls of partition, the barriers to fellowship between brothers, to fall. Just as we defeat Satan in every other aspect of our private and public lives, we must overcome him in the area of fellowship (or lack of fellowship) as well.

As ministers, we are responsible before God to be careful about what we preach and how we preach it so that we do not deliberately offend God's little ones. We are also responsible for our pulpits and must ask God to help us in choosing those to whom we give opportunity to speak. If men and women are contentious and lacking in appreciation for one another, they have no reason to be in our pulpits.

Once we take this initiative, we can be assured that the devil will throw everything he can in our way. He hates the very thought of unity. He will go to any extreme to divide brothers. We are "*more than conquerors through Christ*," however, and as we overcome temptations to sin, we can also overcome the temptations that lead us to disunity.

Most of the time, there is absolutely no logic to the things the enemy uses to divide us. When we have counseling sessions with couples in troubled marriages, the things they speak of that are threatening to tear them apart sometimes sound totally absurd to the rest of us. Don't be surprised by this, and don't write these people off as immature for having those thoughts. This is the way the enemy works on us all.

When someone with whom you are having a conflict tells you what is bothering him, it may sound like the most foolish thing you have ever heard, totally void of logic. Realize that this is the enemy's tactic and that he is good at what he does.

Couples are separated, families are separated, churches are separated and business partners are separated for some very foolish reasons. The fact that it doesn't make sense to risk such important relationships for such foolish reasons shows us that an evil force is at work. This is Satan's business. He loves to hurt, confuse and frustrate us, and there is no better way to do it than through the ones we love.

When I went out to live in Hong Kong as a teenager, I stayed with a missionary lady named Beulah Watters. Looking back on it now, I can say that anyone who is willing to take an eighteen-year-old to live with them in a foreign mission field deserves a medal. It wouldn't matter who the eighteen-year-old was. What's more, anyone who takes any new missionary, regardless of age, to live with them in a foreign mission field deserves praise. For someone to be willing to be tested with new people so that they can grow is a very great thing. I thank God that Beulah Watters gave me the opportunity to live with her in Hong Kong.

At first, I was very grateful to her, but before long I was bothered by some of her ways. One thing in particular irritated me. Beulah had the habit of licking her spoon after she stirred her coffee. It was such a small thing, but the devil magnified it until I almost despised her for it. Every time she stirred her coffee I cringed, knowing what was coming.

The problem was with me, not her. I allowed the devil to torment me over something that meant absolutely nothing.

Later, every time I went to Hong Kong I went to visit Beulah and took her out to the Peninsula Hotel, the finest in town, for afternoon tea. There we sat together and listened to the orchestra playing as we drank a cup of tea or coffee together. When she stirred her drink, she still licked her spoon, just like she always had. It didn't bother me anymore. She hadn't changed, but I had.

Often I invited other friends, many of them rich and sophisticated, to join the two of us for coffee. Some of these were millionaires, but I was never ashamed of my friend Beulah Watters. I introduced her to everyone in the group, and they listened attentively as she told her great missionary stories. She was our guest of honor. Isn't it sad that we allow such petty things to affect us and almost rob us?

The world around us is filled with strife. I am saddened when I see our politicians publicly turning on one another, especially at election times. What America needs is for all our public representatives to stand together. A spirit of confrontation now typifies much of our common culture, and it is not healthy. It's not hard to understand. The master of strife is clearly behind it all, but that doesn't make it any less sad.

The strife among nations that fills the headlines these days is often unfathomable to observers. The roots of such conflicts are deep and so extensive that it often takes many years to resolve them. We can be assured that the enemy of our souls is behind it all. This is his work.

While these things can be expected of the world around us, these things should not be true among Christians. We are not of this world, but of a different Kingdom. We have been translated out of the darkness of this world and into the light of the Kingdom of God's dear Son. His Kingdom is a kingdom of love, and His love flows there. So the more we know the Lord, the greater will be the love manifested in us and through us to others. The difference between the spirit of strife that prevails in the world and the love that prevails in the Church should be our greatest witness to the world.

The enemy clearly wants to see the Body all divided into parts. He loves it when a hand is lying on one side of the church and no foot wants to help it, or when an ear is cut off because it is not an eye. No wonder we cannot function! We are scattered everywhere, and there is no coordination among the individual pieces so that they all work together for the common good.

The hand may still be trying to be the hand, but if he has no foot to carry him about, there is not much

he can accomplish. This delights our enemy. He loves it. God loves unity and blesses it, while the enemy hates it and does everything he can to destroy it. Let's get the pieces together, and then the Lord can perfect us. Until the pieces are together, we are rather helpless.

It should not be a difficult thing for God's people to love one another. They are the greatest people in the world. It is only because of the work of the enemy, trying to make us notice and concentrate on each other's flaws and spots and limitations, that we fail to realize just what great people make up the Church of Jesus Christ. God has put greatness in every one of our spirits, and there are no greater people to be found anywhere than the people of God. Why is it that we have allowed the enemy to convince us otherwise?

Our enemy is subtle. He does not attack us directly, but through hints, insinuations and suggestions. It is incumbent upon us that we learn to detect his work, for if we fail to do so, we allow him to rob us of the treasures of this life in the Spirit, just because of the idiosyncrasies of some brother. We have a great treasure in the love of God that flows from heart to heart, irrespective of the weaknesses, failures or spots we may detect in others.

The reason it sometimes costs us something extra to achieve the unity we desire is that Satan, knowing

that this is God's ultimate desire and His ultimate glory, will put everything he possibly can into our minds and spirits in an attempt to rob us of the very glory that God has ordained for us. When we learn to conquer the tricks of the enemy which divide us, we can come into a place in God we have never been. To me, the secret of doing this is to recognize that it is not a person who is bothering us at the moment and disturbing our spirits, but the devil himself. This robs him of his advantage and makes an end of his subtle ploy.

There are things in all of us that are unpleasant, and if they are not immediately obvious, the enemy will make them obvious. He is a master at magnifying faults, taking something small and making it seem insurmountable. He is intent on robbing us of unity, in our homes and with our brothers, and he will use any trick to get his way. We are commanded to resist him so that the desire of the heart of Jesus, for His people to be "*one*," can be realized.

The enemy of our souls knows how very important it is for us to maintain healthy relationships with our brothers and sisters, so he attacks us in these most subtle ways. Don't take it personally. He is doing what he must do.

Satan is not our rallying cry for unity. It is sad to me to think that we can only come together if we are focusing on a common enemy. He should never be our focus. We are to unite because we have a com-

mon Lord, a common Savior, a common heavenly Father.

When Jesus prayed that His disciples would be one, He didn't mention the devil even once. He said that we should be one because He and the Father were one, not for any other reason. We are one because of the upward pull, not because there is an outward pull or a downward pull.

Anyone can adjust to the circumstances of life and respond favorably when difficulties come, but the Lord wants His work to be done in our spirits because of the glory of His presence, not because of external influences. He offers to give us oneness, and He is not pleased when that oneness only comes through some other means. Our unity must be based on Him and Him alone.

How can you overcome Satan's attempts to destroy the relationships you enjoy with your brothers and sisters in Christ? Stand up against the thief and say, "You have no right to destroy the joy I derive from my relationships. That's my strength. I simply won't let you take it. I'll fight for what is mine." Be bold. Let him know that you are determined not to let it happen.

Part III

How Can Unity Be Achieved?

Chapter 8

Get Into the Glory

“I Will Draw All Men Unto Me!”

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12:32

How can we get our eyes off each other's weaknesses and failures? How can we forget our doctrinal and denominational differences? There is only one way. Each of us must get focused on Jesus. If not, we have no hope of ever achieving unity.

Jesus told the woman at the well:

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

It is only at the point of worship, when our hearts are so involved with Jesus, when we are lifted up to God, that we can reach out to a brother or a sister without noticing the differences between us. It is only in that moment of intense concentration upon our Lord that true unity can come forth in our midst.

If each of us would focus on Jesus, the problem would be solved. God's glory comes as we worship Him, and the glory of God produces unity among brothers. Round-table discussions won't solve the problem; only the glory will. Trying to see things from our brother's point of view won't change things; only being caught up in the glory will.

When God's glory is present, we forget that we are Baptist, Methodist or Pentecostal, or which branch of Pentecostal, Charismatic or Full Gospel we belong to. We forget all the other differences as well.

Just as the glory makes us oblivious to the world, to our own personal problems and needs, and to the noise and commotion around us, it makes us oblivious to how the people sitting next to us might differ from us. When the glory comes, we are locked into a cocoon with the Lord and are totally separated unto Him. In that moment of glory, we couldn't think of a doctrinal difference even if we wanted to. We couldn't remember the things that disturb us about other people and their beliefs and customs if we wanted to.

Since it is the glory that makes us one with Christ and one with each other, we just need to learn how to come into that glory more often and to stay in it longer. We go in and out far too much.

When we get too involved in our church programs, God's glory departs. When we get too involved in the details of caring for the sheep, the glory departs. Anytime we lose our focus on the Lord, for any reason, His glory diminishes or disappears altogether. This is when the personal conflicts begin anew. As long as God and His glory are our focus, we can live in unity with one another.

Most of us have not learned well enough how to linger in the glory of God, how to take a glory bath, how to stand in God's glory and let it transform us — taking us forward “*from glory to glory*”:

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18

When the glory of God departs, we have seen churches split over a single word said the wrong way. Something is terribly wrong when this happens. It is an indication that we have not learned how to appreciate Christ's work in others, and we have not learned how important it is for each of us to strive for unity.

Does unity require agreement on every point of doctrine? Of course not. Agreement on every point of doctrine is impossible. It will never happen in this lifetime. Still, any moment that we are each focused upon the Lord and worshiping Him, there is unity — despite our doctrinal differences. When we look into the face of Jesus, we're not thinking about a doctrine. We're just thinking how we can praise Him better.

Some of the points we get so distressed over just don't matter in the light of eternity. The important thing is that we experience an eternal glory and are changed and help others to be changed. Once we have felt that touch of eternity, so many of the little things that disturb us down here suddenly pale in significance.

Far too often, our arguments over doctrinal issues place upon us a spirit of heaviness. It is time to cast off that heaviness and to put on the garment of praise. Why let the enemy weigh you down with anything? The only weight we want to feel in these days is *"the weight of glory."* We don't need to be held back by anything else. Let your vessel be filled with the smoke of God's glory, not with the acrimony of debate.

In His prayer, Jesus said:

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.

John 17:24

Our ultimate goal is to spend eternity in Heaven with God, but this is not what Jesus is saying here. Even before we get to Heaven, He wants us to live in the realm of His glory, the realm of His presence. To be with Him where He is means to feel His heart-beat and to give importance to the things that are important to Him.

He is standing just above you, and His great eternal horn is tipped. The oil is there, and it is just about to come out. Stop letting petty things impede the flow of God's holy oil. Move aside those things that prevent it from falling on you. Let it come down freely. Stand in it. Rejoice in it. Bathe in it. Be changed by it. Be delivered by it. Become "one" with your brothers, through the flow of the glory of God.

Just being together does not necessarily mean we are in unity. We can all be singing the same song and dancing the same dance and still be far from united in the Spirit. When this is true, God cannot bless us as He desires. Being together in the glory is the secret.

Most people experience the glory that brings unity when they receive a powerful prophetic word. As God speaks to them directly, and they are conscious of a new touch of glory coming upon their lives, there is a melting that takes place. Mountains suddenly melt and flow down because of the presence of God — not to mention all the smaller hills. In the afterglow of that moment, they find themselves

strangely free of any condemnation of their brothers.

Oh that this feeling would last much longer!

Get into the glory and know the unity it brings.

Chapter 9

Stop Expecting Perfection of Others

“Be Thou Perfect!”

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. Genesis 17:1

None of us has yet reached perfection. I know that God called Abraham to walk “*perfect*” before Him, and we, too, are called to strive for perfection, but we all know that we are far from perfect right now and that God has much to accomplish in each of us. He is not finished with us yet. He is still working on us, so don’t despair. We will arrive at perfection. In the meantime, however, His desire is that we learn to love one another — imperfect as we may be.

“But don’t you suppose,” I imagine someone asking, “that those Old Testament saints were much easier to live with than the people we have to deal with every day?” No, I don’t think they were. Those men and women may have done exploits, but that doesn’t mean they didn’t have some idiosyncrasies and that some of them didn’t get up in the morning on the wrong side of the bed, just like you and me. They were all human beings, and human beings are imperfect.

When I was just a teenager, I met great missionaries living abroad and my heart was challenged. At the altar of our camp, God gave me a love for the Chinese people. It happened in a moment. It was supernatural and life-changing and it remains with me to this day. As many have, I felt compelled to leave my parents and my country to go and minister to the Chinese people.

However, when we actually meet in the flesh the people God has called us to, it is often very different than when we felt the burden for them in the Spirit. We find that they are not always well-mannered people. Their culture is different, and their habits are different. They may do things we have never seen, and many things about them may seem to us to be crude and “uncivilized.”

What’s more, they don’t think like we think. We imagine that everybody thinks just like Virginians,

North Carolinians or the people from wherever else we happen to be from. They don't. People of each part of the world have their own way of thinking, and it is often totally different from ours.

This often offends us, and suddenly the very people we loved enough to leave everything we counted dear behind and to make the long trip to their country, the people we were ready to give our lives for, begin to grate on our nerves, and we actually find ourself starting to hate them. I have seen this pattern develop over and over again in many countries. God often has to send revival to missionaries to give them a new love for the people they are sent to bless, and it's because those people are not easy to love. They are far from perfect.

This same thing happens in our own campground in Ashland, Virginia. When visitors first come, they are so impressed seeing those who serve, those who lead the worship, those who faithfully play the instruments, those who operate the sound equipment and the video cameras, and those who speak and minister to the people. They say, "How I love that brother! The way he leads songs is extraordinary. He is so gifted of God." After a week or so at camp, however, when they are washing dishes beside that same brother, they begin to look at him quite differently. What he does now begins to rub them the wrong way. What they felt when he was on the platform

leading the worship is totally different from what they now feel while they're doing dishes together, driving nails together or cutting grass together.

If we're not careful, we can easily allow the enemy to rob us of the treasures of friends and fellowship in the Spirit just because of the idiosyncrasies of some brother. God is the only perfect one I have met, but He has commanded me to love my brothers — despite their imperfections. Love must flow from heart to heart, regardless of people's weaknesses, failures or spots.

I know that some people are very strange and have very strange ideas, but if Jesus loves them, then I can too. If Jesus died for them, then the least I can do is reach out to embrace them as my brothers. God's Spirit was given to us, not because we were already perfect, but to do a work of perfection in us. Stop demanding perfection of others and give them time to mature.

Many of our brothers are in the same process of spiritual development that we are in. They may be at different stages than we are, and there may be something they believe or do which seems foolish or unnecessary to us. Still, there may be things that we believe or do that seem foolish or unnecessary to them. We think they are strange, but they may think exactly the same thing about us. They're not perfect yet, but neither are we, and if we wait to join hands

with others until we find perfect people, we may be waiting a very long time.

Some of our brothers may not understand all the Bible doctrines yet. That's normal. The Spirit of God was given to us to lead us into all truth, not because we have already understood everything. While some of our brothers don't understand every truth yet, we don't either. If God has been faithful to teach us until now, will He not be faithful to teach another as well?

