

Unity - the True and the Counterfeit

by Stella Paterson

The complexities of life are so vast that we cannot begin to comprehend it all with our human mind. In creating the world, the Lord God of the ages put in place laws so intricately intertwined in our lives that man, try as he might, cannot extricate himself.

Some people say they are "atheists," others "agnostic," then we have countless religions around the world. Regardless of man's belief, there is within him a "need" for his Creator, the One True God in the Person of His Son Jesus. Ever since the first man's transgression, and all mankind's separation from God, there has been an inherent inner searching for someone or something to fill that void. Where has it led us? So much has been said in regard to man's spiritual condition, but how has this "seeking" actually manifested on a civic as well as global scale?

While reading a news item on a secular news web site, here in Canada, the Lord revealed what was to be written here. It came with what I call "a flash of revelation." Now I must share with you what the Lord quickened so clearly in my spirit, as once again we are brought to the place where we must examine the flesh as opposed to the Spirit.

Unity - God's plan

When He created Adam and Eve, God's plan was that they be "one flesh," and that what He had joined together, no man should separate. (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:6) Since the beginning in the Garden of Eden, the union called "marriage" was to be a pattern for the relationship between man and his God.

Although a single man, Paul the Apostle understood God's plan and spoke much about marriage in his epistles. Of course, he brought out the pattern of marriage as it relates to the preparation of the Bride of Christ for His Second Coming.

Jesus' prayer to the Father in John 17 includes a request for "oneness" in His Body, the ekklesia, which has been erroneously translated "church." These are the words Jesus spoke:

I am not praying for these (disciples) alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word; so that they all may be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You have given to Me, I have given to them, so that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; so that they may be **perfected in unity**, and so that

the world may know that You have sent Me, and You loved them just as You loved Me. John 17:20-23 EMTV

Throughout the book of Acts, we read of how the people were in "one accord." And where such unity existed, God by His Spirit did the seemingly impossible. The Lord's true ekklesia was born just after the Holy Spirit came upon those in "one accord" in the upper room as they "waited in Jerusalem" for the Spirit's coming, which was promised them by Jesus.

The Greek word for *one accord* literally means "unanimously." And the Greek word for *unity* means "oneness" or (figuratively) "unanimity."

There is diversity within the Body, as Paul explains here. "*For just as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*" (Romans 12:4-5 EMTV) Only the Holy Spirit, working in and through each individual, can keep us one in Christ. This is where death to flesh is so important. Even that can be accomplished only by Him - our place is surrender to the crucifying power of His Spirit. Another mention by Paul of the oneness of Christ's Body can be found in 1 Corinthians 12:27. "*Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.*"

In this next passage, Paul tells how the Gentiles once were *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel* but through Jesus they became one.

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and who destroyed the dividing wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, putting to death the enmity in Himself. Ephesians 2:14-16 EMTV

A very long sentence in Ephesians 4:11-16 shows how the Lord gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, *for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, **until we all arrive to the unity of the faith** . . .* The passage goes on to say more, until we get to verses 15 and 16, which tells us, *but speaking the truth in love, we may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ; from whom the **whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the working of the measure of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the edification of itself in love.*** (EMTV) Rather than all those "ministers" being an individual "office," as is popularly assumed today, their role as a unit is to help "grow" the Body up into one in Christ. The key to the whole passage is found in verse 16 - "for the edification of itself in love."

Unity - man's way

There has been much in the news in recent days of the damage being done to God's plan for marriage between a man and a woman. Man's idea of unity has gone so far away from the pattern put in place by the One who made oneness an institution. We are only beginning to see the destructiveness of the widespread assault on marriage as God intended.

What has the "church" today done to Jesus' Body? Rather than becoming one, being in "unanimity" with one another and with Him, creatures of flesh have fractured His Body with divisions called "denominations." Taking His Name in vain, calling ourselves "Christians," we have rebelliously gone about building churches upon which we put names. These "names" have announced to the world that the supposed body of Christ is divided. The reason I say "we" is because we all were once a part of the system, until Jesus, in His mercy, called us out to be His alone. He that has ears to hear, let him hear!

Within each denomination can be found attempts at "unity," but only among the "inner circle" and to the exclusion of anyone who does not subscribe to their particular doctrines. There is no true unity in such exclusivity; not when we claim to be a part of Christ's Body.

