

One

by Aaron Hurst

The sermon emphasizes the importance of oneness in God's plan, both in our relationship with Him and with each other, and how the devil seeks to divide and destroy this oneness.

Duration: 1:26:48

Scripture: John 8:30, John 15:1-5, John 17:21, Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:3

Topics: "Unity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of resolving offenses immediately, even if they are not our fault. He reminds the audience that they are taking care of the Lord's body and should strive to deal with offenses promptly. The speaker also references a passage from John chapter 8 where Jesus had a conversation with the people, leading many to believe in him. The sermon concludes with a reminder that in order to bear fruit, believers must remain connected to the vine, relying on God's resources rather than their own.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Amen, that's a promise.

Many promises we sang there together. Though your sins are scarlet red, they shall be white as snow. Hallelujah for the blood.

Amen. We greet you in the name of Jesus. God bless you all.

Thank you for coming to share together in worship and in hearing of His word. Open your Bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 6. Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Let's bow our heads in prayer. Father in heaven, we bow our heads, we bow our hearts, and we confess that there is one Lord.

There is one God and Father of us all. The Lord God. There is one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Father, we just do ask that you would take charge, Lord, of this message, Father. O God, again we pray, not I, but Christ, be seen, be known, be heard, be loved, be worshipped, and adored. We lift you up, Lord Jesus, Savior, Master, King of the Universe, dear Jesus.

Please come, Lord, and anoint these feeble lips. And Father, anoint our ears to hear what the Spirit of God has said at Charity Christian Fellowship here today. Have mercy upon us, O God, and look down upon us, and cause your face to shine upon us, Lord.

For without you, we can do nothing. And without your Spirit, Lord, all is vain. So, Father, our expectation and our eyes are upon thee.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. I felt what the Lord laid on my heart to share today is a message with a very simple three-letter word title.

Just a very simple, yet profound. Any five-year-old can tell me what word is on the board. Any six-year-old, where are you? What does that say? Love? That's very closely connected.

Someone else? Seven-year-old? One. That's right. Thank you.

One. One. And I thought, you know, I could put a lot of other things behind that word, one.

But I felt like we will look at a number of different scriptures, and I will not want to confuse or add to this matter of what is on God's heart for one. Now, we will look at other aspects of one. But first of all, here, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.

Not many gods, not many lords, but one. When the scribe came to Jesus and said, what is the first commandment of all? Jesus turned right back to this scripture. And he said, there is one Lord.

And that you shall worship the Lord God with all your heart. One. Oh, the beauty of God's one.

When God says one. Oh, the depth of one. One.

When God says one. And what God has in mind. One.

It is used to signify one in contrast to many. That's what the dictionary says. One is used to signify one in contrast to many.

Multitudes. But you know what? One may be plural. One may be more than one.

Jesus said, I and the Father are one. In the dictionary definition of one, it says, the definition part B is metaphorically to be one speaks of a union. I'd like to demonstrate that this morning.

You know, God is able to take two and make them one. I'd like to illustrate that. Janice, you come up here, please.

I didn't tell her beforehand because I didn't want her to be nervous. Hallelujah. And Jesus said, pointing back to in the beginning.

God created them male and female. And in his image created he them. And he brought the two together, Adam and Eve.

And joined them together in one. And he said, now they are no more twain, but one. Isn't that beautiful? Oh, but how many people are standing here? How many people? Two.

But in heaven, God joined them twain into one. And what God joined together, don't let man put it asunder. But they twain are one.

But you can argue with me and say, but I see two people. Oh, but God's plan and God's depth of taking two and making them one. It's a beautiful mystery.

And it speaks more than of just marriage. It speaks of Christ and his church. It's glorious.

It's marvelous. It's exciting. Thank you, Janice.

You may be seated. One. Well, joined together by God.

It's done in heaven. And it's done on the earth. It's recorded in the documents of the court.

On this day, the year of our Lord, March 18, 1978, Aaron Eugene Hurst and Janice Faye Weaver were united in marriage. And then it will say by Bishop. But no.

He only officiated. Joined by God. And they twain shall be one.

Now, let's turn over to Ephesians 5. Ephesians chapter 5. One. Ephesians 5. And for the sake of time, we will break in. Oh, let's see.

Am I mistaken here in my... I am mistaken in my reference. Actually, I want Ephesians 2. Ephesians 2. Verse 11. Wherefore, remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Now, just stop there for a moment.