Hear the cry of Jesus: *"That they all may be one!"* God commands His blessings upon us when we make an effort to achieve unity — even with those who are different and even with those who are far from perfect.

Sometimes we wait for people to be changed before we can appreciate them. God wants us to be able to reach out and embrace them with His love — in their imperfection. This is how He has loved us:

*God commendeth his love toward us, in that,
WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS,
Christ died for us.* Romans 5:8

God loved you before you even started down the road to perfection. Should you not love those who are already on this journey?

Chapter 10

Don't Allow Doctrine to Divide You

“Live Peaceably With All Men”

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Romans 12:18

What we believe often becomes the basis of our separation from other brothers. Our beliefs, our particular doctrinal point of view, is often the reason behind our aligning ourselves into denominational groups. While it is difficult to say anything against believing, what we believe must not become a tool for Satan's desire against the Church.

Although others do not believe exactly as we do, if they believe in the precious blood of Jesus and they love our Lord, we can work together with them for His glory. We may find many points of difference in what they believe, but in every great

revival God has taken very dissimilar people and brought them, through the Spirit, into a place where they could worship Him together and reap together in His harvest field.

Sometimes our beliefs are not as different as we might think. Some people use different terminology because they come from a different background and have a different understanding of the meaning of words. You can argue doctrine with them all you want, but you will only worsen the situation, causing the breach to be wider. Our constant arguments about every point of doctrine surely sadden the Father's heart. His will is that we not let doctrine divide us.

What should we do when people begin to argue doctrine? We should become experts at changing the subject. Offer everyone a cup of tea. Show everyone the beautiful view of the mountain from the window. Do something, anything to divert people's attention from the potentially divisive issue at hand. If you want unity, you will learn to do it. Having lived in Jerusalem these many years, I became adept at changing the conversation in order to maintain peace when there were many points of view represented by those who were present.

Some Christians want to be known and remembered as people of pure doctrine and impeccably

correct teaching, and it seems hard to criticize that. However, if we insist on purity of doctrine at the expense of fellowship, we have done damage to the Body of Christ and hurt the heart of God. In the end, we may be right doctrinally, but if we have hurt our brothers, we will be wrong, and the glory of God that comes with greater unity will not rest upon our heads.

It doesn't matter who is right, and who is wrong. By the time the argument is all over, we usually forget what it was we were arguing about in the first place. And all we have left is the sense of loss and pain.

When we forget our doctrinal differences and work together in the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, in a moment's time, can wash away every hurt, every wound, everything that has divided or separated one from the other. We are the Body of Christ. Nothing must be allowed to divide us.

When God began to pour out His Spirit upon the denominational churches many years ago, some of the Pentecostals (who had enjoyed these blessing for many years already) sat back with a pharisaical attitude and said, "If God wants to send revival, He will do it at our place, not over there." God, however, does it when and where He wants to do it. He pours His Spirit out upon the hungry, not upon those who are doctrinally correct. His Word declares:

*For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge
of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the
sea.*

Habakkuk 2:14

No one has a copyright on God's glory. His Spirit will be poured out everywhere, on everyone who is thirsty. Stop trying to deny this truth and get yourself joined to God's chariot.

Christians who don't know much about the Bible are often much more open to unity with all members of the Body of Christ than those who do. When we only know a few verses of the Scriptures, we have an open and loving spirit. We recognize that if God loved us and changed us, anyone can be saved. We have a very simple faith. We lay hands on the sick and miracles are performed.

As we learn more and more truths from the Bible, we run the risk of closing our spirits to those who don't know as much as we do. We begin to feel elitist and somehow accept the lie of the enemy that because we know Bible doctrines and others don't, we're somehow better than they are and God somehow loves us more than He does them. People who fall into this trap even lose the simplicity of their joy and first love, and they are not nearly as pleasant to be around as they formerly were. This is a tragedy!

Somehow, when we have filled our minds with doctrines, there is not as much of God in our spirits. This should not be!

After a while, instead of reaching out to all those around us, we are looking carefully to see if they measure up to God's requirements (or what we perceive as God's requirements). Instead of flowing in the Spirit, we are soon caught up in infighting with our brothers over their varied points of view. May God help us!

Unity is of the Spirit. It has nothing to do with doctrine. I am able to have fellowship with people who don't see end times as I do, and I can love them and minister among them. We each love the Lord and focus on worshiping Him, and that is the important thing. We don't have to agree on every detail of future events in order to enjoy the presence of God together.

I am not concerned about the denominational label someone carries or whether there is a denominational label. God's desire is to have a people with greatness of spirit. That is our heritage in His family. When we fall short of this goal, we must ask the Lord to put greatness within us. That greatness is the glory that He had with the Father, and He has agreed to share it with us.

We made it our policy many years ago never to ask the many people coming to Jerusalem to visit

and worship with us to what denomination they belonged. Sometimes it came out in a conversation about where they were from, but we never made an issue of it. It's not important to God.

We were definitely interested in what nation people were from and what city of the world, but what denomination was immaterial to us and to God. He is breaking down denominational barriers and uniting us in the Spirit. His anointing oil causes us to "*sit together in heavenly places,*" without feeling frustrated that we "have to" sit together, and without being agitated about being together in the same room.

Human relationships are complicated, and some people simply cannot live together in the same house, let alone in the same room, but God can do what is difficult or even impossible. He has an oil that can soothe every hurt. It can relax every frazzled nerve. It can heal every break in relationships. God's Spirit can make us one.

It is this holy anointing oil that brings us into the place that we can flow together to the unity of the Spirit of God. We can strive for it to happen and nothing will result, but when we join together to worship the Lord, God brings forth His glory in the midst of the congregation.

We are all members of the Body of Christ. Let the Spirit of God work this truth into your soul. It is powerful, and it can bring you great freedom and release.

Demos Shakarian, a California dairyman, was uniquely used of God in the revival of the 1950s and 60s to create a businessmen's organization, the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, that crossed all denominational lines and barriers, not only here in the United States, but throughout the world. Under the banner of love, businessmen reached out to businessmen, bringing them into the revelation of Jesus as Savior and baptizer in the Holy Ghost. Oh, the glory that was evident in those meetings, as denominational walls fell down and people of diverse backgrounds became one in the Spirit!

Similarly, my late friend David DuPlessis was used by God to go to the World Council of Churches and introduce the baptism of the Holy Spirit to church leaders there. He was also sent by God to the Ecumenical Council at the Vatican in Rome as a Pentecostal observer. Both of these actions were considered nearly heretical by many fine Christians, but God was using these men as *"repairer[s] of the breach"* and *"restorer[s] of paths to dwell in."*

If we truly desire to be *"fitly joined together,"* the power of the Holy Ghost is present to do a work in us. It is not something that we need to do ourselves, nor something that we *can* do ourselves, but He will do it for us.

When we recognize the will of God and strive to bring it to pass, this wonderful promise is ours.

“Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.”

Overcoming obstacles to relationship with God and man: this is what the life of Christ is all about. And it leaves behind a joy that remains and a fruitfulness that remains and is multiplied through the love of God spread abroad in our hearts.

We cannot do it in ourselves, but thank God for His grace. We all get in circumstances where we say, “A little more grace, Lord. Help me, Jesus. A little more grace, Lord. A lot more glory, Lord.” It’s not that we have attained, but we’re pressing toward the mark of the prize for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

When we allow doctrinal differences to agitate our spirits, it doesn’t matter if we are right and the other person is wrong. We are never right when we have an agitated spirit. The cause may be right, but the feelings we permit the cause to evoke in us are wrong before God and will keep our hearts from being pure in His sight. How can love flow from a bitter spirit?

Many of the petty arguments we get involved in are little more than *“vain janglings”* as far as the Kingdom of God is concerned. It is very possible that a certain brother has not been baptized in water exactly as we have, but if his heart is the same as ours, who are we to judge him? He may love Jesus just as much as we do, but possibly he has never

been taught or has never received the same revelation concerning water baptism. That doesn't make him any less than another. Don't allow these minor things to divide you any longer.

That brother whom you perceive to be in false doctrine may be much further along in other aspects of his Christian life than you and may indeed be able to see lack in your life as well. Pray that he will be patient with you and give you time to grow, and you be careful to do the same with him.

If God has touched the life of any person, who are you to question it? If you can't respect the person, respect God in the person's life. Appreciate the work of Calvary that has given that person the opportunity to claim salvation, and let nothing prevent you from reaching out to him and embracing him in the Lord.

I often hear people say, "I wouldn't mind having fellowship with that brother so much if his doctrine wasn't so terrible." Forget about his doctrine. Some of my greatest friends have unbelievable doctrine. God is changing them, but in the meantime, He is changing me and making me willing to enjoy my friends while they are being changed.

Unity is not intellectual; it doesn't depend on intellectual agreement; it is supernatural and depends only on the glory of God. Learn to love those who have different doctrinal positions from yours.

When we are in the glory, we no longer care what our brother believes. We are much more concerned

about all the finer points than God seems to be. Give the Spirit free rein by pushing doctrinal arguments aside.

When we are all together worshipping the Lord, there is a wonderful anointing and we feel a great love for one another. Just as quickly as we begin to teach any biblical doctrine, however, we begin to anger each other. That's not to say that we can avoid teaching all biblical doctrines, but the Bible does clearly teach us to avoid, when at all possible, things that we know bring division:

*But foolish and unlearned questions avoid,
knowing that they do gender strifes.*

2 Timothy 2:23

Unity does not mean thinking alike or reaching agreement on these issues. Unity reflects our common love of the Lord and our dedication to His family. It is one thing to sit around a table and discuss viewpoints, and it is another thing entirely to let God work His love into the depths of our spirits. Without that miracle, the talking is often counterproductive. It only serves to highlight our differences.

The question of sanctification is one that divides many brothers and sisters. All I know is that Paul wrote "*I die daily*" (1 Corinthians 15:31). As I get more and more into the Spirit, my flesh is disappearing

and the character of the Lord is emerging in me. I will leave the rest of the theological argument to those who enjoy such discussion. I want to concentrate on Jesus and the revival of these last times.

At some point, each of us must decide that unity is so important we don't care if people say "ain't." We can love them just the same. We can love people who cannot pronounce their words correctly. We can love people who use the wrong tense with their verbs. We can love people who confuse "two," "too" and "to."

Of course we can. What is more important? That people know the difference between "am not" and "ain't" or that the Kingdom of God be built on the Earth? What is more important — that men and women learn to pronounce every word correctly or that we be "*fitly joined together*" in love and harmony for eternal purposes? It is time to decide what is important in life and to leave the nonessentials.

What we need in this hour is more glory, not endless arguments about each point of doctrine. We are the living creatures of the Book of Ezekiel, and the living creatures were joined together, not at the head but at the wings, the place of soaring. Stop trying to get everyone to think exactly as you do. The unity God is looking for does not come on the intellectual level.

My parents, as great as they both were in God, had differences of opinion over the finer points of certain doctrinal issues. This did not cause them to divorce,

however; it did not break up our family; and it did not prevent them from working together in harmony in the ministry. We will never all agree perfectly until we get to Heaven. Then we will all know the full truth, and there will be no disagreement. If we allow ourselves to get carried away with our many disagreements down here, some of us might find that our disregard for the unity of the Body of Christ has prevented us from even getting into Heaven. God is serious about this matter.

As long as you and I are down here, walking around in this finite body and with our finite minds, we will never be able to convince everyone of our viewpoint. That fact, however, must not prevent us from being “*one*” in Christ.

Forget the things that separate you from one another. If you will do it, if you will come together in unity, you will see a new anointing released upon your life, one that God is longing to pour out upon you. And you will stand in the *Unifying Glory*.

Chapter 11

If Necessary, Sacrifice Correction for the Sake of Unity

“Blessed Are the Merciful!”

*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain
mercy.* Matthew 5:7

God is calling us to be a people of mercy in these days. We are so zealous to defend the name of the Lord and His honor that we sometimes come across to those who need Him as unloving and uncaring. Zeal can be overdone. We are so zealous for righteousness that we feel we must trumpet the sins of men from the mountaintop. God has not called us to spread the sins of men but to lift up Jesus. He is very capable of doing the rest of the work Himself.

An overzealousness that becomes a spirit of criticism and correction is one of the tools the enemy

uses to discourage and divide us. We can be so corrective that we destroy the very life of Christ that is springing forth in a person's life.

During one of my trips to Australia, the Lord spoke to me something that He'd never said to me before. Often the ministry to the ministries outside of the pulpit was more important than my ministry in the pulpit. If I could help someone see how to lead a service better or give them some other such advice and counsel, it was my joy to do it. My intention had always been to help God's people have more success in the things of the Spirit. Now the Lord said to me, "I don't want you to advise or correct anyone outside of the pulpit. If I have any advice or correction for you to give, I will give it to you while you are speaking to the people in public. I want you to just be a friend to ministers across the nation this time. They have enough people correcting them, telling them what to do and how it should be done. You be their friend."

I obeyed this word, working my way from Sydney all the way across to Perth without ever saying a corrective word or giving a piece of advice to any individual or ministry when I was outside the pulpit, and I noticed a fresh and new attitude among the people I was with. We can become so corrective and so "helpful" that we stifle the flow of the Spirit of God in people's lives. By our critical spirits, however

well-intentioned, we can frustrate the flow of love in relationships.

People who are overzealous in this way always have the excuse “But I do it in love.” That may be true, but the person receiving your advice or correction does not always have the same ability to receive it in love that you have of giving it in love. When this is true, what you mean for good can become harmful to others, rather than good. God wants us to do things that foster unity in the Spirit.

We sometimes caution people so much about the use of the gifts that they never flow in them. They can miss great anointed moments by hesitating too long because we have urged them too much to be careful. Rather, we should encourage them to trust the Holy Spirit and step out boldly in Him.

I know that people are sometimes not doing the correct thing. I know they are not always walking in the correct way. I also know that it is wrong for us to get agitated about it. The Lord knows how to take care of people, even the most difficult ones.

God wants to bring us into a place of confidence in Him so that we can turn all these things over to Him and allow Him to work them out. Too many times what we believe is righteous indignation or the Spirit moving us to speak out about some situation is just the enemy wanting us to react to that situation. If he knows that he cannot get a reaction from us and thus

upset what God is doing by disturbing our spirits, he will pull back. If he knows that he can stir us up and keep us agitated, he will keep on doing whatever it is that affects us in this way.

Some ministers today have a hardness to their spirits that is not helpful. I sometimes hear them ranting and raving about something or other on radio or television, and it often seems to me that much of what they are saying is fairly unnecessary. I find this hardness of spirit so offensive that I am often compelled to turn them off. This hardness of spirit is not what we need in this hour.

Some ministers are so intent on attacking sin in their sermons that they actually begin to attack the people who commit the sin. Jesus loved sinners and taught us to love them too. He bled and died for sinners, and if He hadn't, you and I would be lost in our sins. It saddens the Lord when we turn our attack against the very people who need our help. Instead of lifting them up, we are sometimes pushing them further down. Instead of bringing them a cure, we are sometimes finishing them off, dealing them a final blow. It is well and good to oppose sin and the author of sin, but when we start opposing people, we hurt the heart of God. He died to save the very people we are attacking, and He is calling for us to display mercy.

