

Two Brief Articles

by John Nelson Darby

John Nelson Darby's sermon explores the unity of the Spirit and the believer's relationship with God through understanding their identity in Christ and the nature of human ruin.

Scripture: John 17:21, Ephesians 2:18

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "Unity Of The Spirit"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the concept of 'the unity of the Spirit' in his sermon, explaining that it encompasses both Jew and Gentile in communion with the Father. He outlines three principles of this unity: the creation of one new man, access to the Father through the Spirit, and being built together as a habitation. Darby also discusses the importance of recognizing the utter ruin of man and how this awareness is essential for understanding God's joy in blessing humanity. He stresses that true humility comes from knowing one's identity in Christ, and that believers must strive to maintain unity despite differences. The sermon concludes with the reminder that our relationship with God is rooted in our understanding of our complete dependence on Him.

Transcript

{The following are extracted from 'Words of Faith' 1883. G Morrish. I presume the initials at the end of the first one refer to those responsible for the notes.}

Brief notes of a reading with J. N. D. on "The unity of the Spirit."

J. N. Darby.

Ephesians 2:18 is not yet the one body, but both Jew and Gentile are together before the Father in communion, and this is "the unity of the Spirit." It begins here, but from this it goes a great deal farther.

The three great principles of the unity of the Spirit are: (1), one new man; (2), access to the Father by the Spirit; (3), builded together for an habitation.

It is the power of the Spirit which keeps saints in the realisation of the whole of the relationships in which they exist in one body. This secures the manifestation of the one body on earth.

The unity of the Spirit is gone - was in Acts 5, 6, but the power for the manifestation of it is here.

It is an abstract idea, and the difficulty comes from making it an absolute fact.

It is when your mind and mine go on together with the mind of the Spirit. Where we do not see together it is not realised, but one could not say it was broken.

If you and I are quarrelling, are we doing it in the unity of the Spirit?

But, apart from all ecclesiastical ideas, I am to go on with you, and if you are naughty, I am to forbear with you in love. Then the unity of the Spirit is kept on my part, whatever it is on yours.

Two godly baptists might be morally endeavouring to keep it, but they have broken it by being strict baptists.

Taking it in its completeness, you cannot separate it from the one body.

There are three unities in John 17: (1), apostolic - "one as we," one thought and purpose; (2), "one in us," like 1 John 1:1-4 - the true fellowship of saints - is the unity of the Spirit viewed practically; (3), entirely future - unity in glory - "perfect in one." J. A. T.

Croydon, September, 1881. G. H. {The text says 1882 but this was corrected, see page 168 of the magazine}

Utter Ruin - the ground of complete blessing

J. N. Darby.

I believe that which greatly keeps us from the strength of our joy, is our ignorance of the utter ruin of man. Not merely should we be acquainted with the evil into which the ruin has brought us, but also with the ruin itself. The moment that this ruin came into the world, everything went wrong. Not only has man gone wrong, but all his activities have gone wrong also.

Now, Christ has provided for us a way wherein the activities of the new man have their exercise. This is our own proper and peculiar portion; to have the mind of Christ, and to be brought into fellowship with God. But for the enjoyment of this, it is essential that we should be introduced into a knowledge of the complete apostasy of our own natural will. The purpose of God for His children is, that they should be associated with Him in His own joy, and to this end we must know Him. Now, the main sorrow of Christ's life was man's ignorance of God. God was never understood; but the poor sinner understood Him much better than the self-righteous Pharisee. Jesus came forth from the bosom of the Father, having the knowledge of His mind, knowing that God loved the poor sinner; not merely the sinner's joy in being blest, but God's joy in blessing him; and this is the joy in which God would have us to be associated with Himself. Another most blessed truth is, that we should be associated with Christ in His sufferings, "That the trial of our faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:7.)

The first departure of the believer from God, is a departure from the knowledge of his fulness in God and nearness to Him, his conscious sonship with God. If I am one with Christ, I must be as He is. If I have anything at all it must be what He has - what He is. There is no medium between being nothing in ourselves and being everything in Christ.

If I have no title of my own, if I am nothing but wretchedness in myself, and have no natural understanding of God's good-will to man, where is my claim? Therefore true humility is the knowing what I am in Christ. So the moment I say, I am not as Christ, I lose the knowledge of my glory in Him, and I stoop down to the flesh. This we see in John, when he fell down and worshipped the angel. Here was that voluntary humility and worshipping of angels which the Apostle warns us against. Had John remembered the glory he had in Christ he would not have done this; for "As he is, so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17.) J. N. D.

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