Jesus Christ, he is our peace, and he hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Let us read on. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man so making peace, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby, and came and preached peace unto you which were afar off, and to them which were nigh.

For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in

whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for inhabitation of God through the Spirit. Now this is very beautiful, and there's many other scriptures we could go to, to find this.

But here he speaks very clearly, that through Jesus Christ, ye who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. He is our peace, and has made both one. And I believe when he's saying both one, he's speaking of the Jewish Israel, the Jewish people, and the Gentiles.

And he has broken down that middle wall of partition between us, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body. But in order to do this, it took the death of his own son. It took the death of Jesus Christ on the cross to break down that wall of partition.

It took the death of Jesus' son to take the veil off of our eyes, so that we could see him. It took the blood of his cross to bring us into one with God, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. There's many scriptures we could read.

Turn with me over to Galatians 3. Galatians 3 and verse 26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on 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. One. Now, I'd like us to have another illustration.

Can you guess what it is? We need all of you to help with this one. Let's all stand to our feet together. Ye are all one in Christ.

Just look around you and look at your brothers and sisters and think of the gracious, wonderful works of God. The miracle working power of God to unite us in one. Many members, but one body.

Ye are all one in Christ. Let's not just rush over this. This is so beautiful.

That we who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. And that middle wall of partition is broken down. And sin in its power and its grip on our lives has been defeated and sins have been cleansed and washed in the blood of His cross.

And we are made nigh by the blood of His cross. And when I see my brother and I see my sisters and we are now made one in the family of God, ye who were far off are brought nigh. And that wall of partition is broken down in Christ Jesus.

Ye are one. Many members, but one. You may be seated.

One. Yes, it is to signify one in contrast to many. Metaphorically though, it speaks of a union and a concord.

Many yet single by union. So we are one in Christ by union to Christ. We are yoked up with Him.

And we are made one in Christ. Many members, but one body. Ye are all one in Christ.

Now, let's turn over to John chapter 17. John 17 is Jesus' prayer for His Father to glorify Him. His prayer for His apostles and disciples and for the believers.

Here we get a revelation of God's heart. It's beautiful. It's powerful.

Let's read from verse 9. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me. For they are Thine.

And all Mine are Thine. And Thine are Mine. I mean, just look at that oneness there.

And I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world. And I come to Thee, Holy Father.

Keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name. Those that Thou gavest Me, I have kept.

And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to Thee. And these things I speak in the world that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

I have given them Thy word. And the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth.

As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 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 has loved them, as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me, for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me.

And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them, and I in them. Very profound truth. Here we see the heart of God, and the purpose of God.

Here we see His longing, yearning heart, flowing through the Lord Jesus Christ before He goes to the cross, that they may be one. Here we see the heart of God, that they may be one. But furthermore than that, as we already read in Ephesians, first of all, that we may be one with God the Father.

One with God. Fellowship with Him. United with God, with Christ.

Christ in you. The hope of glory. That wonderful mystery.

That our relationship with God is in oneness. And all of the middle wall is broken down. And that the relationship with God is in union.

It's in harmony. There's nothing hindering the lines of communication and fellowship. But that we are in union and in one with God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.

An open heaven, as Brother Denny would call it. A life that is open before God. And we have fellowship with the Father.

The heartbeat of God revealed through His Son as He prayed to His Father. Oh, not only that kind of a oneness, but that there may be a oneness this way with my brothers and my sisters. One.

One in heart. One in union. One in Christ.

One in the body of Christ. Many members, but one body. And the middle wall of partition is broken down through our Lord Jesus Christ.

One. Oh, Jesus prayed earnestly before He went to the cross concerning this oneness. He prayed, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me that they may be one as We are.

Was there anything between Jesus and the Father? Was there any break in fellowship? No. The oneness with Jesus and His Father is a beautiful picture of the oneness that is possible in Christ Jesus with us and our brothers. Well, is there an enemy of this oneness? Yes.

Open your Bibles to Revelation 12. Revelation 12. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one.

Lord. All things in perfect unity and harmony in oneness to God. All one in aim and purpose until, it says of Lucifer, until the day that iniquity was found in thee, O Lucifer, thou son of the morning.

And now here we read in Revelation 12. And verse 7. And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon and the dragon fought in his angels and prevailed not.

Neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan which deceiveth the whole world. He was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Therefore rejoice ye heavens and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea. For the devil is come down unto you having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

The day that iniquity was found in Lucifer and there was war in heaven, the oneness, the peace, the unity, one was being challenged by that old serpent, the devil and Satan. And we could go back and read it but for the sake of time we won't this morning. But he rose up in pride and he said, I will be like God and I will ascend up on high.

And there was war in heaven. How is it that the devil, Satan, that old devil could bring a division in heaven and draw angels with him and shatter that oneness and challenge almighty God but he prevailed not. Bless God.

And he was cast out. But where was he cast to? Into the earth. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth.

For Satan, that old serpent, the devil is come down to you having great wrath. Oh, but there is a beautiful verse. They overcame Satan.

They overcame that old devil by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death. The enemy of God. The enemy of God's people.

That old serpent, the devil. Yes. Without and within.

To be one with Christ, to be one with my brother is under attack. The devil is a liar. He's a thief and a robber.

And the devil wants to divide and to destroy. He wants to raise up that wall of partition between brothers and sisters. He wants to raise up that wall of partition between husbands and wives.

God declared they are one. But my wife and I are finding it a blessing and a challenge to continue to grow in that oneness though we've been married nearly 30 years. It's declared.

It is true. It is right. But there's a reality for it to be lived out here upon the earth.

Ye who are baptized in Christ and into His body, you are baptized in one body. And it's true. It's declared.

But we are working it out every day of our lives. Amen? And that old serpent, the devil, he wants to bring division and destruction and separate and tear at the body of Christ. And he doesn't care how he does it.

Ah, but Jesus prayed for us. And He said, I don't leave you alone. It's good that I go to my Father because then the Holy Spirit will come.

And He, He, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, He shall fill you with dunamis, with power. And we do not need to give place to the devil. Hallelujah.

Turn to Acts chapter 20 for a verse or two. And I want you to think with me what are some of the enemies of this unity in one that God has designed for us to have together in the body of Christ. You think with me.

But we'll read here in Acts 20. In Acts 20, verse 28. I think I read this last Sunday.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock of God and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves entering in among you not sparing the flock. We'll just stop right there.

Paul's burden for the church of God. He says, take heed to yourselves because there's grievous wolves shall enter in among you and not sparing the flock. Now what do wolves do in a flock of sheep? They seek to tear and to scatter the flock.

But the shepherd will wisely keep the sheep together. And when the sheep are together in a beautiful harmony and oneness hearing the voice of the shepherd and the shepherd says, this way. Or the shepherd says, no, not this way, but go this way.

The sheep follow the shepherd and they hear his voice. And the sheep, as they're together in their flock like that and the shepherd close by are protected from the wolves. But when the sheep are restless and losing their way and are not contented to follow their shepherd and they begin to wander away from the flock and away from the shepherd and his tender voice and begin to harden their heart against the voice of the shepherd, maybe allow some sin to enter into their lives, maybe allow some hardness into their heart and the sensitivity to their conscience and to the voice of the shepherd becomes a bit dimmed and they begin to wander away from the shepherd's rod and his staff.

Oh, then the wolf will have a chance to catch that one. How can we break this down to us here this morning? Attack from without and within to this oneness. And they shall be one.

Maybe you have some thoughts. What are some verses in the Bible that speak to this? I have a number of them, but I think it would be a blessing if we would exercise ourselves and consider the fight of faith that we're in and the war that we're in. No, not with guns and tanks out there, but another war, a very real war.

And can't you just hear the heart of Jesus and the Father? Oh, that they may be one. So, what is the enemy going to attack? That oneness. Because when they are one and they are united as an army marching forward in Jesus' name, they're a force against the devil, against sin and worldliness and all of these things.

Anyone venture to offer a scripture, a word while you're thinking? Let's go to Proverbs 6. Proverbs 6. Maybe this will stimulate our minds as we look at a few of them and there's many. Proverbs 6 and verse 16. These six things does the Lord hate.

The A7 are an abomination unto Him. A proud look. Wasn't it pride? The pride that was at the core of the iniquity of Lucifer was pride.

Even a proud look does God hate. A lying tongue. Oh, maybe I don't lie until an outright lie.

But do I shade it a little bit to make myself look better or make my brother look worse? Speak truth one with another. Put away lying hands that shed innocent blood and heart that devises wicked imaginations as it was in the days of Noah. Their heart was wicked.

