

# Be Diligent to Preserve the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of organic unity among believers, forged by the Holy Spirit, as a key to victory over Satan.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 30:27, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Matthew 16:18, John 17:20-21, Ephesians 4:3, Colossians 2:15, Hebrews 2:14

**Topics:** "Unity in the Body of Christ", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the vital importance of unity within the Body of Christ, illustrating that together, believers can achieve far more than they can alone. He draws on biblical examples, such as Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, to highlight the strength found in fellowship and warns against the counterfeit unity that compromises God's truth. Poonen stresses that true unity is forged by the Holy Spirit and is essential for overcoming the attacks of Satan, who seeks to sow discord among believers. He reminds the church that victory over spiritual adversaries is only possible when they stand united under Christ's headship. The sermon calls for vigilance against division and encourages believers to guard their relationships within the Body of Christ.

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## Transcript

"Two can accomplish more than twice as much as one, for the results can be much better. If one falls, the other pulls him up; but if a man falls when he is alone, he's in trouble.....And one standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer; three is even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken" (Eccl. 4:9-12-TLB).

You may remember the story from Aesop's fables, where an old farmer taught an object lesson on unity to his three children, who were constantly quarreling among themselves. Taking a number of weak sticks, he showed them how the sticks could quite easily be broken individually, but when tied together, in a bundle, were almost impossible to break.

Even the children of this world realise that there is strength in unity and fellowship. "The locusts", the Bible says, "though small are unusually wise, for though they have no leader, they stay together in swarms (Prov. 30:27-TLB). Therein lies their safety and their power.

In the church of Jesus Christ, we need to relearn this lesson.

I am not referring to an organisational unity of Christians or of churches, formed by man, at the cost of compromise and the sacrifice of God's truth - such as in the modern day ecumenical movement. That type of unity is a farce and a counterfeit of the unity that Christ prayed for in His High-Priestly prayer (recorded in John 17).

The unity that the New Testament speaks of, is the unity of the members of Christ's Body with one another, under the Headship of Christ - an organic unity and not an organisational one. It excludes those who are outside of the Body of Christ, even if they have the label `Christian'. There can be no union between the living and the dead. Those made alive in Christ through the new birth can find their spiritual unity only with others who have been similarly regenerated by God. Christian unity is forged by the Holy Spirit Who alone makes us members of Christ's Body. The Bible exhorts us to "strive earnestly to guard the harmony and oneness produced by the Spirit" (Eph. 4:3-Amplified). Any unity formed by man is worthless.

Satan is a cunning foe and he realises that he cannot overcome a united Christian fellowship that lives under the authority of Christ and His Word. His strategy for warfare, is therefore, to begin by sowing discord, suspicion and misunderstanding among the members of a fellowship, so that he can paralyze them individually.

Jesus said that the powers of Hell would not be able to overcome His church. (Matt. 16:18). It is the church, the Body of Christ, that is promised victory in the battle against Satan. A believer standing in isolation from other believers may find himself defeated.

Satan attacked Christ constantly during Christ's life on earth, but was unable to prevail. Finally at the cross, Satan's power over man was taken away from him by Christ (Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15).

Today, Satan cannot attack the Risen Christ. His attacks are therefore directed at Christ's Body, the church. Victory over Satan is possible only as we stand united against him, as a Body under the Headship of our Lord.

In a fellowship of Christians, even if one member is not fulfilling his function, the power of the Body is, to that extent, weakened. Satan knowing this, seeks continually to isolate individual members of a group, or to divide the group (or church) into cliques. Either way, he succeeds in his aim.

This is why we must be constantly on our guard against the wiles of Satan, lest he weaken the links between us and other members of the Body of Christ.

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