

FAITH SONS OF GOD

**INTO HIS HARVEST
UNITING IN
LOVE**

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May 24, 2015

“My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”— *Colossians 2:2-3*

The goal of the Apostle Paul was for the followers of Jesus to be ‘united in love’ in order to bring to life the Master’s way of doing things – the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge. After so many centuries, it is time for such a united effort to surface and sweep over the earth. It is only Jesus’ way of doing things that will bring heaven down, bring suffering and injustice to an end, and bring men and women of all races and national groups together as one united family poised to receive the foreordained gift of everlasting life. (*Ephesians 1:3-5*)

Recall that it is “in the name of Jesus that every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (*Philippians 2:10-11*) Thus, every Christian, every Jew, every Muslim, every Hindu, every Buddhist, and even every agnostic and every atheist shall eventually bow to Jesus. But that cannot occur until those who profess to follow Jesus unite and become living breathing examples of the love of the Christ.

Our generation is ripe for such true unity, and we applaud all faith sons who are spreading this unity by reaching across the manmade sectarian boundaries to find and join hands with the whole “family of believers throughout the world.” (*1 Peter 5:9*) They are learning how to foster unity, without requiring uniformity, and they are learning to view others the way Jesus views them.

Of course, not all have chosen to employ the bold method introduced in this series of articles of visiting other churches and trying to uplift their spiritual conversation. Many of our brothers are using more traditional and/or familiar methods such as the ‘passerby’ method of casually speaking with family, friends, workmates, or sending articles and emails, or sparking conversations on social media sites. But whatever method we use, by letting go of pride, self-importance and self-promotion of our own little groups, we can foster unity in the glorious brotherhood of faith sons and ready our world for greater things.

Cease Judging and Controlling

We cannot stress enough the need to humble ourselves and let go of judging or trying to control the spiritual lives of others. Recall the counsel given to the Apostle John when he and his associates attempted to control others:

“Teacher,” said John, “we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.” “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us. Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.”— *Mark 9:38-41*

In this account, there were others in Jesus' day who were not a part of the group that was following Jesus, but who recognized the power of Jesus' name and used it in their ministry. And this other group was performing great works using Jesus' name. John and his associates tried to stop the other group, believing the apostles and those following with them had a monopoly on Jesus' name and power. But Jesus did not agree. He made it clear that all who do good works in his name are 'with us,' not against us, and he added that anyone who supports a work being done in his name would receive a reward. Clearly, Jesus was not into dividing or controlling people.

He was the Master, true, but not in the sense that we are his slaves. He never 'lorded it over' the flock.

"Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."— *Matthew 20:25-28*

Jesus could have easily and justifiably demanded all peoples come to serve him. But he did not. He chose to take the lead in serving others. He was the Master because of his technique and method of teaching. He mastered life; he mastered faith; and he mastered the 'fruits of the spirit.' He was the perfect example of faith and godly living. If we are to carry his message as his ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20), then we, too, must learn to be masters of life and faith and the fruits of the spirit in all of our dealings with others.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."— *Galatians 5:22-26*

An important aid in developing unity in faith is to be able to distinguish between salvation and non-salvation issues. Most of the things that divide us are manmade, man-created, and man-promoted doctrines and ideas, none of which determine whether we will survive after death. What does it matter whether one believes God is a trinity or not? Whatever His constitution, we all love and worship Him. What does it matter whether man has an immortal soul or whether man will be given an immortal soul? The point is that those who conquer will have one. What does matter, and what does unite us, is our faith in Jesus as the only means for salvation, our whole-souled love for the Father, and our love and kindness toward our fellow man. These are ideals that we can all rally around. These are concepts that will foster the type of unity that can change the world.

Don't forget that our adversaries do not care which church we belong to. Look at what is happening to our brothers and sisters in Africa and the Middle East. They are suffering great physical harm, even beheadings, for their faith in Jesus. Their oppressors do not care which denomination of Christianity they belong to. They do not quiz them on doctrinal matters. All that matters is that they bear the name of Jesus and are exercising faith in that name. Does not their faith deserve our respect and recognition? All who willingly pick up the 'cross of Christ,' are baptized into his death, and who share in his sufferings are worthy of our highest honor.

Note that each and every one of them can chose another destiny. They can renounce Jesus and save their mortal lives. Yet that is not the path they are choosing. They are demonstrating a living faith – more faith than most Christians of any denomination are called to exercise. We are confident the Father is well pleased with their faith and we have no doubt that their eternal adventure is assured.

Back to the Basics

Over the centuries, the followers of Jesus have allowed themselves to be divided and to fight among themselves for supremacy. Enough time as passed to show that dividing, usurping, and judging the body of Christ does not work. We need to get back to the basics, founded on the plain and open teachings of Jesus, not the teachings and prophetic interpretation of men and organizations:

“Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. **For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly?** Are you not acting like mere humans? For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere human beings? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? **Only servants, through whom you came to believe**—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.”—*1 Corinthians 3:1-9*

All who profess union with Jesus Christ are equal in God’s eyes. There is no one appointed as our masters or intercessors. Whatever group we belong to is only a subset of the larger group of faith sons.

“So in Christ Jesus **you are all children of God through faith**, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**”—*Galatians 3:26-29*

All who profess union with Christ have the spirit of God within them. Who are we to try to destroy God’s temples?

“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person; **for God’s temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.** Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness”; and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.” **So then, no more boasting about human leaders!** All things are

yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.”—*1 Corinthians 3:16-23*

Can we take that counsel to heart? Can we stop boasting about our religious associations and welcome as our brothers and faith sons of God all who profess union with Christ? Can we get back to the basics and dare to rely solely on the plain and open teachings of Jesus as our guide? Can we abandon hateful speech, negative talk and self-grandiosity and pursue the better way of effecting lasting change by uniting in love, in faith and in destiny? If we can, we will be able to better appeal to our youth, the non-Christian communities, and to the world at large. And we can, as individuals, take those ‘treasures of wisdom and knowledge’ into our secular communities and improve our world.

Our generation is ripe for such an effort as evidenced by the rise in non-denominational churches and the mass exodus from traditional authoritative churches. More and more people are identifying themselves as ‘spiritual, but not religious’ and more people are becoming agnostic even atheistic because they see religion as a divisive force, not a unifying source. But we can change that.

We need to stop spinning in endless circles in expectation of doom by an angry potentate. We need to accept Jesus as the Prince of Peace, the one who brought spiritual liberty to all and who seeks all to attain to life everlasting, and start progressing forward with the assurance of spirit agencies supporting us in this endeavor. And we need to lock arms in a show of spiritual solidarity based of mutual respect and devotion to the Master and then do our utmost to promote faith as the unifying process that will change the world. It took us 2,000 years to get here so change won’t happen overnight. But it can and will happen, not by power and might, but by faith and spirit.

We welcome your thoughts.

See related articles: [Fitly United in the Same Mind](#); [Unity, Not Uniformity](#); [The Plain and Open Teachings of Jesus](#); [Bringing Heaven Down - Turning Back Destruction](#); [Bringing Heaven Down - Training Our Perceptive Powers](#).

“Elaia Luchnia”