Their thoughts only evil continually. A heart that devises wicked imaginations. Letting the mind run in wicked imaginations.

Starting to imagine things. Maybe even imagining something about your brother or your sister. Maybe even imagining and going into thinking evil of someone.

Judging a person's motives. And being off. And all the while the devil is there whispering in your ear.

Because he wants to divide and separate the sheep. Feet that be swift in running to mischief. I should maybe look that up.

I brought a little, I brought a paraphrase here of the Amplified Bible. Which gives some further definitions here of different proverbs. Proverbs, let's see.

Proverbs 6. Let me see what it says here. It gives here the definition of mischief. Of running to evil.

You know, it's interesting that it says feet that be swift in running to mischief. You know, if our heart isn't solely sold out to God and set on the Lord Jesus Christ, it's like restless feet. Well, what can we do tonight? We need to find something to do.

And often, without a purpose and without a heart that is satisfied with Christ, feet will run into mischief. Into other things. And we could give many illustrations and examples.

Oh Lord, guide my feet in the path of righteousness. Turn away thy feet. Also, you! You turn away your feet from going into the places of wickedness and mischief.

God hates it. It's an abomination to Him. Verse 19.

A false witness that speaketh lies. A false testimony. A false witness that speaks lies.

And he that soweth discord among brethren. It sounds like the devil, doesn't it? Sowing discord among the brethren. The accuser of the brethren.

That old serpent the devil is called. Accusing, pointing the finger. Well, have you thought of some? The enemy of one.

Claire? Yes. Ephesians 5, 29 and 30. You know, maybe we could have you raise your hand and the ushers could get a microphone to use so it would be better for the recording.

And also so all those here can hear. Any other comments? Any other thoughts? On the enemy of oneness. Let's put a little more definition to this sowing discord among the brethren also found in Proverbs.

Proverbs 16. Let's see. Do I have that correct? 16.

Can somebody help me out? A whisperer separateth chief friends. Proverbs 28. 16, 28.

Yes. Thank you, Brother Paul. Proverbs 16, 28.

A froward man soweth strife. And a whisperer separateth chief friends. A whisperer.

When I think of a whisperer, I think of that it doesn't have to be, but it's the thought telling something about another person behind their back. A whisperer separateth chief friends. Another one very closely related to that is in Proverbs 17.

And verse 9. He that covereth a transgression seeketh love. But he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends or close friends. In the war and fight against the enemy of our souls, we cover for our brother.

We don't repeat a matter that should not be repeated. Can you just see how so often those things are at work in bringing division? Someone else have a thought. Have a verse.

Raise your hand. We'll get a microphone to you. Okay.

John Mark. James chapter 4. From whence come wars and fighting among you? Come they not hence even of your own lusts that war in your members? Ye lust and have not. Ye kill and desire to have and cannot obtain.

Ye fight and war. Yet ye have not because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not because ye ask and miss that ye may consume it on your own lusts.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God. For whosoever would be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Any thoughts? When we seek our own pleasure, our own good, then it's going to cause conflict.

When we become friends of the world, we can't grow in our fellowship with God. Amen. Timothy Lambright.

Go ahead. In 1 John 2, verse 9, He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now. And in Matthew 22, verse 39, the second commandment is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

I think this means there is the second commandment and Christ said it's the two greatest commandments. It's one of the chief ways to, or an all-inclusive statement there. Amen.

Thank you. Is the other mic somewhere else? Yes. For the mural.

Matthew 18, 15. Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. I believe one of the methods that the devil uses to divide the body of Christ is the opposite of a whisper, but whispering is the opposite of this, I should say. It's not following these principles of hiding a thing and going direct.

Instead, the devil wants us to spread it abroad and tell others before talking to the cause of offense. Amen. Thank you, brother.

Anyone else? Yes. Go ahead. There's another hand then back there for the men.

Go ahead, brother. Okay, brother Paul. John, chapter 1. This then is the message that we have heard of him and declare unto you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

We say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness. We lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

So it's the idea that there is no oneness unless we're in the light. Amen. And when there becomes a separation, something's not in the light.

We're not willing to admit something about ourself or we're hiding something or we're doing something in darkness because in him is no darkness at all. Thank you, brother. Amen.

Brother Joe. In 1 Corinthians 3, it says, 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 as there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walkest 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 anything, neither is he that watereth, but God that giveth the increased.

