

Kingdom Unity

by Richard E. Bieber

The power of kingdom unity is the key to experiencing the presence and power of God in our daily lives.

Scripture: Matthew 18:18, John 13:34, Romans 12:5, 1 John 1:5, Revelation 12:7

Topics: "Church Unity", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Richard E. Bieber emphasizes the importance of unity and maintaining the spirit of Jesus throughout the week, not just during Sunday gatherings. He highlights that true worship is not just about music or preaching but about the spirit we bring. Bieber stresses the power of unity in binding and loosing on earth as it is in heaven, as promised by Jesus in Matthew 18:18-20. He connects the conquering of evil by the Body of Christ to three-fold unity: a clear conscience through the blood of the Lamb, a clear testimony of Jesus as Lord, and crucified lives that follow Jesus to the cross.

Transcript

Our gatherings each week in Jesus' name are truly a Kingdom homecoming. We were out in the world all week, living our lives, exercising our ministries, and now we gather in the assembly to be refreshed for the battles that lie ahead.

The power of this weekly homecoming hinges to a large degree on what we were doing out there through the week. Did we pour out what God poured into us? Did we let our light shine? Did we maintain the unity of the Body? We will have unity in our gathering each Sunday to the extent that we maintain our unity out in the world all week long.

Many people seem to think that vital worship on Sunday morning can be engineered by having

the right kind of music,

the right kind of preaching,

the right worship format.

No doubt those things play a part. But the essential ingredient in our Sunday homecoming is the spirit we bring to it. Are we truly coming together in the name of Jesus?

- If we are in the Spirit of the Lord,

- If we are together in his mind, unified under his name,

then the hymns and the praises and the scriptures and the preaching and the prayers are all visited with power from on high. Jesus, alive from the dead manifests himself among us....

speaks to us,

refreshes us,

increases our vision,

and sends us forth to conquer evil.

"Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:18-20

....This is Jesus' promise, and he keeps it. But his promise is premised on our unity with him and with each other. Keep in mind that Jesus' promise of power in unity is the climax of a teaching about being reconciled:

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen take one or two others along with you that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." Matthew 18:15-17

- When two agree unity.

- Where two or three are gathered.....unity.

- In my name unity.

By his death on the cross Jesus has given us unity. But it's up to us to practice it---not just on Sunday, but all week long. We are members of each other and are meant to function as members of each other all week long.

When our Sunday service is over, we will be scattered in a hundred different directions

working,

thinking,

speaking ... trying to solve problems. And it's important for each of us to remember that, whatever we're doing, we're about the same business of the Lord Jesus.

We are still binding and loosing....

We are still in agreement....

and Jesus is still among us helping us to fulfill our ministry. Unity around Jesus and unity around a single ministry. And what is that ministry? To please the Father, as we bind and loose, conquer, free the captives in Jesus' name.

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." Revelation 12:7-11

The dragon is seen as thrown out of heaven, the head-quarters of the universe. He and his angels will then be confined to the earth. Already as a foretaste war and chaos rage on the earth.

Not just in the Middle East,

not just in Southeast Asia,

not just in Africa,

those eruptions and the many that are to come which will one day reach our streets too, wherever we live. They are manifestations of a spirit of anti-God and anti-Christ which envelopes this earth.

But this spirit of evil ... Satan ... is conquered even on earth by the Body of Christ. Not by the individual believer but by the believers in unity. They have conquered him ... they ... the saints in unity. They have conquered him,

1. by the blood of the Lamb;
2. by the word of their testimony,
3. by loving not their lives even unto death..

They conquer Satan by a three-fold unity.

1. The unity of a clear conscience.
2. The unity of a clear testimony.
3. The unity of crucified lives.

1. The unity of a clear conscience ... they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb.

That blood makes us one with God and with each other by washing away our guilt so we can conquer evil.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth.... I John 1:5-6

When I walk around with a grudge,

I'm walking in darkness

When I walk around with an attitude,

I'm walking in darkness.

..but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. I John 1:7

When I get it right, when I forgive and get rid of these attitudes, I'm walking in the light. Then I have fellowship with my brothers and sisters ... and the blood cleanses me.

And when you have a Body of believers walking in the light, in fellowship, cleansed by the blood, you have the power of God to bind and loose and to conquer evil...

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone: If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."

Why such severe treatment? Because the church, if it is to have. power to conquer evil, must be in unity ... must be walking in the light.

When we are walking the light, in the unity of a clear conscience, washed in the blood of the Lamb,

- what we loose on earth is loosed in heaven,

- what we agree on is done,

- when we gather in his name, Jesus is there.

2. The unity of a clear testimony ... they have conquered him by the word of their testimony.

...a word coming forth not from one or two of us, but from all of us. A word to the world about who Jesus is, spoken without shame,

without fear,

without hypocrisy. We tell the world the rock bottom fact of our own lives,

that Jesus is Lord.

- He conquered sin on that cross.

- He rose from the dead.

- His name is now above all names.

- He's coming soon.

And we tell them this gospel with one mind and one mouth.

God help us to repent of our timidity and with one mouth proclaim to the world around us the word we have been given ... the word that has changed our lives the word that breaks the gates of death, sets the captives free, opens blind eyes and deaf ears ... that Jesus is Lord.

If it's in our hearts, let's proclaim it with our mouths. Let's live it!

3. The unity of crucified lives they conquered him by loving not their lives even unto death.

Our flesh loves comfort, loves security, loves its pleasures---loves to do its own thing, make its own schedule, call its own shots.

But the Lord who saved us and who stands among us when we gather---calls us to come and die with him ... to follow him on a path where we will sooner or later lose our comfort, our security, our pleasures, our own way; and finally, our life itself.

"When you were young (Peter), you girded yourself and walked where you would. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go." (This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God.) And after this he said to him, "Follow me." (to a cross)

What do you think that cross is---that cross that Jesus is giving you to carry? Who do you think is to die on that cross? You are! Every day we carry our crosses together behind Jesus,

- we win victories,
- we conquer evil,
- we free others from their chains.

When we hang on to our lives, we are weak, sick, useless and divided from each other.

When we let go of our lives in obedience to Jesus, we are strong in the power of God---and we are one.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."

Each time we gather in his name, may the Lord Jesus empower us to keep walking in the light, repenting of our attitudes and our grudges---so that his blood can truly cleanse us from all sin.

Each time we leave the assembly, may the Lord Jesus empower us to go forth with a word of testimony on our lips and in our lives---so that the world will hear the voice of God.

By the Spirit's power, may we all be determined to "love not our lives even unto death"... to follow Jesus to whatever cross he chooses for us ... that in the unity of

- a clear conscience,

- a clear testimony,
- crucified lives,
the power of God may rest upon us---to bind and loose,
to conquer Satan,
and free the captives.

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