We Pentecostals have been guilty at times of being very judgmental. There is such a fire and fervor in

our faith that sometimes we have turned it on the sinner or on those who are not exactly like us. The fire and fervor of God are not to be used against men but against our true enemy. The fact that we are against sin can never be an excuse for being against the sinner. It is Satan against whom we war, not against flesh and blood. Jesus was fierce in battle against Satan, but He was tender in service to men and women everywhere. There was no spirit of condemnation in Him.

Those in positions of church leadership are often guilty of concentrating on correction at the expense of unity. Even people in the congregation get caught up in this spirit. Sometimes I get notes sent up to me from people in the congregations where I preach. I usually open the notes excitedly, expecting to see a message of love and encouragement. I am sometimes disappointed. Sometimes people in the congregation, rather than concentrate on the good things God is doing, feel compelled to criticize something. I feel sorry for people like that.

Some seem to have “a gift of criticism.” They feel that it is their job in life to correct everyone else. They find fault with the way you talk, with the way you conduct yourself, with something — anything. They have “the gift of insult,” and they’re not happy unless they are pointing out the failures of others.

Many people don’t require correction at all. What they need is to be held and loved. Let the Spirit flow,

and don't do anything that will stop it from flowing. Sometimes it is better to let a matter go at the moment. It may be something that you would normally rather correct quickly before it has a chance to get worse, but you must consider the consequences. Don't take corrective action if it means breaking the flow of the Spirit of God. God Himself can do much more corrective work than we give Him credit for. He said:

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:19-21

When God takes corrective action, He does it so beautifully and so completely. His glory among us is to make us "one," and we must be careful not to hinder the work of unity He is performing.

Sometimes just holding your peace does more to create unity than anything else. Keeping silence may be the most spiritual thing you can do in certain circumstances. "But they asked for my advice," someone may say. That may be true, but we don't

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have to tell people everything we are thinking at the moment. Let God give you some edifying and comforting words to say, instead of the thoughts you were about to express. Speak words of faith. Speak words of reconciliation. Declare the goodness of the Lord. Refuse to get caught up in people's arguments. Do the things that promote unity. Be the peacemaker.

You may not feel that this is important, but unity is like the ditch-digging part of coming into the glory. When the ditches are in place, the glory will flow.

When Jesus was confronted with the woman caught in adultery, all the evidence was there. The woman had been caught in the very act, and everybody was therefore ready to stone her. Jesus knelt and wrote in the sand, and what He wrote has been the topic of much supposition through the years. Some imagine that He wrote the sins of the accusers, for one by one they slunk away in shame. Perhaps He just didn't want to get involved in the discussion and was doing something totally unrelated to it. You and I need to learn how to write in the sand, how to get disassociated from some of the situations that normally would invite our participation, so that we are not required to give an opinion on the matter — one way or another.

Some people seem to have the gift of getting caught in the middle of every situation. They need to learn to write in the sand, to busy themselves with

something else so that they do not get involved in a situation that can help no one and can only cause grief. When the enemy is trying to get you involved in something you have no business in, trying to get you to become one who condemns, do some doodling. Try any little diversionary activity. Avoid things that cause disunity.

After everyone else had gone, Jesus turned to the woman and asked her, "*Woman, where are thine accusers?*" This shows us that He was not among the accusers. There is not one ounce of accusation in Jesus, not a single degree of it.

When He asked the woman, "*Where are thine accusers?*" she answered, "*I have none, Lord.*" He responded, "*Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more.*" That is God's position, and He wants it to be ours too.

The spirit of accusation is not of God. We all should know by now who "*the accuser of the brethren*" is.

There are several stories in the Bible that, if we're not careful, can give us a wrong impression. One such story is of Jesus overturning the tables of the money changers. We somehow picture Him in a fury, but that is a mistaken concept. He is not a God of fury. He was declaring a fact: "*My house shall be called a house of prayer, and you've made it a den of thieves.*" He was not angry. He was deeply saddened by the actions of the money changers.

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God is calling His people to have purity of heart.
He declared:

*Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD?
or who shall stand in his holy place? He that
hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath
not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn
deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from
the LORD, and righteousness from the God of
his salvation.*

Psalm 24:3-5

God has no judgmental spirit, no attitude of condemnation, and if we desire His best for these last days, we will rise to the same level.

Chapter 12

Keep Working at It

“This Is a Great Mystery!”

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:32

Some wonder why unity does not just happen automatically, why it seems to require a struggle. The reason is that unity among brothers is like a good marriage. It doesn't just happen. You have to work at it.

God has ordained oneness for the marriage, but those who are married know that it also requires diligence and conscious effort on the part of both the marriage partners to bring about that unity. The unity Christ has ordained for the marriage is the same unity He has ordained for the Church, as Paul showed in his teaching to the Ephesian church.

In the marriage, a man and a woman must make a conscious decision that, although they are not exactly alike and may have very different tastes and very different philosophies of life, they can live together and love each other and respect each other's opinions. This is exactly the same way we are able to be "one" with our fellow Christian believers.

Somehow we get the idea that only those who believe exactly as we do have a right to be part of Christ's Church, but that is not our decision to make. He is the Head of the Church, and only He can make that decision. If He has chosen to extend salvation to others, who are we to question Him?

If couples can work out their differences and live together in intimacy in the same house, why can't we love our brothers and work together in the same church? Harmony in the marriage requires that we lay aside the differences for the common good. We may not like it, but we do it anyway, and we must do the same in the Christian context.

When we dwell on differences, they only become bigger. When we dwell on divisions, they only become more serious. If we can concentrate on what unites us and lay aside all the other things, we can be "one" in Christ.

Is this type of compromise biblical? The Bible says, "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God*" (Ephesians 5:21). It is not just the wives who

must submit themselves to their husbands. We must all submit ourselves to each other. I know we don't like to do it, but wives don't like to submit to their husbands either. If a woman is smart, she will do it for the sake of the marriage, and if we are smart, we will submit to one another for the good of the entire Body of Christ.

This is Christ's Body, so do it for His sake. Do it for the sake of the Gospel. This one principle is holding us back from achieving many of the great things we want to do in God. Get over it by focusing on Christ, not on one another.

Jesus prayed, *"That they may be made perfect in one."* None of us would ever be able to marry if we waited until a perfect person came along or if we waited until we were perfect ourselves. We are imperfect, but we get married anyway, and then we begin the process of perfecting ourselves and the marriage.

Marriage is not about perfection; marriage is about love. If we waited for perfection, no one would ever be able to get along. No one would ever be able to live with a spouse. No one would ever be able to commit themselves to a marriage partner. There would be no marriage. We marry as imperfects, and then we are *"made perfect in one."*

Jesus didn't say that we were already perfect. He prayed that we would be perfected in our oneness. We are a work in progress. We are being made per-

Those who are married any length of time, however, will tell you that it's not all that simple. If the man and the woman fail to work at maintaining their relationship, the marriage can be destroyed at some point.

In the moment of joining, when the two are blinded by their love, nothing could keep them apart. Even if obstacles to the marriage were expressed by others, the bride and groom would probably not even listen. They don't care at that point. They are determined that nothing will keep them apart.

Later, however, when things are not running so smoothly, if one or both of the partners has a desire to separate, there are suddenly a thousand reasons to do it. It was God who joined them, and nothing was strong enough to prevent it, but it is Satan who separates them, and any old reason will do. This is a picture of exactly how disunity occurs in the Body of Christ. If the members expect to stay together and to enjoy the mutual benefits of the family, they must commit themselves to work at it.

What is it that keeps a married couple together? It is primarily accepting each other (despite all failings) and forgiving each other for any wrongs or perceived wrongs. What is it that separates countless married couples? Intolerance of the idiosyncrasies of the other and an unwillingness to forgive.

It works both ways. "I'm sorry; please forgive me" are some of the most powerful words in the English language. If we, as members of the Body of Christ, cannot give and receive forgiveness, there is no way we can live in harmony with each other.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to do that. I shouldn't have done it. Forgive me." It doesn't hurt anyone to say these words, and it doesn't make you less of a man or woman to do it. The opposite is true. True men and real women know that they are not perfect and do not require perfection of others.

The other thing that can keep a marriage together is a burning love. If a couple is joined in marriage despite many apparent obstacles, they can stay married as long as they keep their love burning. If believers can stay in the cloud of God's glory, they will maintain their burning love for God and for each other. If their love is allowed to grow cold, they are in danger of separating from God and from one another.

Getting along with other people is never an easy proposition. There are things in all of us that are unpleasant. If they are not immediately obvious, the enemy makes them obvious. He is a master at magnifying and spotlighting faults, taking something small and making it seem insurmountable.

How do we overcome those obstacles? Supernaturally! If we can believe for God to heal hopelessly

ill people, to provide great sums of money for our ministries, and to anoint us for other impossible tasks, why is it that we cannot seem to believe for the miracle of oneness? Could it be because we prefer not to be “*one*” with our brothers? Have we opted rather for divorce? This is not God’s way.

As we believe for God to make us one with our spouses, let us believe Him to make us “*one*” with our fellow believers.

Chapter 13

It All Depends on the Conductor

“Thou Shalt ... Flow Together”

*Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and
thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged.*

Isaiah 60:5

It is amazing to watch a concert orchestra perform. An orchestra is made up of many different instruments played by a great variety of people, both men and women, of all sizes and shapes and ages. The instruments are quite varied and make sounds that are very different one from the other. Sometimes one or more instruments are playing and the others are silent, while sometimes all the instruments are playing together. What is amazing is that this great group of instruments can all combine their varied input to make up an incomparable and often unforgettable sound.

It is all dependent upon the conductor, and although he usually does nothing more than wave a

baton in the air, much honor is accorded him. It is his genius at interpreting the music (and the willingness of the individual members of the orchestra to be led by his genius) that makes for such a memorable event. We Christians have much to learn from an orchestra.

When any great orchestra is preparing to play, each instrument must first be tuned. Every instrument is tuned to the same standard, a standard presented not by any individual member of the orchestra, but by the conductor himself. No member of the orchestra is free to offer his own standard or to argue with the standard put forth by the master. It is the conductor's decision to make, and everyone else follows his lead. If we could all just get tuned up with our Master Conductor, our problems of disunity would be instantly solved.

"But what if the person beside me doesn't get his instrument properly tuned?" someone asks. Let the Master take care of that. That's not our responsibility. The Master knows what He is doing. If we are too busy listening to the sour notes coming from the musicians around us, we won't get our own instruments tuned properly and we might even get our eyes off the Conductor and not be ready when He signals us to begin.

Sometimes the disturbance in our spirits and the fuss we make when we notice that others are

not totally in tune causes more disharmony and disunity than the failures we perceive in others. We must stop trying to get everyone else tuned up right. That's not our job. If we can get ourselves in order, we will find that things flow more smoothly around us.

When the music has begun, the musicians don't look to each other for their cues; they look to the conductor. If every musician is following the conductor, everyone will be in sync with the music. We cannot afford to watch what someone else is doing and take our timing from him. Stop worrying so much about being in time with your brother and concentrate on following the Lord's leading for your own instrument.

The members of an orchestra are never responsible for one another. Each member has only two responsibilities: to get his own instrument in tune and to follow the leading of the conductor. If each one fulfills these two responsibilities, everything works well.

The decision about who plays when is the conductor's to make. If he wants one instrument or ten or all, he has a reason for it. We don't worry about what the outcome will be. We just listen to him.

In an orchestra, no individual musician has the right to feel superior to another or to claim that he or she can stand alone. All the instruments are needed

for a proper balance. It is for the Master to make the decision about who plays when, not us.

Because the orchestra is made up of many instruments, the failure of one instrument is hardly noticeable. What is important is to avoid something that hinders the entire orchestra. The famous saying that one sour note does not spoil a symphony is true. This is why our Lord has taught us to avoid things that destroy unity. It is the enemy's goal to divide, but our God is not a divider, and we must not be either.

Some people see good in division, and it may appear for a time that good has resulted. I am convinced, however, that God will not hold us guiltless when we have done damage to His family. If any good results from division, it results despite the division, not because of it.

God is not in the business of splitting churches, breaking up families and causing good friends to be separated. He is a Peacemaker, and He is looking for peacemakers among us as well. He said:

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9

God's law of sowing and reaping cannot be changed. What we sow, we reap. If you sow seeds of division, you will surely reap the reward of it. God

is looking for a people who will cease to sow seeds of division and begin to sow peace.

We are even to avoid people who cause division:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Romans 16:17

Some agree with the need to be made perfect together, but they want to insist that the rest of us move their way. That's a foolish attitude because it is not going to happen. We cannot insist on having our own way and expect to be blessed of the Father. We must all move in His direction and stop demanding that everyone else move in ours. We are all part of a great whole and we are not the decision makers. God is.

God is doing an amazing thing in Israel. He is moving the Church in the direction of the Jews, and He is moving the Jews in the direction of the Church. Both are having to move from a set position because God is doing something greater than either of them. His is an eternal work.

Americans are slow to understand this need for co-operation. We are very spoiled. The very strength of America, when it carries over into our relationships within the Body of Christ, becomes a problem for us.

Our very freedoms, our independence, our ability to do what we want, when we want and how we want, anytime day or night, spoils us for interdependence. We have so many great privileges that much of the world does not enjoy and so many liberties and benefits in our lifestyle that no other people have, and that makes it difficult for us to understand the restraints of the Holy Ghost in regard to the other members of the Body. We need to be able to feel the hand of the Lord upon the reins of our spirits.

For instance, if God uses someone else to speak to us, we cannot afford to answer back and say, "Nobody tells me what to do!" This is a very common American attitude, but it negates the efficacy of the Body of Christ. God wants to bring forth changes in our spirits so that we realize we are part of a much larger world. He wants to give us a grace to interact with every part of the Body worldwide. If we are doing anything to break the oneness that God so desires to bring forth, we will have to answer directly to Him.

If you still have any denominationalism in you, repent of it and ask God to help you. He is not a God of denominations. His Church is one. If you are guilty of nationalism or racism, know that God is not pleased with it and ask Him to help you get rid of it today. If you are prejudiced against the poor or toward the rich, ask God to remove that ugly at-

titude from your spirit. If you have any bad feeling against anyone for any reason, it will hinder your spiritual progress. Ask God to take that thing out of your spirit. Let Him make you a team player in His great orchestra, that He might show forth the beauty of His masterpiece to the whole world.

Part IV

What Must I Do?

Chapter 14

It's Me, Oh Lord

“Then Said I, Woe Is Me!”

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 6:1-5

We all want other people to be changed so that we can more easily relate to them, but it is time that we recognize where the real problem lies. It's in us, not in others. We are the ones who must be changed. I have always loved the old spiritual and have sung it thousands of times:

*It's me. It's me, oh Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.
It's me. It's me, oh Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.*

Many helpful verses have been added over the years.

*Not my brother, not my sister,
But it's me, oh Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.
Not my brother, not my sister,
But it's me, oh Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.*

*Not the deacons, nor the elders,
But it's me, oh Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.
Not the deacons, nor the elders,
But it's me, oh Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.*

If unity is to come, each of us must recognize our individual responsibility in this regard. God wants to deal with *our* hearts on this subject, and if we allow Him to do it, others will follow.