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one, and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are labors together with God, ye are God's husbandry and ye are God's building. It just kind of points out, when we get our eyes even on good men and off of Christ, that that can cause division.

Amen, brother. I had that scripture, I had titled it here, or given it a definition where when we take our eyes off of men or rather have a wrong view of a man-focus rather than a God-focus, a Christ-centered, then even that can bring division. Thank you, brother.

There's another hand over here. Yes, Tim. A couple of evenings ago, I had occasion to read through part of John chapter 8 where Jesus was having quite a long dissertation with the people there.

And at one point, it says in verse 30, as he spoke these words, many believed in him, but he went deeper. At that point, it had not... You know, just kind of maybe backing up a little bit here. Brother Lester's meditation this morning helped us again to see that for us to bear fruit, we must be connected to the vine, not our own resources.

Amen. The wild branch connected to the wild olive tree was spoken of there only bears wild fruit and that is no good for eating. Just to make this little portion make sense, I'll just give a little background.

He was giving this, but as he continued on, their hearts began to be revealed. And you get up, get down to where he told him, I speak that which I have seen with my father and you do what you have seen with your father, which offended him. We have one father.

Wait a minute. We have Abraham to our father. And then he goes on and basically refutes that.

You get down to... Then they said, God is our father. In verse 42, Jesus said, If God were your father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth and came from God, nor have I come of myself, but he sent me. And I'm reading out of New King James here.

Why you do not understand my speech. You are of your father the devil and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. You know, Apostle Paul said at one point, Jesus, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. That's kind of where I was headed with this.

Becoming one, Christ was sent into the world to reconcile the world to God. And here the devil was doing his best to break that up, to keep that from happening. And it just struck me as I read that the other evening, that we can get pretty caught up in the vanity of our own hearts in what we are doing, but if we stop to consider where these things come from, like John Mark had read in the book of James, it should serve to help us to be very careful of the words that come out of our own mouths.

And also a reminder to us to use the word of God as a measuring stick for where we really are and what we're saying. The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Thank you, Tim. Okay, back here. Yes, in John 12, starting at verse 40.

He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart and be converted and I should heal them. He thinks that Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of them, nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

I think the devil uses that a lot to take away the oneness of a body of Christ where people love the praise of men more than they love the praise of God. Amen. Yes.

Thank you. Eli, yes. In 1 Corinthians 13, it says, Charity suffereth long and is kind.

Charity envieth not its envieth not chariot. Charity wanteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, and thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in inequity, but rejoiceth in the truth. And it's a very beautiful thing that charity, the principles of love, loving one another.

That's what I wanted to share. Amen. Thank you, Solomon.

Alright, right over here is a hand. Maybe we'll just take that one yet. In 1 John 3, verse 11, it says, For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

And then in verse 14, We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. And also verse 16, it says, Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

There's more there, but that whole portion there between verse 11 and verse 17 speaks about love in action. Yes. Amen.

Thank you. We can go on and on. It's a burden on my heart to try to just convey that central focus of God is that we be one with the Father and with Jesus Christ and one with another.

And that we strive and press in. And we'll have a few more verses on that in closing here. But also recognizing that we have an enemy.

That old serpent, the devil, has been cast down unto the earth and woe to the inhabitants of the earth. He has great wrath. And he is the accuser of the brethren.

But as we'll share here some of these verses, one particularly about love. You know, let our love be so fervent one for another. And if someone should fall into the sin of whispering or backbiting or slander, that our love would reach out and cover and we will not believe it.

But even if I should fall into that sin, that maybe the love of my brother, ye that are spiritual, you can come and restore me so that that thing doesn't have to be spread further. Like our brother was sharing, Brother Merle. That we don't start talking about it to other people.

And I thought of also where Jesus said, when you come to pray and you bring your gift to the altar and there you remember that your brother has ought against you, don't continue to just go through the motions of praying. Go first and be reconciled to your brother. Then come and offer your gift.

Very clear principle that I do think we should look at. One of the problems in the Corinthian church that Paul was giving a correction to was they were going to law with each other. And they were suing one another.

And he said to them, in 1 Corinthians 6-7, don't need to turn there for sake of time, but he said, why do ye not rather take wrong? Now won't that go a long way if we would rather take wrong rather than be offended. Somebody did me wrong. And take up an offense and maybe rally some other brothers around and we need to straighten this thing out.

Why do you not rather take wrong? And then, turn with me to this one, 1 Peter. In 1 Peter. 1 Peter 2 and verse 19.

