



THE UNITED PRAYER

Matthew 18:19-20

In a Peanuts cartoon Lucy demanded that Linus change TV channels, threatening him with her fist if he didn't. "What makes you think you can walk right in here and take over?" asks Linus. "These five fingers," says Lucy. "Individually they're nothing but when I curl them together like this into a single unit, they form a weapon that is terrible to behold." "Which channel do you want?" asks Linus. Turning away, he looks at his fingers and says, "Why can't you guys get organized like that?"

This Lesson is focus on "The United Prayer"

I. WHAT IS UNITED PRAYER

United prayer is the prayer of two or more individuals who are coming together in one accord.

Amos 3:3 Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?

Agreement is the prerequisite to unity and for that matter to united prayer.

II. WHAT IS THE BASIS OF UNITY?

❖ **Jesus Christ** is the basis of unity. John 17 records the longest prayer Jesus prayed in the bible. In prayer He prayed for the unity that exist between Him and the Father would rule His disciples as those who believe in Him through the message of the Apostles.

John 17:11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--the name you gave me--so that they may be one as we are one.

John 17:20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ² I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved Me.

Jesus expressed the need of complete unity in the Church

1. First, for every believer's protection.
2. Secondly, to convince the world that He was sent by God the Father into the world not to condemn the world but to save sinners from their sins.

❖ **We can achieve unity because there is only one channel by which we can all be hooked up and He is Jesus.** Just like television sets, we may differ in size, in look, in color, in value, even in brand name, but if we are all connected to the same channel what they see in me is the same thing that they will see in you.

❖ Indeed there is no real and complete unity apart from Jesus Christ. He is the only standard by which our diversity, differences, can be harmonized.

Just like a stringed instrument like a guitar, the strings provide six different kinds of sounds, keys and notes. But the moment each string is tuned through a tuner, together they blended in perfect harmony creating a perfect melody pleasing to the ear.

We are like the strings of a guitar each with its own unique personality, temperament, and mindset. But the moment we are tuned in to Jesus by the Holy Spirit, together we would produce a perfect harmony, a perfect melody of praise and prayer that pleases the heart of our heavenly Father.

Let me caution you though that as we come closer together in unity, we become vulnerable and because of our many imperfections, sometimes, we cannot avoid hurting one another, in one way or another. And this really hurts. That is why many are leaving the church because they got hurt. But remember this, every time someone hurts us, bear in mind that in one way or another we have also hurt them. Listen to this.....it was said that.....

The German philosopher Schopenhauer compared the human race to a bunch of porcupines huddling together on a cold winter's night. He said, "The colder it gets outside, the more we huddle together for warmth; but the closer we get to one another, the more we hurt one another with our sharp quills. And in the lonely night of earth's winter eventually we begin to drift apart and wander out on our own and freeze to death in our loneliness." **Wayne Brouwer, Holland, Michigan, quoted in Leadership, p. 68**

Leaving the Church because somebody hurt us is not the best thing to do. Remember this, there is no healing outside the church. We can only expect our situation to get worse outside the church. Healing is in the church because the church is a spiritual hospital managed by the Holy Spirit and the medicine prescribed by our Healer Jesus Christ to bring us healing is a capsule called **forgiveness**. This is a tough pill to swallow but those who are willing to take it will not only experience healing but a complete wholeness of life in heaven and on earth.

If somebody hurts you in the church, before you go somewhere else, first, meditate on this verse. ***Proverbs 27:6 Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.***

III. RESULTS OF UNITED PRAYERS

It is very difficult to describe the tremendous blessings and power that God channeled through united prayer. The book of acts, documented the importance of united prayers.

❖ **Non Believers are won into the Kingdom of God.**

Acts 1&2, The Believers were constantly together praying the united prayer. This prayer prepared their hearts individually and as a group before they were all filled with the Holy Spirit at the day of Pentecost. **As a result three thousand believers were added to them that day.**

❖ **Believers are filled with the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 4 – Persecution started against the Church and the Believers response was united prayer.

23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

❖ **It sets free those who are under any form of bondage.**

Acts 12:1-11 King Herod arrested some of the disciples and put to death by the sword James the brother of John. When Herod saw that this pleases the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter with the intention of putting to death as well. He kept Peter in prison while waiting for the scheduled trial.

5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. 6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. 7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

United prayer is definitely the prayer that made a big difference in the life of the early church from its conception to the persecution, through the dispersion until

today. As the desire to pray continue to consume our hearts, as the fire of prayer continue to inflame our spirit, and as we continue to intentionally and willingly engage and commit ourselves to pray together.....there is no limit to what God is going to do in us and through us for His glory and honor.

IV. PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Two years ago (2004), the Holy Spirit warned me in my heart that we as a family are going to experience financial challenges ahead. This was being confirmed in my dreams. There were many nights after that warning that I was dreaming of water flooding the place where I was standing. I personally do not understand why every time I dream of flood water it is almost hundred percent that, soon after that we were confronted with a financial trouble.

As the Holy Spirit gave me this warning, He also gave me two things I need to do to prepare us when this financial trouble comes.

- ❖ *The first one is to start giving our full tithe to this Church.* Prior to that, we were giving only a portion of our tithes to the church because most of it we are sending it to some pastors and Bible School students in the Philippines.
- ❖ *The second one is for my wife and myself to start praying together.* The first one is easy for me to do. But the second one is a real struggle. Don't get me wrong, I love my wife and I love praying with her. But I hated long prayers while she loves to pray long prayers. In this case, I have to pray with my wife because the Holy Spirit convicted me to do so.

And sure enough, two years later (2006), my wife had a scary surgery when they removed that football size tumor from her abdomen. Another thing, our white car got hit and run in a parking lot. My mother was confined at the hospital because her kidney that was operated last year shuts down and her other kidney was infected. My wife had a car accident about two blocks away from our house. My youngest sister is confined at the hospital because of a foot infection

caused by a bee bite and she is diabetic. On top of this we lost more than ten thousand dollars from our investments. Through this ordeal I could honestly say with the Apostle Paul....

2 Corinthians 4:7 *But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.*

We as a family and a Church came out of 2006 victorious because God honored and answered our UNITED PRAYERS.

Matthew 18:18 *"I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."*

V.CONCLUSION

Psalm 133:1 *How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! ² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. ³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.*

God commands His blessing to flow and overflow in our lives if we are united especially in prayer. United Prayer is the stepping stone towards a better unity in the Body of Christ.