Isaiah cried, "*Woe is me!*" We often do the opposite. We say, "*Woe is he. Woe is she. Woe is that one. Woe is the other one.*" We only see the faults and failures of others. When the touch of God's glory comes upon us, suddenly we become aware of our own situation of being "*undone.*" It doesn't matter if we are a little undone or a lot undone. We may have conquered the majors and still have the minors to deal with, but undone is undone, and we can no longer blame disunity on others. "*It's me, oh Lord.*"

We are like those of whom Jesus said:

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Matthew 7:3-5

When I was on a ministry trip to Malaysia, God showed me that if we want to have clarity of spiritu-

al vision, there can be no beam and no mote in our eyes. Nothing can be allowed to deflect the vision, the revelation of the glory of God.

If beams are there it is because we ourselves have allowed them to be there. If motes exist, we cannot blame others for their presence. Whatever the reason may be for the existence of motes in our eyes, God wants to remove every obstacle so that we have clarity of vision.

I personally want to see much more than I do already. My desire is to see beyond the moon and stars. I want to see into the deeper realms of glory. I want to see the face of the Lord in every service. Every time we gather, I want to see those things that have been prepared for us from the foundation of the world. To do that, Jesus is teaching us, we must be free of ill will toward our brothers.

It is no longer enough to tolerate each other, to live and let live; God is demanding much more now. Every individual in the Body of Christ must make a conscious effort to strive in every way possible to maintain "*the unity of the brethren.*" If we don't reach out, who will?

As I said before, a great part of our ministry in Jerusalem has been to reach out to people of other faiths and of other branches of the Christian faith. We have had particularly good fellowship with the Orthodox and the Catholics and wonderful contacts

with the Jews and also the Moslems. People of all of these faiths can be found in our house at a given time. This may not be a normal occurrence in Jerusalem, but it happens at our house.

If God can cause Moslems and Jews to love one another, is He not big enough to do it for Baptists and Methodists? Can He not do it with Pentecostals of different branches? Can He not do it with the church on one corner and the one on the next? He can, and He *is* doing it — for all those who will allow Him to work in their hearts. When we say, “It’s me, Lord,” barriers fall and wonderful things begin to happen. Don’t wait for your brother to get around to wanting unity. You be the one. You make the move. You reach out.

When Joseph confronted his brothers many years after they had sold him into slavery, he did not at first reveal his true identity. He was in charge of the existing supplies of food for a large part of the world, and they needed food, but the only thing he told them was that when they came back for more food they must bring their brother Benjamin. The brothers objected that their father probably would not want to let Benjamin out of his sight, but Joseph insisted that if they didn’t bring Benjamin they would receive no supplies.

Some have speculated that Joseph told them this because Benjamin was his only brother by the same

mother and because he wanted to see him so badly, but I believe there was a deeper reason. The other brothers, all sons of Leah, did not particularly like Benjamin, just as they had not liked Joseph. If they wanted to avoid the famine, however, they now had to make peace with Benjamin and bring him with them.

Many years had passed and yet these men had not rid themselves of their hatred of Rachel's children. May God deliver us from deep-seated and long-lasting hatred and jealousy! I have seen people robbed of great anointings and great ministries because they refused to deal with their feelings against the Josephs and Benjamins in their lives. I can guarantee that you will not be blessed unless and until you make peace with your Benjamins. You will not have food in the time of famine unless you can overcome your jealousies and bitterness.

It is time to lay aside our grievances. If we refuse to do it, we become like the brother of the prodigal son, who was angry with his father for welcoming home the prodigal, when he himself had enjoyed the goodness of his father's house on a daily basis. I meet people who can tell you every grievance they ever had in life, how the offense happened, what the particular circumstances were. The worst thing is that sometimes this all happened twenty-five years or more ago. This is terrible! It's bad enough

to remember grievances from even two years ago. Stop remembering every grievance. Let the anointing work on your memories. Take out a Holy Ghost eraser and go to work on your blackboard. Let go of every hurt. Let go of every grievance. Forget all the times someone has done you wrong.

The brothers of Joseph had done grievous things to him, and many would have seen nothing wrong if Joseph had treated them badly in return. Joseph, however, was destined to rule, and if he was to rule, he had to free himself of any bitterness from the past. He did not insist that his brothers reach out to him first. He reached out to them. They were, however, forced to go back home and deal with their Benjamins before they could return and gain the provision necessary to save an entire generation. We simply cannot choose to ignore our Benjamins and expect to have God's blessings upon our lives.

Sometimes, when I am experiencing a great wave of God's glory, He speaks to me about people I should bless. Some of those He shows me seem to me to be worthy of blessing, and it is not a difficult thing to want to pass God's blessing on to them. There are others, however, who do not seem, to me, to be especially worthy of God's blessing, and I am thankful for His grace at work in my life that allows me to bless them anyway.

As I release miracles upon the list of people the Lord gives me, I am not given the luxury of picking and choosing those whom I consider to be worthy. That is God's prerogative. He blesses those whom He chooses, and if He shows me to bless people, why should I question Him? I must bless those whom I consider to be "good" (generally speaking, those who have been good to me), but I must also bless those whom I don't consider to be so "good." I must not miss the blessing God has prepared for me because of hard feelings I have harbored in my heart, and I cannot afford to wait for others to make the first move. I must say, "It's me, oh Lord," before His blessings come.

Balaam the prophet was asked by Balak to curse Israel, but God only allowed him to bless the nation and its people. Jesus said:

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Matthew 5:46

If we will cultivate the ability to bless, we will find ourselves only blessing and not cursing anyone.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Romans 12:14

When God called Ezekiel, the prophet complained that the people would not be willing to hear him. God said it didn't matter. It is our own hearts that God wants to deal with. "Tell them anyway," He told Ezekiel. By speaking, we deliver our souls, and we will leave it to others to make their own decisions on the matter. It is you and it is I who must recognize the value of unity and go after it. "It's me, oh Lord, standing in the need of prayer."

Stop saying, "Woe is he," and start saying, "Woe is me." Let God take the mote from your eye, and the beam, too. Let Him remove all bitterness and hatred and jealousy from your soul and give you a pure and undefiled love for your brothers. Don't allow something so mundane to keep you from the very best God has for your life.

What did our heavenly Father mean when He said, "*Let brotherly love continue*"? He meant stop preventing it. Stop standing in the way of it. Promote it. Protect it. Do all you can to foster it. Do your part to make it happen.

Chapter 15

True and False Love

“See That Ye Love One Another With a Pure Heart Fervently!”

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. 1 Peter 1:22

“*Unfeigned love*” is genuine love, with no pretense, and since the greatest sign of spiritual maturity is not gifts or miracles nor ministry, but love toward one another, nothing could be more important than developing an “*unfeigned love*.”

One of the problems we encounter is that in the past there have been those who had a pretended, or “*feigned*,” love. They had a certain veneer of love. They could say to everyone they met, “I love you,”

but that love was only skin deep. They said all the right things, but their “love” was not the love God speaks of in First Corinthians 13, the love that “*bears all things*” and “*believes all things.*”

Because of this superficial love that was so prominently displayed for some years in our midst (and nobody likes anything phony), many people went to the other extreme and became much too reserved in their demonstration and expression of love toward one another. They didn’t want any part of the obviously false “love,” but in shunning it, they lost sight of the importance of demonstrating real love, “*unfeigned love.*” A common term used by critics of the pretenders was “sloppy agape.” It pointed out the insincerity of those pretending love.

Just because counterfeits exist is no reason for us to shun those things that are genuine, those things that are real. I understand that there are counterfeit twenty-dollar bills circulating, but I am still using the good ones as they come into my possession. The fact that there are phony bills around doesn’t hinder me from benefiting from the good ones. Let’s just be sure that we are not the counterfeits ourselves.

Peter was truly inspired when he wrote: “*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren.*” There is a process of purification that God wants to perform in our souls to bring us to a level of purity, of sanc-

tification, that we can have and manifest a love for the brethren that is genuine.

You may never have loved anyone “*fervently*.” Many people haven’t. They spend their time praying for gifts and miracles and never ask God to bathe them in His love for people. The gifts and the miracles without the love, however, are meaningless. The purpose of the gifts and the miracles is to show God’s love to people.

God has called us to love each other so much that when a brother has a problem, we feel it just as much as if it were our own personal problem. That’s spiritual maturity. That’s real love, “*unfeigned love*.”

I am very blessed to have grown up in a very close and loving, sacrificing family. As children, we were expected to show love to others. I rebelled against this at times. I couldn’t understand why we had to take many people home after church when it was so late at night, why we had to help them in and out of the car and even in and out of their houses, and why so many people had to come to our house on special occasions.

Mother once said that everybody who didn’t get invited anywhere else for Christmas was invited to our home, and sometimes these people were not the choice guests for such occasions. The world considered some of them to be “unlovely,” but there are no “unlovely” people in the Lord Jesus Christ. If Jesus

loved the men and women of this world enough to die for them, the least I can do is show them a measure of kindness. When we can love only the lovable, something is wrong with our love.

Some say, "I can love everyone except ... ," but there are no exceptions in God. The very person you want to make the exception is the one God wants you to reach out to and embrace with genuine love.

"I do love them," someone may say, "but I hate their ways." The fact that they add the second clause shows that their love is not really genuine. If we really love people, no added clause is needed.

Some insist: "I love them, but I just don't want to be with them." The fact that you don't want to be with them speaks louder than your declaration of love. Let God do a work in your spirit, so that you are genuinely able to love people.

There are many reasons to work toward unity. One of the most important of them is that it is a terrible thing not to be able to look your brothers in the eye, and it is a wonderful thing to be able to freely do so. When we can look at our brothers and sisters face-to-face and eye-to-eye, we can expect to also look face-to-face and eye-to-eye with our Lord. He requires that if we say we love Him, we should demonstrate love one to another. John wrote to the churches:

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

1 John 4:20-21

God is calling for pure and “*unfeigned*” love in this hour.

The Lord is calling us to look at each other as He looks, to see the heart, to see the spirit, and to forget about the petty differences that bother us about each other. I know this is not the way of the world, but we are called to a higher realm, the realm of love.

The ability to love with no pretense, with no reservation, and with no ulterior motive is divine, supernatural, and God wants to put it into our hearts as a sign to all that we are His. Nothing can replace the demonstration of that love.

If there is someone that we try to avoid, if there is someone that we go the other way to keep from seeing, we need to ask the Lord for His help. Avoiding the problem will not resolve it. If there is someone with whom you dread shaking hands, or someone whom you cannot look in the eye, His grace is sufficient for you.

We may be tested on this today and tomorrow, but we are determined to “*let brotherly love continue.*”

God is not just calling us to accept our brothers; He wants us to wash their feet — not just as a ritual, but in our everyday show of love and concern for them. Paul admonished:

By love serve one another. Galatians 5:13

May God's spirit work within us.

Some people are satisfied with a little bit of love, just as many are satisfied to live below the poverty level. Personally, I want more.

Some are afraid to love because they have been hurt in the past. Making yourself vulnerable to hurt is a natural part of loving. There will always be those who reject our love. If Jesus only loved when there was no chance of being rejected, He would not have paid the price for our salvation.

We have all been hurt, and we will all be hurt more in the future. That is a risk we take, but it's worth it. If you don't love someone, and he does something against you, you don't even care. It is love that opens you to hurt. So expect it, accept it, and keep right on loving.

Your love cannot be passive; it must be active. I have made it a policy in my life never to say "God bless you" without truly meaning it. I want that "God bless you" to come from the very depths of

my being, to be genuine and powerful. When I say "God bless you," I release my faith as I say it for all the blessing. I want for you the very same blessings I desire for myself.

Chapter 16

Honoring the “Lesser” Members

“Upon These We Bestow More Abundant Honor!”

And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 1 Corinthians 12:23-27

We cannot afford to despise any member of the Body of Christ. Those whom we would tend to despise, the Scriptures teach us, should rather be honored. We may not recognize their value, but God knows it well.

Anybody can love a person who has a charming personality or a person who seems to be completely refined by the Spirit of God. Anybody can appreciate a glistening, polished diamond. What's difficult about that? But how did that diamond get to be what it is today? Was it always so perfectly formed? Was it always so beautifully polished? It is sad to report that few have the gift of recognizing and appreciating a diamond in the rough.

Part of the great Charismatic Movement was an attempt to reach out to the well-to-do, and because of that, meetings were often held in beautiful hotel ballrooms. The goal of influencing businessmen and professionals was a worthy one, and there were good results. There was also a rather sad by-product of this outreach, however. If men and women could not afford to dress up and buy a ticket to the ballroom, they just missed out on what God was doing at the moment. After this had continued for a while, people got the idea that wealth and spirituality were somehow combined.

Far too many now have the concept that the Body of Christ is made up only of people who are beauti-

fully manicured and dressed in designer originals, and who eat expensive gourmet meals. Let us be clear that those who enjoy these privileges make up only a fraction of the Body of Christ, and those who have adopted this concept have not been able to reach out very far in the world. If prosperity and financial success were the criteria of spirituality, God would have to apologize to ninety-nine percent of the Christian world, because the rest don't qualify.

A few years ago, when I spoke at a convention in West Texas, I noticed that I was the only speaker who had not arrived in a private airplane. I knew, however, that I had something to offer. God's love is for all people, not just for the rich and famous.

Not all members of the Body of Christ are rich. Not all are well educated. Not all are what the world (or the Church) might call “successful.” Not everyone is able to buy a ticket to an expensive convention.

About twenty years ago, I was in a conference in Jerusalem with Father Francis MacNutt, the anointed Catholic preacher. He had chosen not to wear his ceremonial robes, but presented himself instead in simple white flowing garments, the garments of poverty. If Jesus Christ were living in the world today, he told the people, He might not have afforded to attend this conference. I applauded him, and I believe that this truth needs to be voiced more often.

Many people are drawn to our humble campground in Virginia because they are hungry for God and have heard that God is visiting us. When they arrive and see the simplicity of the rooms, the dining facility and the meeting places, they are scandalized. They have grown so accustomed to meeting in ballrooms that if they meet in some lesser setting, they have to make a big adjustment in their thinking.

The thing, I believe, that impacts people even more when they come to our camp is to see the simplicity of many of the people who attend. We make no distinction, but have the same concern for every member of the Body of Christ.

Nothing is wrong with meeting in a beautiful hotel in New York City and saying to one another, "Let love flow among us." Everyone is dressed beautifully, and they will all go out to eat at an expensive restaurant later. That, however, is not the Body of Christ. It is just a small representation of the Body of Christ.

Where are "*the uncomely parts*" of the Body of Christ, the parts we consider to be of "lesser" importance, the poor and working people? If we fail to recognize and give greater honor to those we consider to be of lesser value, God will not allow us to move into the greater glory. He demands equal treatment for all His children.

When one couple came to our church, they were from a very affluent background. All their lives they

had attended a church where everyone was beautifully perfumed and the air was filtered and purified. “Do Pentecostals smell differently?” Patti asked me one day, after noticing that some people attending the camp were not nearly as well perfumed as her circle of friends.

“This is not a difference in Pentecostals you are noticing,” I told her. “It is a difference in the economic strata of these particular people.”

We should have among us those who are well-to-do, and we should also have the poor. We should have those who are well educated, and we should have those who are not. The fullness of the Body of Christ is a representative sampling of society as a whole.