Well, maybe we should start at verse 17. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood.

Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the frail.

And here's the verses we were wanting to expound on. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it if when you be buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently? But if when you do well and suffer for it and you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

For even here, unto where ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in his steps. Beautiful. Why do you not rather take wrong? Why not rather suffer it than let it be a cause of a wall or a division between you and your brother, between you and your wife, between you and your husband, between you and your family members? Why not rather take wrong? Because Christ gave in his example.

He didn't strike back. He didn't demand justice. Right, while we're hearing 1 Peter 2, we'll just sort of turn the corner in the message here and just give the closing few verses here.

In 1 Peter 2 verse 1, Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and all hypocrisies and envies and evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby. Laying aside. I think I would like to just look that up in the amplified paraphrase here to get a little more definition to our understanding here this morning.

In 1 Peter 2, So be done with every trace of wickedness, depravity, and all deceit and insincerity, pretense, grudges, envies and jealousy, and slander and evil speaking of every kind. So be done with every trace of it. Lay it aside.

Yes, we are set for the defense of the gospel. Oh, there's so many verses. But I think of in the body of Christ in the defense of the oneness in Christ and then with each other to not allow any division to enter in or any walls to come up.

Oh, as James said in James 3, Let us be easy to be entreated. Let us be full of mercy. As we think in Ephesians 4, Let us endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Let there be our bowels moving for it. Oh, I would that somehow we could just get a deeper revelation of Jesus and His oneness with the Father. And He says, That's the oneness that I died on the cross for for you to have with each other.

Don't let there be walls. Don't let there be divisions. But love covering a multitude of sins.

Let's turn over to Philippians 1.27. And I'll close with that. Philippians 1.27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. Oh, beautiful.

Conversation. Your walk of life. Your whole manner of being.

Let it be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. That whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs that ye stand fast in one spirit with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. Oh, Jesus.

We are debtors unto Christ. When we experience the oneness with the Father, there is something burning in the heart of that redeemed soul that wants to be one with brothers and sisters and have fellowship. There's a yearning in the heart that even as Christ and the Father are one, so we also have a burning desire in our heart for oneness with believers of light, precious faith.

Yes, many more scriptures could be given. But do you see? Our God is one Lord. His body is one body.

Now, there may be different denominations and expressions. But His body is one. And He that is born of the Spirit and has been joined into that one body has a respect and a care for that one body.

Even though not all of us are in one, we are just a small part of the body of Christ. Yet, there's a respect and a care and a love for the body of Christ. Amen? But oh, it works itself out practically right here.

Starts at home. Husband and wife. One.

Working out that oneness. Families. United in one.

Working out that oneness. Yes, it's already declared that we who are in Christ Jesus are made one. We're brought nigh.

But now we walk it out. Oh, I just, I just plead with us as brothers and sisters. Let's not let anything stand between us.

And that which is lame, oh, don't let it be turned out of the way. And just keep hiding that thing. But let's confess together faults, sins, one to another and pray one for another that we may be healed.

Oh, so many beautiful things. And remember, the devil works through division. Accusing the brethren.

Separating friends. But God is one. And he has one body.

There's one Lord. There's one faith. There's one baptism.

Oh, how does all that work itself out? There's so many messages in this subject. But God bless you, my brothers and sisters. And I am encouraged by what God is working in our midst.

But let's keep pressing in. Amen. God bless you.

Thank you. Amen. One.

One in Christ. I was blessed and challenged by that reminder of the preciousness of that oneness. And may we ever keep that in our focus.

You know, if we have one purpose and one goal, which is to glorify Christ, all these other little things won't matter as much. That the devil brings in to bring divisions. That he wants us to focus on and to think about.

I think someone shared the verse, I'm not sure if it was Brother Aaron, bringing out the thought of if that brother has ought against you. Just the thought on that verse. It doesn't say if you have a grudge against your brother, you go to him.

Though we need to do that. But it says if you know that your brother is not at peace with you, you go to him. It doesn't say you wait.

I think that's something that we need to take a look at sometimes. Sometimes I do something wrong. Yes, I need to go to apologize.

But sometimes there's a brother that's offended. And we know he's offended. We need to go to him.

That's what the scriptures say. Anyway, anyone have testimony? We'll get the mics. If anyone has anything to share on this message.

It's a deep message. A deep subject. Satan knows the power of the oneness.

