

Liberty Commentary September 2, 2008

As the political season is in full swing and we head into the November elections, one of the themes that continue to resonate from the political conventions is “unity”. Both political parties know that in order for their party to be successful in the November election they must have a political organization that is united in purpose, other wise there is rancor, divisions and disagreements which lead to a confusing message that will not resonate with the voters, causing their party to lose the election.

The Apostle Paul instructed the Christian that we too must exhibit unity if we are to be effective witnesses and win people to the Lord Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, many churches are ineffective in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ because they have become immersed in debate, disagreements and petty divisions that impede the message from being delivered to a hurting, lost world that desperately needs to know Christ as their Savior.

The Bible says in Philippians 2:2, “Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind”.

The words, like, same, one, and again one, indicates that this verse is describing unity. If we are to live out the mind of Christ (2:5 “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”) at home, in church, in relationships, we must demonstrate unity.

We often say we need to be unified in our marriages, homes, church relationships, but are never really told in a practical way how to do this. The Apostle Paul gives us clear instructions on how we can know and cultivate unity in our personal lives, our homes and our relationships. There are three actions that describe a unified believer. We must have the same love, be of one accord, and be of one mind.

This unity of love that Paul is describing means that we have a deep commitment to love one another no matter the personality, idiosyncrasies, and cultural or physical differences. In fact, the word that Paul chooses to use for love is a word that means, “total commitment”. Lets be honest, there are some people who you will encounter in life that are hard to love. Some are obnoxious, they are different than we are and they say things that just rub us the wrong way and we don’t want to be around them. However, if we are to live out the mind of Christ we must exhibit unconditional love and commitment to those who we find difficult as well as to those who do not love us back. Christ ultimately proved his unconditional love for us when he went to the cross and died for our sins. There is no way apart from a supernatural change of mind and heart that you can love people with the unity that Christ expects unless you are Holy Spirit led and have the mind of Christ.

Secondly, Paul teaches us that we are to be of one accord. Being of one accord implies that we have a deep love and commitment to one another to the level of being soul mates. The word that Paul uses to describe “one accord” in Paul’s generation meant that two individuals were soul with soul.

The example that Paul is giving us here is to say that if we are to live out the mind of Christ of being of one accord we need to take the time to know one another and care about one another to the extent that when one person is going through a challenging time we sense that and we try to be an encouragement to them. Being of one accord is to shoulder the burden of life and bear their burdens with them until they are strong enough to bear it on their own.

The last point that Paul makes with regards to unity is that the believer should exhibit the unity of purpose, being of one mind.

Sometimes the church staff loses sight of the purpose of ministry and their work becomes a job and not a calling. The Sunday school teachers

get consumed with the job of teaching and it becomes repetitious and routine and the ministry is simply a job week after week that has become a burden instead of a blessing because there is no unity of purpose, no vision, no anointing.

When the church is of one mind and gets focused on the ministry of knowing God and making Him known it will consume our lives and we will think about it in church and out of church. It will consume our mind as we prepare to teach the Sunday school class, or prepare to sing a special or whatever ministry that God has given to us.

Unity of purpose (being of one mind) will unite a church and bring a church together and cause a church to work hard and long and be motivated and focused on doing more for Christ next week than we did last week. We will be focused all week long seeking Gods provisions and Gods anointing so that we can minister more effectively each and every day so that we can be used of God to reach the world for Christ and leave a lasting legacy for those who follow.

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