My parents always had a burden for the poor. They were known in our city for their expressions of love. They did not just speak of love; they lived it. That’s why Mother insisted that I sit beside people who had nowhere else to go for Christmas dinner. When I look back at what God has done in my life, I realize that I owe much to a family that taught me to bestow honor on the less appreciated members, and to bestow the greater honor on the “*uncomely parts*.” God ordained it to be so, “*that there should be no schism in the body of Christ.*”

When we first went to Jerusalem, I was concerned because there was a real need for ministers with a

pastoral heart for all those who had felt the call of God to that city. Among those who had come, there were a surprising number of simple people. Some of them didn't tie their shoes just right, and some were not dressed well in other ways. They had a burden for souls, however, and had responded to the call of God.

One man in particular who fell into this category had a very large family. He was shunned by many organizations because of his appearance, but we asked God to help us reach out to him, and we did. God showed us to reach out to humble local believers as well.

While we were living in France and reaching out to the Jewish people all over Europe, we learned of a special Holy Spirit conference to be conducted in Jerusalem, and I flew back there for the conference. The organizers of the event had invited many of those living in Israel at the time to sit on the platform, but when I searched through the group, I quickly noticed that there were no "little people."

I asked someone, "Where is Sister Miriam? She is one of the most amazing Jewish soul winners. Why is she not up there?"

"She couldn't afford the entrance fee," I was told.

"Where is little Brother Levy?" I asked. "He is one of the most amazing prayer warriors in Israel."

"The same problem," I was told. "He couldn't afford to come."

I began to inquire about tickets and to see how we could help these and other local saints to attend the conference. Maybe they wouldn't even need passes if they came with us. We had conducted our own conference at the same conference center in 1972, and the doorkeepers remembered me and quickly waved me through.

We put people in taxicabs and sent them around the city to bring these humble servants of God to the conference center. Maybe others did not consider them to be important or worthy of special effort, but God said of many humble people in Bible days that *“the world was not worthy”* of them. These people probably could have been wealthy (if they had chosen to be). Instead, they had denied themselves so that the work of God could go forward, and I wanted to honor them.

Thank God, we were able to get all of them into the conference. He has required that we care about those who are considered “lesser” among us and that we show them equal treatment. Those who have a million dollars and those who have not a single cent in their pockets are equally important to God and should be to us too.

For some years, when people would come to Jerusalem and ask other ministries where to find the Heflins or the Mt. Zion ministry, nobody seemed to know that we were there (if the people asking were

well dressed and seemed to be prosperous). When poor people came, however, and they were looking for a place to stay and a place to eat and a way to get a ministry started by faith, everyone knew us and recommended that they come to us. We were always glad to help these people, but it disturbed us that such a distinction was made (between the well-to-do and the not-so-well-to-do). This should not be.

When Oral Roberts came to Richmond many years ago, local pastors told their altar workers, "When the poor people come forward to accept the Lord, let the Heflins handle them. They have a ministry to the poor." When the next large meeting took place, some of the ministers commented on the wonderful workers Daddy had with him. "Where did you get such good people?" they asked.

"Oh," my father answered, "those are some of those poor people you didn't want to pray for. After they were saved and started paying their tithes, they began to prosper. Now they own their own homes."

We noticed that many ministries in Jerusalem were obsessed with chasing after well-known visiting ministers. They spent their time around the best hotels, trying to meet important people. We determined, however, to concentrate on the humble. Rather than spend all our time with the "high and mighty," we felt led to minister to the entire Body

of Christ. Now, years later, many are beginning to realize their mistakes in this regard.

Someone suggested that we get a famous singing group to come to our church in Jerusalem to draw crowds. But when revival breaks out, people come, even in the absence of famous singing groups. God has chosen to exalt the humble, and it is time we learn to do the same.

At one point we had an apartment in Jerusalem and a dozen other pieces of rented property throughout the country, but God showed us that He wanted us to have a house as well. We looked for a suitable house for quite a while, and sometimes the real estate agent got frustrated with us. Houses are very expensive in Jerusalem, yet we kept insisting that God had something better for us than we were seeing.

Finally one day a man called to say, “I have just the place for you.” We went to see the house he had found and it was, indeed, exactly what we needed. It was one of the largest houses we had seen in Jerusalem, and God told us what to offer for it. It should have cost thousands of dollars a month to rent, but God gave it to us for a fraction of the cost. A man who lived nearby offered to furnish the house and let us pay him as we could, so we were able to quickly furnish the house well.

When we had the house and it was furnished, suddenly people were shaking hands with us who

had not shaken hands with us before. People who never knew we existed were suddenly aware of us. These things ought not to be in the Body of Christ. If people can suddenly love us because we have a big house, we're all in trouble.

There are brothers and sisters who prophesy, and we don't appreciate the word that comes from their lips because they seem so humble. We don't put any weight in the exhortation they give because they mispronounce a word or, in some other way, give away the fact that they are not very well educated.

Sometimes we receive a word from a famous person and accept it as coming from God when we would not receive the identical word from a "lesser" person. I believe this causes us to miss out on some of the great things God has for us. He is "*no respecter of persons,*" and He expects no less of us.

Years ago, my Uncle Bill was pastoring the prestigious Bethel Temple Assembly of God church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The oil boom had started, and he had the largest weekly tithe offering of any AOG church in America. One day a young man came to him and said, "Brother Ward, I was praying, and the Lord told me He wants to send revival to Tulsa. He's going to use me to bring the revival, but He chose your church for the place to have the meetings."

Brother Ward looked the young man over and replied cautiously, "Brother, we're just not in a position

to have another revival meeting right now. We just had one recently and we have another one already scheduled in the not-too-distant future. This is just not a convenient time.”

The man said, “Brother Ward, I want to tell you again what God told me,” and he went through it all again. Again, my uncle gave his logical explanation and tried to exit gracefully from an uncomfortable situation. He couldn’t imagine that this humble young brother would bring great revival to Tulsa.

Then the brother said, “Brother Ward, since you can’t accommodate me, would you mind if I go up the street to a nearby church and have a meeting there?”

“No, brother, I don’t mind,” my uncle answered, “Go right ahead.”

“I want to make sure you don’t mind, because God’s going to send revival, and I guess He will send it to that other church,” the man insisted.

“That’s all right, brother. Go on and feel free,” my uncle agreed.

What happened next amazed everyone. The brother preached the greatest revival Tulsa had ever seen, and every day for quite a while my uncle was kicking himself for not having sensed that, under his simplicity, the humble preacher had a real touch of God upon his life.

Years later I was attending the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Voice of Healing Ministry at

Christ for the Nations and I heard Paul Cain tell this story. I went to him after the service and told him that I had heard that story from the other side all my life but that Uncle Bill had never mentioned who the young man was. I was so glad to learn that it was Brother Paul Cain. It was his first great revival.

We should not have to work at appreciating our “lesser” brothers. It should come automatically. God has instructed us to honor those among us who seem less honorable to the world.

God told me that if He sends a diseased member of the Body to us, that person is still part of the Body. We must work to cure him, not drive him away or kill him before his time. If God sends a lame member our way, our duty is to recognize that member and work to bring him healing.

We have been guilty of asking God to get rid of weak members, to hide them so that no one will see them, or to take them away so that we don’t have to deal with them, but God is doing just the opposite. He is heaping special honor upon them.

God gave me a simple chorus:

As one Body, as one people (3X)

Moving together in God.

Unity in the glory (3X)

Moving together in God.

Why should this surprise or disturb us in any way? When any member is honored, that honor abounds to the entire Body. Why are we so upset when God honors His humble ones? That honor touches us all.

Kathryn Kuhlman had such an unusual ministry that many people in the Body of Christ were ashamed to accept her as part of the family of God. She was strongly criticized and even rebuked. When people began to belatedly recognize her unique gift and the greatness of her relationship to God, everyone wanted to be her friend, and everyone honored her. God is looking for those who can discern the members of the Body, even before they are acclaimed.

Our lack of discernment in this regard is paralyzing us and causing schisms in our ranks. A disjointed Body cannot be effective for God. He is calling us to move forward as one Body, as one people.

When I was a young girl, we had a simple storefront for our church in Richmond, and it was while we were in that storefront that God began to send revival to our city. He sent “Little” David Walker and Raymond G. Hoekstra to the city and told them to rent the Mosque Auditorium for a crusade. The auditorium seated five thousand people. They needed a local pastor to sponsor them, someone to sign contracts for the auditorium and for the newspaper advertising, and many of the local pastors

were unwilling to do this. Even though we had a small church, my parents had good credit, and when none of the other preachers showed a willingness to sponsor the meetings, Daddy did it.

When God began to send revival, the Mosque Auditorium was quickly filled. Every night there were five thousand on the inside of the auditorium and another five thousand on the outside hoping to get in. When it became apparent what God was doing, all the local preachers decided to cooperate with the meeting, but my parents were on the platform and had a major role because they had believed in the meeting from the beginning and had been willing to risk their financial future and their reputation among the brethren for it. Because we were willing to help people when they were still relatively unknown, God blessed our family, and the success of our ministry in Richmond dated from that time.

Daddy stood beside Little David and watched the miracles as they were performed. He saw an eyeball created in a moment in an empty eye socket. He watched as the student body of a school for the hearing and speech impaired were healed. Little David was the only minister ever to shake our city, and we were part of it.

Because God has commanded us to love, we cannot pick and choose whom we will love. If we decide to love some and not others, as we many

times do, we rob ourselves of the fullness of joy and the strength it could bring to our lives.

Jesus specifically taught us to love “*the least*” among us. He said:

Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Matthew 25:40

Whatever we may have, there are always those who have less and who need our help, and we will be blessed in the process of helping them. Let us allow the Spirit of God to cultivate in our spirits a new graciousness. Let Him place in our spirits a desire to reach out in love and care for one another.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible in this regard is:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32

Simple Holy Ghost kindness goes a long way to show others the love of God. The ability to be kind to one another is of Him. We all know these things, but sometimes we need to be stirred up to remember and give attention to and put into daily action what we already know to be true.

We're a family, and we must not be ashamed of any individual member. I was invited to speak at a very large meeting, and I called to thank those who had invited me. I was shocked when the organizer said to me, "Sister Ruth, we have always loved you. We just haven't appreciated some of the people you work with."

I was trying to be gracious and I thought of letting the comment slide and saying nothing, but I couldn't do it. I found myself saying, "I make no apologies for anybody I've ever worked with."

With our natural families, we don't go around making apologies for each uncle, aunt and cousin. They are family, so nothing needs to be said, and that's the way the family of God should be. Every family has a peculiar Aunt Mary or a strange Uncle Jim. We introduce our Uncle Jims and Aunt Marys to guests and let them know up front that our relatives are a little eccentric, but that we are not ashamed of them. They are part of our families. In the same way, God has called us to love and appreciate those who are usually unloved and unappreciated. We are not just to do it perfunctorily, but with complete sincerity.

We have been born into the family of God, and the fact that we have some relatives in various parts of the world who are very different from us should not

trouble us in any way. Some of our brothers eat with their hands (and I enjoy eating with them), and some of our brothers eat with sticks (and I enjoy eating with them too), and some of our brothers do things that are far stranger (and I am not ashamed of them either). They are my brothers, and they think we do some rather strange things here in our country too. For instance, the Japanese are shocked by us sitting in dirty bath water. They soap, scrub and rinse their bodies before they sit in a hot tub.

There are wonderful things to be said about the Church in every country, and I have learned and been enriched by believers of all nations. I consider the Korean church to be the greatest church in prayer. I consider the Indian church to be the church with the greatest knowledge of the Bible. I consider the Chinese church to be outstanding in the simplicity of its faith. I love the Kenyan brothers because of their willingness to sacrifice for the Kingdom of God. No price is too great for them. But the people of each nation do things quite differently. The people of different nations pray differently, and I love to hear them all pray. The variety of their prayers is just like a spiritual rainbow in God’s sky.

God’s great family is wonderful, and I am proud to be a part of it.

Chapter 17

The Gift of God's Love

“Love Covers All!”

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.
Proverbs 10:12

What a wonderful truth! Love covers all!

“*Love covers,*” so let it cover the things you find offensive or irritating about your brothers and sisters. Let it cover the hurts and pains of the past. “*Love covers,*” so let it do its work.

Love is such an important subject that the Apostle Paul gave it an entire chapter in his first letter to the Corinthians. First Corinthians 13 not only shows us what love is, but teaches us that we do not have to generate love, to work it up ourselves. We could not do it, even if we tried. Love is a gift from God. It is *His* love because He is love. Nothing can replace love, and we all need more of it.

*Love is a gift from God.
He's given it to you and me.*

Paul began that powerful thirteenth chapter by showing us how very important and indispensable love is:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13:1, NKJV

Speaking in tongues is a wonderful gift and it has lifted many of us into heavenly realms, but if it is not accompanied by love, we become “*as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*”

And though I have the gift of prophecy ... but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:2, NKJV

Even if we could receive a gift as great as that of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel (or even a gift as great as that of all of them put together) and we had no love, we could accomplish nothing. Every gift of the Holy Spirit, no matter how great, operates only in proportion to the love that is in our hearts for people. These gifts are given to us to serve and minister to the people.

And though I ... understand all mysteries ... but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:2, NKJV

Understanding God's mysteries is one of my personal aspirations, so I have had to make sure that love is always my motivation.

And though I have ... all knowledge ... but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:2, NKJV

There certainly couldn't be anything wrong with having "all knowledge," but without love it would be worthless.

And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:2, NKJV

Faith is powerful, and we all need more of it, but even faith without love leaves us empty. Even a faith so great that it could move mountains is nothing without love.

The Lord is putting it all into perspective. He is not saying that we don't need the ability to speak in tongues or to prophesy or to move mountains with our faith, but He is telling us that all of this

is nothing without the force that must motivate it – His love.

He went on:

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor ... but have not love, it profits me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:3, NKJV

What could possibly be wrong with giving all one's goods to feed the poor? We would all respect a person who did that. If it is done, however, it must be done with a heart of love for God. If not, it is an empty gesture.

What else did Paul say about love?

Love suffers long.

Love ... is kind.

Love does not envy.

Love does not parade itself.

Love ... is not puffed up.

1 Corinthians 13:4, NKJV

Love ... does not behave rudely.

Love ... does not seek its own.

Love ... is not provoked.

Love ... thinks no evil.

1 Corinthians 13:5, NKJV

Love ... does not rejoice in iniquity.

Love ... rejoices in the truth.

1 Corinthians 13:6, NKJV

Love ... bears all things.

Love ... believes all things.

Love ... hopes all things.

Love ... endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13:7, NKJV

Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:8, NKJV

I can rarely ever read these verses without feeling convicted, for I know that I have come short of the glory of God in this regard. I believe, however, that the Lord will help us, when we genuinely desire His help.

Who are we to love? Africans? Chinese? Indonesians? That's too easy. When we don't meet Chinese people often and, therefore, don't have many dealings with them, it is easy to love them. It is the people we must deal with on a daily basis that we find hard to love, and these are the very people we are commanded to love.

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love THY NEIGHBOUR as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to

*persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of
the law as transgressors.* James 2:8-9

The old adages, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" and "Familiarity breeds contempt," are only too true. We cannot pretend, however, to love those who are afar off, while failing to love those near at hand.

It is easier to love people who live across some ocean. We feel like we love the people of India and would give our lives for them. It is that person sitting next to us in church that we "just can't stand." Many have a burden for the Eskimos, perhaps for the same reason: they are so far away.

May God help us! He is calling us to unity with those we know and associate with on a daily basis. He wants the whole world to know that He sent the Son to save them, and they can only know as we show forth His love.