And he does anything that he can to destroy it. But let's be jealous for the oneness and the unity in the body. First of all, I would just like to share something I was meditating about yesterday as we were driving back from Kentucky.

The rest were all sleeping. I had lots of time to think. I was just thinking about it.

You know, we've been here almost two years. And it just did me good to start thinking about it. You know, I'm really missing not having been here very much.

I mean, I was gone to Africa. And then I was here for several Sundays. And then I was gone last week.

And I just feel my heart drawing closer and closer and closer in oneness with all of you. So I thought I would share that. And also with the message that we heard this morning, I was very encouraged to press onward with this desire in mind.

And even as you shared with each of us having that one goal that we want to glorify Christ and that way laying down all those things. There was one verse in particular that I thought I would share. The verse that was shared in Matthew 18 about going to our brother between ourselves.

But then there's also a verse that specifically speaks about an elder. It's in 1 Timothy 5.19. And the chapter here, this portion is speaking about elders. And it says, Against an elder, receive not an

accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

This is our... as the congregation, particularly this applies to us brothers as well as we saw in Matthew 18. But let's make sure we apply it to our elders. And when someone comes and says something that's not good, okay, let's lay it down.

Let's know the truth about it. So God bless you. Thank you.

Receive not that accusation that someone comes without one of the elders. Okay, anyone else? I was just thinking of Brother Aaron Sherrod here. He's greatly blessed with.

And I was thinking the fact that, you know, if we take a brother to the law and they see the opposite of oneness, that's not going to speak. It's going to speak the opposite of what we want the testimony of Christ to speak. The verse in, or was it, I believe that Brother Aaron was shared in John, yes, in John 17.

It says, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And if the world sees oneness in the body, it speaks volumes. As we look around, we can see there's just not a lot of oneness in families.

I was thinking in particular of one evening, driving into the city of Lancaster, had my car window rolled down and stopping at a stop sign, I could hear arguing loudly coming out of the one apartment. It just didn't sound very one. And when the world sees a body, a group of people being one, that just speaks volumes.

So thank you Brother Aaron for that message. It says here in 2 Corinthians 2.10, To whom you forgive anything, I forgive also. For if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ.

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices. Unfortunately, many Christians are ignorant of his devices. And they don't realize that often times Satan uses our very brother in ignorance, not realizing.

Maybe it's, you know, I'm standing for the truth, but I'm ignorant. But Satan's going to use my tongue to bring a division. And when we have it settled in our hearts that God is a uniter, that brings that awareness of, shows forth many of Satan's devices for what they are.

Wait a minute. This is divisive. This is bringing division.

That's right. And oh, that we would all be so jealous for the Lord's testimony. Amen.

That these other things from the devil would be seen for what they are and we would not let our mouth. Because we're all able to do that so easily. I am myself, you know.

Let a careless word out. Something that's down the road gets back to somebody. You know.

It may be something very true about that person. But is that Satan using me to bring division? I know I've done that in the past. And I just want to remind us that let's not be ignorant.

Brother Rigby. Yeah, I appreciated the message and the word that was first used of love there in trying to read that word. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another.

And I think that we often don't see the value or the importance of this message, this oneness in Christ. And Proverbs says, a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city. And their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

When that offense comes, the importance of resolving it immediately, like you said, even though it's not our fault, even though it's something that... But we somehow become aware of those offenses that we deal with it and do our best to resolve it immediately. I want this message to be burning on my heart and desire that for our body as well. Let's remember it's the Lord's body.

The Lord's body we're taking care of. Yes, Brother Jalen. Yeah, I just want to thank the Lord this morning for the message.

It seems like it was a good reminder to me. We see disunity everywhere around us and just a reminder to keep our hearts open and keep things clear between us and other people and also between us and the Lord. Brother Aaron just asked me to share a little bit what I plan to be doing the next little while, just to inform you all so you know what I'm up to and where I've gone.

This Thursday, Lord willing, I plan on leaving for Bangladesh. I'm not sure how long I'll be there yet, probably at least four months. And I'm going with Christian Aid Ministries.

They're starting a work project there due to the cyclone that hit there in November. And their plan is to do a rebuilding project. It's not quite on the coast, close to the coast there.

And I'll be going with them to manage that project. They'll be sending teams. And I just ask for your prayers as we go, that God will go before us and that our hearts is that it be more than just rebuilding houses.

So I just cover your prayers in that.

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