God's love extends to the nations, and if we are to have unity in the Body of Christ, our love must also encompass them. Some people have been serving the Lord for many years, yet they still have no love for the nations. This is hard for me to understand, but it happens. How can we love God and not love the nations?

Every time John the Revelator saw the throne of God, he also saw the nations, the multitudes.

We can never approach the throne of God without gaining a consciousness of the nations and of His love for them. God wants to challenge us and enlarge our vision for the people He loves.

Those who attend our campmeetings have been blessed to meet people from many nations who also come. Knowing these varied people has put a love for the nations in the hearts of many Americans who have come to the camp.

Once, when we were praying in Bethlehem many years ago, we were all under the power of God on the floor of the prayer room. We were lost in prayer for what must have been several hours. When we finally got to our feet and began to share the revelations we had received, one of our sisters said, "I just came back from a foreign country." When she said that, we all heard the sound of eternity in her voice, and we began to weep.

"I was carried away in the Spirit to a small house or a hut," she continued. "Outside the house was a woman who spoke to me in her language. I didn't know what language she was speaking, but I understood everything she said.

"When I spoke back to her, also in her language, she told me that her son was inside the house and was dying. I went inside and laid hands on the dying son, and he was healed and raised up.

“As I was getting ready to leave (and I was still speaking to this lady in her own language), she said to me, ‘I want you to come back.’

“I answered, ‘But I don’t know where I am.’

“Then the lady said, ‘This is Pokhara.’ ”

I was startled to hear her say it. She had no way of knowing where Pokhara was (a little west of Katmandu in Nepal). I knew only because I had been to Nepal myself.

She had described the hut as being “in front of a beautiful lake.” Behind the lake, she said, was a great mountain. She described its shape. I had seen that very mountain at Pokhara when I had gone to visit my friend the prince, the uncle of the present king of Nepal. He had a vacation house beside that lake with the mountain in the background.

The sister who had this vision had never been to Nepal and knew nothing about the people there, but God took her there in the Spirit and supernaturally placed in her heart a love for the Nepali people.

God’s love is just as supernatural as the gift of speaking in other tongues. It is not *of* us and does not emanate from us. If we could produce Holy Ghost love, we would bottle it, and this world would already be saved. If we could just get a quarter of an ounce of Holy Ghost love at a time and put it in a bottle for sale, we would already be millionaires.

We don’t need to buy it. Although God’s love is

priceless, He has promised it to us. Oh, if we could only appreciate God's love more, use it well and maintain proper relationships with those around us! What a different world this would be!

If we are willing to open ourselves up to the world, God will place His love in us and let it flow out through us to men and women everywhere. If we are willing to open our hearts to those around us, God will put His love in us and cause it to flow out through us to our family and friends and fellow church members. When we close our hearts to anyone, we stifle the love of God, and the flow of His love is quenched.

We cannot manufacture love. We have all tried it and found ourselves lacking. When we get in the presence of God, however, the thing that has irritated us so much of late will suddenly be forgotten. God has buckets of love extended over each of us, just ready to pour out upon us — if we are willing to receive their contents.

When God's love is at work in us, we don't even notice the things that bothered us so much before. That's not normal, but that's the way God does it.

There is no greater perfection than love. There is no higher knowledge than love. There is no greater wisdom than love. There is no greater revelation than love. We should not be surprised, therefore, that we sometimes are found lacking in this regard.

Just when we think we are getting good marks on the subject of love, somebody begins to rub us the wrong way, and it takes all we can muster just to overcome the irritation we feel.

Many times I hear people say, "I really liked that person — until I got to know him. Now I don't like him at all." It should be just the opposite. The more we get to know God's people, the more we should like them. When we learn about other's heartaches, their troubles, their struggles in life, the things that have happened to them to form them into who they are, it should all give us a much greater appreciation of them as persons. It lets us know why they react the way they do to certain things, and should allow us to more readily overlook those reactions. When we begin to feel the heartbeat of others and to glimpse their daily walks, our love and appreciation for them should grow accordingly.

It is impossible for us to walk in someone else's shoes, because we have each been given a different grace. What bothers me may not bother you at all, and what causes you to stumble may seem like a small thing to me. I may have experienced something that you have not yet come into, but you have surely experienced something that would benefit me. The Lord wants us to begin to look at each other as He looks, to see the heart, to see the spirit, and to forget about the petty things that normally bother

us so much. I know this is not the way of the world, but we are called to a higher realm, a realm of love.

My parents loved people and imparted that love to my sister, my brother and me. If the house is not full of people, I invite people home. Often someone returns with me to my home, either in Jerusalem or now in Virginia, from my times of ministry.

We need each other, and we will need each other more and more in the days just ahead. We could not have made it this far without help, and we will not make it home without help either.

You may not think that a certain part of your body is very important until it starts to malfunction and cause you pain all over. Even the smallest member of your body can bring suffering to the entire body. One little joint can make you moan and groan and complain. It can cause you so much pain that you can think of nothing else for days at a time. Suddenly, you know how important that part of your body is. God wants to show us, in the most painless fashion possible, how important we are to each other and how very much we need each other.

You may think that you have a valid reason for your bad feelings against some brother, but because of Calvary, there is no valid reason for feeling anything against a brother. You have been forgiven, so God expects you to forgive.

Sometimes, when we get upset over something that has been said or done that offended us, we don't think we ever need to see each other again. We're wrong, and we need to recognize how very wrong we are. It is never good to be too independent in the Lord.

One of the reasons God has called His servants to live by faith is so that they will have an appreciation for the members they serve. It doesn't feel good to a preacher to be economically dependent upon other people, but God has decreed it for a purpose.

No pastor is independent. Although we all depend on God, we also depend on one another. We are the family of God. We are all members of the Body of Christ, and we need each other.

The ability to love with no pretense, with no reservation, and with no ulterior motive is divine, supernatural, and God wants to put it into our hearts as a sign to all the world that we are His.

We all have days in which we do better in this regard than others. We all have times in which we excel and other times when it seems that everyone around us bothers us. It suddenly seems that everyone else is a porcupine, and we are getting stuck with their sharp quills. Even then, know that if you desire to love and you purpose in your heart to love, God will make His love more and more available to you.

Love of God and love of brother go together. When one is present, the other will automatically follow. Let us receive the gift of God's love so that we can go forth and share it with the world.

Chapter 18

Learning to Share Love

“Greet One Another With an Holy Kiss!”

Greet one another with an holy kiss.

2 Corinthians 13:12

The Bible makes it clear that we are not only to love one another, but we are to learn to share our love openly. Paul also wrote:

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.

Romans 12:10

I know how hard it can be for some to show affection openly. As I was growing up, I was not a very outgoing person either and did not always enjoy greeting all the church people. This concerned my father. “Ruth,” he told me in a very serious voice, “you simply must shake hands with the people before and

after church. You don't shake hands enough. You don't talk to the people enough. They must think that your mother and I have said something bad at home about them and that you are reacting because of what you heard us say."

The only reason I was not greeting everyone was that I was too shy. After I began to learn, however, how important it is to be demonstrative with our love, I asked God to help me, and He did. We cannot stand upon our own abilities, for our abilities are in God. This is what the life in the Spirit is all about. His power in me is changing me. I can do what I could not do before. I can be what I could not be before. If I am changed, then I can believe for change in someone else.

On one of my early trips to India, I had the privilege of speaking at a very wonderful conference held in the town hall in Kottayam, in Kerala. The place was packed. After I had spoken one Sunday morning, communion was served, and then all the people were given an opportunity to greet each other. I knew the Indian custom of the brothers greeting each other with a kiss on each cheek and the sisters doing the same with the sisters, but I didn't feel like kissing anyone, much less people I had never met before. *What should I do?* I wondered.

The platform was quite large, and I thought at first that I could surely not be expected to go all the

way over to where the sisters were gathered to greet them. Perhaps I would be excused from this part of the service. Then I noticed that everyone was looking at me, wondering what I would do, and I sensed that my future ministry in India depended on how I responded in that moment. As I made my way toward the ladies' section, I found myself praying the prayer I often pray in this situation: "Jesus, help me."

When we look up to Him and call out for His help, He is always there. When we cannot show love, He can. When we are not sufficient in ourselves, He is. When we are not able, He is able. If we are only willing, He will do the work for us.

Just at that moment, as I prayed, "Jesus, help me," a great bucket of honey from Heaven was tilted over and poured down on me. By the time I reached those sisters, I was weeping and feeling more love for them than I had ever imagined possible.

God's love is available to us. It is supernatural, but we can have it.

When we went to France to live in 1974, our goal was to reach out to the Jewish people all over Europe. The Charismatic movement had not yet come to France, a predominantly Catholic country, but God gave us a house just outside of Nice, in a beautiful medieval village by the name of Carros, and there we spent anywhere from four to six hours a day in prayer until some wonderful things began to

happen. Word began to spread about our meetings, and priests began to drive long distances to join us. One man came all the way from Barcelona, Spain, a two-day trip. Many drove from Paris. Some French laymen set off for our place as soon as they got off from work on Friday night and drove all night to get there. They stayed with us, praying and seeking God as long as they possibly could, leaving only in time to get back to work in Paris on Monday morning.

The French are very affectionate, and they kiss each other on both cheeks in greeting. When a priest arrived one day, I noticed that one of our sisters presented him with a stiff arm and hand for shaking. I felt that I must take her aside and speak with her about this.

"These men are hungry for God," I told her. "Let's not do anything that would alienate them. I understand your reluctance. I have the same problem myself, but we must let God change us. The French people are accustomed to warm greetings."

She said, "Ruth, my family was German; I grew up in a hard working immigrant family, and we just didn't kiss anybody."

"I know," I said, "but we've been fasting and praying for revival, and we must let God use us to warm the hearts of His people."

This sister fasted and prayed that week and let God change her, and when the group arrived the

following weekend, she was a different person. Since then she has been able to very affectionately greet others.

I know how hard it is. As we were growing up, the custom of kissing was not yet common in the church, but there was one lady who kissed everyone. As children, when we saw her coming, we would run to the other side of the church to avoid being kissed.

Demonstrating love to everyone did not come easily to me, but that is the purpose of the Holy Ghost's presence in us. We cannot fall back and blame our timid natures or our lack of training as children. We have God's love in us, and we can love because of it.

This is not a matter in which we are given a choice. Paul wrote to Timothy:

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

1 Timothy 1:5-7

“Charity,” or God's love, is “*the end of the commandment.*” Demonstrating love to one another, therefore, is a commandment, not a matter of choice.

I am often reminded of this passage when we are about to partake of the Communion, the Lord's Supper. As we regularly remember the sacrifice of the Lord's body on the cross and we also remember His universal Body, we need to remind ourselves of what the Christian life is all about. Without God's love in our hearts, without "*charity*" toward all men, our faith is in vain. That love must be demonstrated.

We sometimes feel genuinely victorious if we can just overcome our bad feelings for some person, but the calling we have from our loving Lord is not just to barely tolerate people. He wants to give us a supernatural and overflowing love for them that will be demonstrative.

During our campmeetings, we all live close together, and this is a wonderful experience. God is raising up many communities of believers around the world and is teaching the members of those communities to love one another and live together in a demonstration of that love. Circumstances sometimes force us to live together in this way, and when it happens, God is pleased.

There is an aspect of our perfection that cannot be realized when each of us retreats to his own territory. That's why it's good to be in a situation where there is no retreat and where we are forced to reach into God and get something more than we already have. This causes us to grow in God's love.

Usually, when God is asking us to do something new, we want to move into it slowly, building up little by little. With love and its demonstration, however, we can never do it in stages. Say "Jesus, help me," and plunge right in.

You might say, "But we don't even know these people." That may be true, but even when we know people, it is not always easy to love them, as we have seen. God's command of love and its demonstration is for those we know and those we don't know.

One of the greatest things to come out of the Charismatic Movement was a restoration of the demonstration of love shared among us. If you still have problems with such demonstration, ask God to help you.

Some people would rather not be overly friendly than risk being unholy. In God, we can have love flowing in purity and holiness. If God doesn't give us an ability in Him to be holy and sit next to a person of the opposite sex in the church service, then something's wrong with us. There is a holiness in God that is beautiful and does not preclude our showing love one to another.

So, you have a choice. You can just sort of stand there and say, "All right. I'll suffer and let you kiss me on the cheek," or you can meet the person half-way, kiss them on the cheek and let them kiss you in return. You simply must do it.

We are all members of the same Body. How can we not show love one to another? Each one is just as important to the Lord as the other. There are no exceptions, no limitations and no “buts” in God’s commandment of love.

Work toward that highest goal, *“the end of the commandment,” “charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”*

Part V

**Unifying Glory:
It's Coming**

Chapter 19

Making Progress Toward Unity

“We Are One Body in Christ!”

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Romans 12:4-5

Some progress is being made toward unity, for which we are grateful, but it is only a beginning. For the most part we are still a very fractured Body.

When the Charismatic movement first started, it was ecumenical, and God blessed it for that reason. The movement was made up of Spirit-filled Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Pentecostals, Catholics and many others. These people all got together in regular meetings, and sometimes there would be representatives from many different denominations in each meeting.

When the movement got so large that there were enough Presbyterian Charismatics to start a Charismatic Presbyterian conference or enough Lutherans to have a Charismatic Lutheran conference, that ecumenical dimension which brought in the greater glory was lost. It is time to get back to that earlier glory.

Please don't misunderstand what I am saying. These groups were still being blessed of God, and it is wonderful that there were enough Presbyterians to have a Spirit-filled Presbyterian gathering. After people began to gather in their own meetings, however, I noticed that the meetings no longer had the same touch of God upon them.

When Catholic Charismatics were meeting regularly with Protestant Charismatics, there was a special power evident that is not present when only Protestants or only Catholics meet. God loves the ecumenical aspects of our unity in diversity and blesses it, while the enemy hates it and does everything he can to destroy it.

One of the great strengths of our campmeetings in Ashland, Virginia, which have been going on every year now for forty-five years, is that we have people of many denominations all worshipping together: Pentecostals, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Catholics and many others.

We also have people from many nations. There are Nigerians, Indians, Taiwanese, Jamaicans, Mexicans,

etc. In fact, in any given summer we have people attending from nearly forty countries of the world. What a great strength!

I have a friend who pastors a church in Melbourne, Australia. Students from many parts of Asia and Africa go to Melbourne to study in the university, and some of them attend that church. How I love to go there! On any given Sunday, there may be people from fifteen or twenty different nations.

Our friend Pastor Isaiah Jones has a great diversity in his church in New York City. His people are from all the different islands of the Caribbean. If I didn't go to church there for any other reason, I would go because I love to hear the sounds from Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica and Martinique as well as the other islands. He has people from nearly twenty different Caribbean islands in his church. There is something very beautiful about people of many backgrounds and languages and cultures all worshipping together. That is what God is trying to do among us in the Spirit.

In the world, it seems to be much easier for people to agree. Some fashion models began to wear blue jeans, and suddenly people all over the world were wearing them. Suddenly, factories in many countries had to work overtime making denim material to meet the demand. God wants to stamp His image into us and to make us all like Him, but we are all

trying desperately to maintain our individualism and uniqueness. When God is finished with us, we will be more alike than different, because we will look like Him.

It was easy to identify the first generation of believers. People knew immediately that they had been with Jesus. They were so much like Him that people decided to call them Christians.

A friend of mine in Jerusalem had a dream, and he came and told me about it. He was very excited and told me in great detail what he had seen. "Ruth," he said, "the thing that amazed me was this: when I looked at myself in the dream, I looked like Jesus." He kept repeating it over and over because the dream had so impacted him.

That's what we will all look like in the end. He is making us like Himself and stamping His own image deep within our spirits.

My father loved the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and preached from it often. Nearly every sermon he preached over a period of many years had something from that chapter in it. It is a very powerful passage.

After the writer remembered the exploits of so many of the biblical heroes of faith, he concluded:

(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens

and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that THEY WITHOUT US SHOULD NOT BE MADE PERFECT.

Hebrews 11:38-40

Despite all their greatness, despite the fact that they had a good report, they could not enter into the fullness of the promise without us. And, let me tell you something, you and I will not inherit without our brothers. Our inheritance is to be shared with all the family of God, so we had better start liking one another.

There is a total perfection in the plan of God, a completion, but we will come to it together. If we can't have unity in our Sunday school class, where there are just a few of us, how can we have unity in the whole Sunday school department, when there are many more of us there? How can we have unity in our church as a whole? How can we have unity in the churches with which we cooperate in our area? How can we have unity among all the churches in our denomination? How can we relate to the rest of the world, where there are more than eighty-three million Spirit-filled people? God has said that we will, together with past generations, be perfected.

The saints of former generations could not be perfected without us, for God has determined that His whole family be blessed together. This is a great truth that more of us need to lay hold of.

The biggest contribution the Charismatic Renewal made to the Body of Christ universal was giving us this sense of family and of genuine love one for another. In the Charismatic meetings, we sang:

*We are one in the Spirit;
We are one in the Lord.*

*Bind us together, Lord;
Bind us together with cords that cannot be
broken.*

*I'm so glad I'm a part of the fam'ly of God —
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by
His blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod;
For I'm part of the fam'ly, the fam'ly of God.*

There were many other similar songs that gave us a sense not only that we were a family but that we should be proud of that fact and cultivate it. When we forget that we are family, we allow the enemy to make us partisans.

In our town, we have several supermarkets. There is a Ukrops and a Food Lion. I never say to my

neighbor, "Because I am of Ukrops and you are of Food Lion, we can no longer be friends." That would be foolish. This type of sectarianism demonstrates carnality and immaturity.

We're all family, no matter where we happen to buy our groceries. Some prefer the brand names, and others prefer generic products, but we don't let that separate us. We're family, and nothing must be allowed to come between us.

When we partake of the Lord's Supper (the Eucharist), it is important to be able to discern the body of the Lord that was broken for us, but, equally important, we must be able to discern His universal Body. He is the Head, but the members of His Body are to be found throughout the world, in every nation and among every people. Once when we had some personnel problems in Jerusalem, God told me that it was not enough just to love the people who had wronged us, that I must be able to stand before them and prophesy into their lives every great thing that I wanted Him to do for me.

I wanted that ability, and thank God He has given it to me.

Despite all the enemy's best efforts, God is bringing forth unity in the Body of Christ. He is causing us to be "*fitly joined together,*" one to the other, all members of the Body of Christ. Our God is greater than any enemy, and although it is the devil's goal to divide, God is able to unite us.

Be patient with those who are intolerant, because most of us were the same way at one time. Be patient with those who say they can't ride in the same car with someone else. It probably happened to you at some point in your life. Be patient with those who have preconceived ideas of what is happening in churches around them. You were no doubt the same way at one time.

Chapter 20

Unity: By Choice or by Force

“For This Cause Many Are Weak and Sickly Among You!”

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30

God has ordained dire consequences for those who fail to “discern the Lord's body.” We have a choice. We can allow the glory of God to change us willingly, or we can allow Him to put us through difficult circumstances to soften and mellow us. The choice is ours. One way or the other, God will bring unity to the Church.

Our friend Norman Williams, who was a survivor of that terrible 747 plane crash a number of years

ago in the Canary Islands, was grateful to be spared by God. Of the nearly six hundred passengers on the two airplanes that crashed into each other on the runway, a little more than sixty survived. His deliverance was all the more remarkable because he was the only one of the survivors who was not left either physically or emotionally crippled by the experience. He suffered only a broken ankle, and that healed very quickly.

“Ruth,” he told me later, “they took me to a Catholic hospital, and there, on the wall of my room, was a crucifix. I had hated the Catholics for many years, and I hated the crucifix. During those days I spent in that Catholic hospital, however, God changed my heart, and now, for the first time in my life, I love Catholics.”

I said, “Norman, that’s wonderful. If the accident hadn’t happened, you probably would not have come to speak for us (we were worshiping in a Catholic church on Mount Zion in Jerusalem at the time). Even if you had come, you might have felt uncomfortable in this building.”

I’m glad I didn’t need to suffer through a plane crash in order to change my attitude toward other believers. My mind was changed by the glory of the Lord. I do not feel the need for striking out verbally at those who are different from me. Jesus wouldn’t do it if He were here, and He is calling us to stop

doing it too. If we persist, He will use other measures to deal with us.

If we refuse to act on our own to break down the walls of division among us, God will do it the hard way. If we are not willing to lay down our differences and embrace each other, then God will allow difficult times to come upon us so that we recognize what He has done in our fellow believers. If we refuse to allow the fire of the glory of God to change us in this regard, then the fires of persecution and hardship will come to change us. It's our choice.

I love to attend church services in China. There are many things I enjoy about the country: seeing the Great Wall, shopping and visiting the museums. There is something special, however, about going to church in China. The more Sundays I can be in China, the happier I am.

The reason I enjoy the Chinese services so much is that no church in the world is a better example of what the Lord wants to do in His people. The Chinese believers are being made perfect in one, for people of many denominations attend the same services and worship together. This came about largely through the many years of persecution the Chinese believers suffered during the infamous Cultural Revolution and through the various Communist regimes that followed it. God has ways of uniting us when we resist His Spirit.

A Nigerian brother attending our campmeeting said that persecution had done something wonderful for the Nigerian church. Through suffering, believers were beginning to lay aside doctrinal differences and other petty things that would normally have separated them and were coming together.

To me it is sad to think that we can only come together if we are focusing on persecution, hardship or loss. Unity is unity, but I would prefer a unity that comes because we welcome it, not one that comes through circumstances.

Because the Church has left its first love in this regard and has become a respecter of persons, God sometimes has to allow troubles to come our way. He wants to change us by His Spirit, but when we refuse and resist, He does it in other ways.

It is not necessary that we experience trouble. It is not imperative that we be taught by the circumstances of life. If we would just open our hearts to the Spirit of God and allow Him to work in us, ridding us of all prejudice, we could avoid many of the difficult things that often happen to bring people together.

Our Lord is more aware of His soon coming than any of us could ever be, and He is doing something amazing in our midst in this regard. If we are not laying down our hatred and mistrust voluntarily, tests, trials and afflictions of life come, and the result

is the same. This is only God's second best for us. He wants us to allow the Spirit to work in us, and to produce a glorious miracle of testimony to the love of the living God.

Either the freedom of the glory will change us, or the fiery trials of persecution will do the job. Unity: by choice or by force. It's up to us.

Chapter 21

The Certainty of Unity

“I Will Build My Church!”

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 16:18-19

God has promised to answer our prayers, so should we conclude that the prayer of Jesus will be answered as well? Most definitely. How could God answer our prayers and not answer the prayer of His only begotten Son?

Jesus' prayer will be answered — no matter how impossible that may seem to us at this moment in

time. From now until the end of time as we know it, we will experience a great influx of souls into the Kingdom of God and a great coming together of those souls into one Body that praises and worships and glorifies Jesus and that shows the world His love. Although we could say that Jesus' prayer has been answered in measure during the past two millennia, it is now time for it to be answered in fullness.

We are now living in the time of the revelation of the glory of God, the time which Isaiah prophesied would come, in which *"the knowledge of the glory of the Lord [would] cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."* God is doing it before our very eyes. He is bringing forth a glorious revelation of Himself, and because He is love, He is restoring love and harmony to His family.

"That they all may be one." Is it possible? Will we ever see it in this world? Absolutely. It might take some shaking to bring it to pass, but God will do it. He may have to do it "in spite of" some of us, but He will do it nevertheless. Some of us may refuse to participate in it, but God will do it anyway, and those who hold back will be the losers. Stop resisting unity. The prayer of Jesus will be answered — whether you like it or not. His Body will be united, and nothing can prevent it from happening.

So, do we just sit back and watch it happen? To the contrary. When we pray, we have to be sure that we

are working to bring about the fulfillment of what we pray for. If we are working against our prayers, we cannot expect God to override our opposition. When we pray the prayer of Jesus that we be “*one*,” we must make every possible effort to remove the obstacles and allow it to come to pass.

If we are praying for an open door, we should move in the direction of the open door, and if we are praying for unity among our brothers, we must learn to hold our peace and to do whatever else is necessary to promote unity. We would much rather give people a piece of our minds, but if we insist on doing it, we not only lose personally, but we set back the process of unity for the whole family of God.

If you are intent on seeing the problems people have, you will find them. They are there. They are not very well hidden most of the time. If you are intent, however, on finding a solution, it is there to be found as well.

If your desire is to be at the forefront of what God is doing in these last days, you must allow Him to give you an enlargement of spirit toward all the family of God. Learn to start emphasizing the similarities among us rather than the dissimilarities, to point to the good things rather than to the things that you find wrong.

My father was not a highly educated man, but he had a great reservoir of God-given wisdom. He

always had a wonderful homily to tell that would help us understand the heart of God. His wisdom helped shape the lives of my brother and me. One day Daddy said to us:

It's like a man who has a Cadillac, but his Cadillac has a flat tire. One man walks by and says, "Oh, look at that beautiful Cadillac," but somebody else walks by and says, "My, look at that flat tire."

There will always be some flat tires around, but we can look beyond them and see the Cadillacs if we have a perceptive eye.

Some have tried to live in harmony with others and failed. If you are one of those, don't feel bad. We have all failed a few times. Keep trying. Victory will come.

Every time I have preached a sermon along these lines, I have been tested on it, and I haven't always had immediate victory, but I keep working at it. If we fail the test of unity, we can try again and again until we get it right. It's worth the continued effort; so when you stumble, get up, brush yourself off, ask God to forgive you, and start over again.

As ministers, let us cast off the jealousies that plague our profession. There is no room for jealousy in the Lord. There is also no room for covetousness,

envying, strife or bitterness. Start doing those things that promote unity.

Paul declared our unity to be part of the finished work of Christ:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28

Just as our salvation has already been paid for and our healing has already been paid for, our unity has already been provided for through the sacrifice of Christ. We are “*all one in Christ Jesus.*” Let us contend for it, just as we contend for every other promise of God’s Word.

Why are we resisting God in this matter? Why keep building up walls, when God is trying to tear them down? Why keep finding differences with each other, when God is trying to take away all differences? Why keep making distinctions, when God is trying to erase every distinction? He has “*broken down the ... wall of partition between us*”:

For he is our peace, who hath made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

Ephesians 2:14

If God has made provision through Christ for every wall of partition to be broken down, why do we keep holding them up? Let them fall. Let every wall of division come tumbling down, walls of denominationalism, walls of nationalism, walls of racism, walls of sexism. Don't support a single wall that keeps people apart.

The wall that separated the two Germanys came down, and there is now, once again, one Germany. East Germans and West Germans are now all just Germans. The two opposing countries have become one. Every Christian should take a lesson from this fact. Walls that divide people are not good things to build. As President Ronald Reagan said in his famous speech in Berlin, "Tear down this wall."

If someone had not torn down the Berlin Wall, on November 9, 1989, individual Germans would still be either West Germans or East Germans and would still harbor bitterness against each other. Because someone had the courage to tear the wall down, Germans are no longer saddled with that distinction and have been able to join hands and move forward for the common good.

Political walls have fallen all over Eastern Europe and throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is time for the walls that keep Christians apart to come down too. Let them fall.

The walls that hinder us may not be as easily defined as the Berlin Wall was. Perhaps our walls

cannot be seen and described. They are walls that we have built up in our thinking and in our spirits. They are walls nonetheless, and it is time to tear them down.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, a large group of East Germans visited us in Jerusalem for the first time. We had a wonderful time of rejoicing together in the Holy City. As the walls come down in our spirits, we will be surprised how many people God will bring into His Kingdom. The existing walls are hindering many. Let those obtrusive walls come down.

Your walls must come down, and my walls must come down before God can do in us the greater things He desires. Although it seems difficult in the natural, we can believe God for it to happen — and quickly.

Sometimes we are willing for the walls to come down, but we maintain our fences. Some of them are beautiful picket fences. I was in Vancouver, British Columbia, with Rev. Gideon Chu, pastor of a predominantly Chinese congregation. Pastor Chu and his people had been worshiping in a borrowed gymnasium for several years. When a pastor does not have his own church building, he thinks and prays and dreams of a building twenty-four hours a day. That night I saw a vision of Pastor Chu in the courtyard of a picture-perfect, Christmas-card-type

New England church building with steeple and stained-glass windows and all the rest. My first thought was that this was the church building God was going to give Pastor Chu and his congregation, and I knew the pastor would love it.

As I continued to see the vision, Jesus, who was standing in the churchyard with Pastor Chu, took him by the hand and led him in the direction of a picket fence that surrounded the church. They came to a gate, and Jesus bent over to open the gate and then led Pastor Chu outside of the picket fence. There were green pastures and fields filled with ripened grain, with no fences dividing them nor any other separation as far as the eye could see in every direction. I knew that God was going to lead Pastor Chu into revival, and extend his influence far beyond the borders of his own congregation. Some months later I heard that great revival had come to him personally and to his church and people. Today he is fulfilling the vision, and his field has become the world.

I have been personally blessed to spend many years overseas, living in many different countries and with many different peoples. I began with the Chinese in 1958. I have loved every place that God has sent me, and there is not a people in the world He has not placed in my heart. I could be happy to live in any nation of the Earth until Jesus comes.

I love the Indians, the Africans, the Orientals, the South Americans, the Scandinavians, the Middle Easterners and the people of the Caribbean. God has done this supernatural work in my heart by His Spirit. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, East and West meet at the cross of Jesus. Not only do we meet, but we embrace, and we become one in Christ Jesus.

God causes the blacks and the whites of South Africa to love one another. He causes Pakistanis to love Indians and Indians to love Pakistanis. This may not be the natural order of things, but it is the order in the Spirit.

The love of God not only goes beyond denomination; it goes beyond nationality and race. In Christ, there is no difference between a Chinese, an African, an Australian, an English person and an American. God's love goes beyond such petty differences. We are all one through Jesus Christ.

Jesus said:

Love one another, as I have loved you.

John 13:34 and 15:12

When Jesus loved us and gave His life for us, He made no distinctions. He loved all of us, and we are called to do the same.

I have never been ashamed to be identified as a Pentecostal. I am a Pentecostal in experience and

in doctrine, but I am not a Pentecostal in the narrowness of denominational boundaries. My experience as a child of God reaches out beyond borders, and I am able to relate to the people of God — wherever they happen to be found.

I love to be part of the great Charismatic gatherings around the world. To me, there is nothing more wonderful than being able to lift up my voice with thousands of other believers and sing the praises of God. I love to worship with Charismatic Catholics and Charismatic Episcopalians and Charismatic Whatever. When I do it, I am fulfilling Christ's command: *"Love one another, as I have loved you."*

We have all found it difficult to love certain people, but that is the beautiful thing about the Christian life. It is about doing the impossible, and God can enlarge each of us in this area.

I am determined to stand before the Lord with an inheritance from the nations, and I want to encourage you to let God enlarge your heart with His love so that you, too, might reap the harvest of love in these last days.

Get a good map of America and a good map of the world and keep them with your Bible. Let God put other places and other peoples into your spirit, so that you might have a spiritual inheritance all over this great nation and all over the world.

Don't worry about how to pronounce every name. I have traveled for years, and I still don't know how to pronounce the name of every single place in the world. If God puts a place in your heart, He will help you learn to pronounce it.

As our ministry has grown, it has been difficult to get to know everyone who attends campmeeting or everyone who visits us in Jerusalem. I enjoyed it when we knew everyone personally. By having such personal friendships, we are able to enrich each other in God. When we tell each other about the good things God has done for each of us, it causes our spirits to rise up with excitement.

When one of us is weak, a strong one can help him. That one who is strong today may need help himself on another occasion. The Scriptures tell us:

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. Romans 15:1-3

One may have plenty, while another suffers need; but one day the one who now has plenty may himself have a need:

That now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want.

2 Corinthians 8:14

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Acts 4:32-35

Family of God. Body of Christ. Get it into your spirit. We are “*members one of another*” (Romans 12:5 and Ephesians 4:25). You have a family that is concerned about you, that is praying for you and believing for you. You need never feel alone.

Sometimes we seem so spread out. But no matter where we happen to be, that doesn't change the fact that we belong to a big, wonderful family.

“*Let brotherly love continue,*” no matter what is

shaking. No matter how the shakings come, “*let brotherly love continue.*” If everything around about you shakes and falls apart and you can no longer recognize anything at all, still “*let brotherly love continue.*” Let this continuation be because of our love for God and for one another, until His return.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.

Romans 12:6

Just because something is difficult or that we are far from it is not a valid reason for giving up. We will get there. Let’s take some first steps, and we’ll be surprised how God will help us.

We must learn to do what the Apostle Paul said:

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14

If we never get started working toward that lofty goal, we can never expect to arrive at our destination. Let God begin a work in you today.

Remember, glory brings unity and unity brings glory. One of the easiest ways to experience the glory is by singing in the Spirit. The more you sing in the Spirit, worshiping the Lord, the greater the glory that will be manifested. And in the glory, your heart will be brought into unity with God and with your brethren. This causes you to experience *Unifying Glory*.

Chapter 22

Reaching out to “Devout Men” Everywhere

**“There Were ... Devout Men, out of
Every Nation Under Heaven!”**

*And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews,
devout men, out of every nation under heaven.*

Acts 2:5

This message of unity is more important right now than at any other time in history. Just as a wave of glory swept men and women “*of every nation under heaven*” into the Kingdom at the beginning of the Church age, we are about to see a wave that will sweep people of diverse backgrounds and experiences into the Kingdom at the end of this Church age. You and I must be ready for it.

Until the Day of Pentecost, the disciples had a good thing going in their exclusive Jesus Club. What happened that day removed the exclusivity and

made the Church all-inclusive. They had welcomed a tax collector and a doctor into the group, but now there were suddenly Parthians and Medes and the inhabitants of Cappadocia and many other places. There were Jews, and there were also proselytes (converts). Very suddenly the Church went from a small group of followers of Jesus to a great multitude of believers that included people from “*every nation under heaven.*”

Until that day, the disciples had experienced some high moments in which they had ministered to hundreds and sometimes thousands, but in general, their days had been spent with their limited group. Now all that had changed! Now they had people of many language groups and of many cultural traditions. What a lot of cultural adjustment that must have meant for the group!

Not many days had gone by, for example, before the Greeks were complaining that their widows were not being well cared for, and the disciples had to appoint deacons to do this work. And this was only the beginning. Beyond this, we cannot begin to perceive the cultural changes the disciples were faced with in those days.

It is time to broaden our horizons. Most Christians view the people of the world in terms of “the saved” and “the unsaved,” and some have never bumped into “*devout men,*” but they’re out there.

God sees much more potential for the Kingdom than we do.

The word *gentile* means “heathen.” When the gentiles came into the Kingdom at Caesarea, the Jewish believers were amazed. They could not imagine that the gentiles could be saved. God didn’t look upon them as heathen, however. He looked upon them as “*devout men*,” men hungering after righteousness. Such a man was Cornelius:

A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. Acts 10:2

Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. Acts 10:22

Many who have not yet moved into the revelation that you and I know concerning the salvation of the Lord have a heart after God. We imagine that only those belonging to certain denominations or groups of denominations can be saved, but God has set no such limitations. We automatically exclude the people of certain religious backgrounds, but God does not. If we don’t quickly drop our aversion to certain

labels, we may miss much of the harvest God wants us to reap for the Kingdom.

Many Christians, for instance, would never use the two terms "*Jews*" and "*devout men*" in the same sentence, but God does. "Aren't the Jews the ones who rejected Christ?" some might ask. Many of them did, but God judges individuals, not groups. Many Jews alive today have never met Jesus personally, and many others have never even heard of Him. They are hungry for God and are seeking after Him with all their hearts. They have not rejected Christ. They are "*devout men.*"

There are still "*devout men*" living in Jerusalem to whom God wants to send us, and when you speak to them, don't speak to them as if they were heathen. Speak to them as people searching after God, people who know the psalms and the prophets better than we do. They recognize that they have not come into the fullness of revelation, and we must let God use us to bring them into that fullness. What we must *not* do is bruise these hungry souls and send them running in the opposite direction.

There are many other "*devout men*" whom we have not yet considered. Once when I was speaking in Utah, a bishop of the Mormon Church came to the meetings out of respect for a relative. I could see that he was moved by the worship.

It was my birthday and they had a nice lunch for us, and this man was invited. I made a point of

sitting next to him, and we talked about Israel since the Mormons have a great love for Israel.

Before we parted, I asked him if he could come back for the evening service, and he said that he couldn't possibly come. Later, when I looked out over the evening congregation, there he was. During the worship, his hand went up. He, too, was praising God. We must not limit what God can do and whom He can save. If the heart of a man desires to worship, who are we to prevent him?

When we were first saved, we didn't "have all our ducks in a row," so to speak. We still had a lot to learn. When we were first filled with the Spirit, we were still far from perfect. We would have resented it at the time if anyone had doubted that we were really saved or filled with the Spirit. God did it for us, in spite of our imperfections — so that He could lead us on toward perfection.

God is calling us to drop our judgmental spirits. If we have come into new revelation, new music, new insight and new anointing, we can also come into a new attitude toward one another. The new wind that's blowing, the new river that's flowing, and the new thing that God is doing is bringing us to the point of losing our judgmental spirits, the critical part of us that robs us of being a blessing to others. It also robs us of receiving many blessings for ourselves.

As soon as we hear a certain label attached to a person, we close our hearts to them, and conse-

quently, we are not able to bless them. We may meet the hungriest person we have ever seen, but if we believe that the person cannot possibly be among the "*devout men*," we are unable to bless him. If we cannot conceive of people as being seekers after God, we cannot help them. This must change if we are to reap the harvest of the end times.

Some believers here in America, for instance, cannot minister to Native Americans. Their preconceived ideas about Native Americans and what they are like are far too strong. It is time to move beyond our preconceived ideas, for God is pouring out His Spirit upon the Native American population.

We are about to see a great outpouring upon the Jewish people as well. One evening during one of my recent trips to Jerusalem, a Jewish couple came to see me. I hadn't seen them for several years, and had inquired about their welfare. They were well, I was told, but they had not been able to have children. Since we were having many miracles with barren couples, I suggested that they come to see me.

I told the couple stories about other people who had been unable to have children and how God had given them a miracle, and then I began to pray. Later I prophesied and then I started singing in the Spirit and invited them to join me. They both sang in other tongues and magnified the name of the Lord. Before they left that evening, they were overflowing with the Spirit.

Stop pulling in your skirts when you walk by certain groups. That’s what the Pharisees did. Just as God has called us to embrace the city of Jerusalem and take it to our hearts, so He calls us to embrace her people and many others we thought we could never embrace. Reach out and begin to embrace men everywhere, regardless of the label they wear. Make up your mind that you will be able to reach out and bless all men everywhere. Refuse to be petty. Refuse to be small. Develop a greatness of spirit and give people time to grow.

Sometimes we are terrible salespeople. Those who work in sales have to learn that they can just as easily “unsell” a product as they can sell it. Sometimes the sale is made in the first five minutes, and then, during the next five minutes, the sale falls through. Salesmen have to learn to cut their sales pitch before they become counterproductive. May the Lord teach us how to deal with “*devout men*” everywhere so that we can successfully bring them into the Kingdom of God.

Ask God today to change the way you look at people. It might help to remember what you were like when the Lord began to deal with you. Personally, I can’t imagine what it would have been like if someone had tried to deny me the privilege of satisfying the spiritual hunger within me, just because I happened to be of some unrecognized group. What

a tragedy it would have been if I had been deprived of blessing because I said the wrong things, because I didn't have all the right answers or because I didn't know how to express what I was feeling. Stop denying the "*devout men*" in any group.

Was Peter's vision on the rooftop in Joppa from God? Cornelius also had a dream. Was that from God? After all, he was not born again yet.

The dream was from God. God can change another man just as He has changed you and me. He is taking the narrowness out of our hearts and removing the walls built up in our spirits so that we can see the greatness of what He desires to do worldwide.

David DuPlessis, who was known as "Mr. Pentecost" and was used of God to bless people of many denominations, said that when the river rises, the pens that men have built for sheep can no longer keep the sheep apart. There may have been many sheep pens, with the animals divided among them, but when the water rises above the fences the sheep also rise and begin to flow together. The pens are no longer separating the sheep. All are suddenly together in the flow of the river. God is beginning to do this work in the Spirit. In the great flow of His river, all folds are uniting, as all streams grow and merge.

When I first went out to Hong Kong in 1958 the ship I was on passed through the Panama Canal. In the canal the ships pass through a series of locks.

Once a ship gets into a lock, the water in that lock begins to rise, and it gradually lifts the ship up to another level. The ship then moves from one lock to the next until it is on an entirely different level.

In the Panama Canal, the waters of the East flow together with the waters of the West, the Atlantic waters flowing with the Pacific waters. This is also the way God is doing it. He is lifting us, one step at a time, until we can join hands with brothers of other flows.

It took years of hard digging to make the Panama Canal across the Isthmus, but now ships move through it swiftly and easily. Let's get busy preparing the spiritual canal in which all of God's waters can flow together, joining the disparate parts of His family.

My good friend Debbie Kendrick recently had a vision of the canal. She said:

The Lord spoke to me and said, “I am shortening the distance between East and West.” I saw the two massive bodies of water — the Pacific and the Atlantic — and I knew they were the Church. The one body represented the churches of the East — the Orthodox churches, the Coptic churches and the Roman Catholic Church — and the other body represented the Protestants. I saw that man had engineered and

constructed a bridge to reach from the Atlantic to the Pacific, crossing dry land through the Isthmus of Panama. When it was finished, the waters of the two great bodies could commingle and flow together.

The Isthmus of Panama had been an impasse that prevented the two great bodies of water from coming together, and as thousands of laborers dug huge trenches across the land, I could see the waters actually anxious and straining to come together.

There were other bodies of water that formed on the land. These were very different, for they were made up of fresh water. As the two great bodies of water moved toward each other, these small pools and streams of fresh water were taken in by the larger bodies, so that there were no longer large bodies and small bodies. They were all one. This is what God is doing in the Earth today, making of His many children, one great Body.

I loved the bumper sticker that said, "Be patient. God's not finished with me yet!" Consider that truth before you begin to judge others, and let God give you today a new approach to the people you work with, the people you worship with, and the people you otherwise come in contact with on a regular basis.

God has destined us to have a glorious unity in Him, and that glorious unity will only come through *Unifying Glory*. The glorious unity is the finished product, but the process necessary to achieve it is carried out by God’s *Unifying Glory*. Glorious unity comes out of *Unifying Glory*. Let all the fences be carried away by the flow of the river of God’s Spirit, and don’t try to erect them again.

When we were in Macon, France, in the fall of 1999, people came to our meetings from many different European countries. It was a joy to look over the congregation and to see the variety of God’s children present. The people were sitting together in such a way that we could not easily detect at a glance which were the French, the Swiss, the Italians, the Austrians or the Spanish. The delegations carried no signs and bore no labels. They were all intermingled. There was not a separate section reserved for one group or another. They were all together.

The same was true of the different denominations within a specific nationality. As everyone began to worship the Lord together, we could not tell from which church they had come. What a wonderful flow of the unity of the Spirit we experienced in those days! This is a foretaste of what God is about to do all over the world.

When I was ministering in Mexico, New York, with Pastor Ron Russell in December of 1999, a Catholic

priest came with half of his congregation. The local Methodist pastor was present. Two Assembly of God pastors' wives were there. Some Church of God leaders were there, as well as folks from other denominations. What a sweet spirit was present in that meeting! That's what God wants to see, and when He sees it, He blesses it. This revival is moving more and more in the direction of *Unifying Glory*.

This is not to say that we will all become alike or that we will all become part of the same church organization. We will always be "*members in particular,*" but we are also intended to be "*one body and one spirit.*" God has destined us to be interdependent and to help each other.

It is sometimes difficult, if not impossible, for college graduates to find anything in common with kindergartners, and the two groups are bored with each other. Some who have moved to spiritual heights of maturity have no patience with others who are in lower stages of development. Jesus loves both groups.

We find it easy to be with people who are on our level of understanding, but what God is calling us to do is to teach others. If we are to relate to the various branches of God's family, we must reach out and embrace any unifying factors we can find.

Some people may not want to be one with us, but that doesn't matter. We can still be one with them.

Some might ask, “Does it work that way?” Oh yes, it does. We can be one with others even if they don’t want to be one with us. That may sound like a contradiction, but it is not. Spirituality causes us to reach out and embrace all those who love God.

“But what about their doctrine?” This isn’t about doctrine. It’s about family. A friend of mine called to say that she had located a wonderful church in her town and had begun attending. She was very blessed there. The next time I talked to her she had decided never to attend that church again. When I asked her why, she said, “You should have heard what the pastor preached.” This woman is strong in the Word of God, and she was disturbed that the pastor had said things with which she didn’t agree.

“Well,” I said, “he’s just immature. Give him an opportunity to grow.”

“Oh, I can’t do that,” she told me.

“Why not?” I asked. “You told me that he had power and that signs and wonders and miracles were evident in his ministry. Surely he will grow in those other areas.”

I told her about several people I knew who had had similar limitations but who had outgrown them. Later she called again to say that she had gone back to the church. “And,” she said, “he’s already getting better.”

Give people an opportunity to grow, and while they are yet growing, maintain the unity in the Spirit

anyway. It goes beyond mere ideas, beyond doctrine, beyond the way we express things. It is a unity born of the heart, of the Spirit, of the glory of God.

Lord,

Make us one. Send your Unifying Glory into our midst and join us together by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

Amen!

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