Today, we have countless numbers of "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers"; many of whom are self-proclaimed. And sad to say, these very ones are guilty of bringing division in the Body of Christ.

One well-known "pastor" says that "God blesses churches that are unified," and that members of "his church" are required to sign a promise "to protect the unity of our fellowship." He also suggests that "When God has a bunch of baby believers he wants to deliver, he looks for the warmest incubator church he can find." Those statements are against everything our Lord has taught us. He has only one "church," which is His Body; not some building or group set apart who are "better" than His other sheep.

"Unity" - worldwide

We spoke earlier of the inherent desire in each person for some kind of unity. Although he cannot recognize it as a need for the Life of Jesus, man seems to have an "inner drive" to find unity, or to create "unity," albeit counterfeit. Deep inside every man, woman and child is a God-created void that only He can fill; and only by coming into oneness through faith in Jesus. But how has man gone about "making it on his own?"

It is thoroughly mind-boggling the number of times mankind has attempted to create unity in one way or another. We see all around us the evidence that is so

blatant, yet it has escaped our attention, or at least our comprehension as to its relevance.

What are we referring to?

As of February 5, 2009, a Google search showed the word "united" was listed in one billion, six hundred fifty million entries (1,650,000,000). The word "union" appeared in four hundred eighty-nine million entries (489,000,000). A further Yahoo search resulted in even more, with "united" being found in five billion, eight hundred thirty million entries (5,830,000,000). And "union" showed in one billion, eight hundred thirty million entries (1,830,000,000).

Everywhere we turn we can find the words "united" or "union." There is "united" this or "union" of that. The list is endless. Of course, there is the obvious "United States of America." And there is the ever-present, increasingly powerful "United Nations." Many nations around the world have the either "united" or "union" in their names; for example, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, the once Soviet Union, the European Union, etc.

Speaking of the United Nations, they have a plan to put the rights of children into the hands of governments, taking away God-ordained rights of parents to bring up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. With such a plan in place, if a child decides he doesn't like what his parents are asking of him, he only has to go to the government and they will overrule the parent's authority. Could this possibly be what Paul was speaking about when he said "disobedient to parents," in 2 Timothy 3:2, in his description of "perilous times" that would come? It is difficult to fathom how "perilous" the days ahead will be. (Please read the article on this very disturbing U.N. plan at the following link: <http://wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=87929>.)

The news article I mentioned earlier, which "launched" this article, was titled "Gaddafi pursues United States of Africa." It seems this man who has not been heard from in a while has again come to prominence, as this first paragraph shows: "Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was elected chairman of the African Union on Monday and made clear **he would pursue his vision of a United States of Africa** despite reluctance from many members." The next paragraph begins with, "Resplendent in golden robes and cap and hailed as '**king of kings**' by traditional African leaders. . ." When I read those words, I was grieved in my spirit at how the whole world seems to be clamoring after unity in one form or another, while unmindful of the One who created that desire as well as His plan to fulfill it when Jesus comes as King of Kings.

In the work place, "unions" are believed to bring fair treatment for employees but, in many cases, they have actually become divisive, as media coverage reveals in their reports of "striking union workers." These things often pit employee against employer.

In the business world, for example, can be found "credit unions" as an alternative to traditional banking institutions.

Fleshly man has always, in his own strength, tried to counterfeit what only God can do. In religions and denominations, which are really "divisions," can be found the words "united" as well as "union." One such union is the "European Buddhist Union." The "United Church" is a well-known denomination. Then we have countless others who are also "United" in name.

Whether in the "world" or in religion, despite man's endless attempts to bring unity, he can never achieve it. There is a day coming soon when the ultimate manifestation of a man of flesh will arise. He will forcefully try to bring the whole world into one "global" union. Leading up to that day, we already see attempts at "unity" in currency, "unity" in a one-world religion, and "unity" in one-world government. But there is One who is coming, to Whom all things **will be** in subjection, as we learn from this passage:

'You made him a little lower than the angels, You crowned him with glory and honor, You have subjected all things under his feet.' For in subjecting to him all things, He left nothing not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things having been subjected to him. Hebrews 2:7-8 EMTV

Jesus is Alpha and Omega. He was present at Creation. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. *And He is before all things, and in Him all things are held together. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that in all things He may have the preeminence . . .* (Colossians 1:17-18 EMTV)

Man may attempt to bring unity through the knowledge of good and evil, not realizing his inherent need to be one with the God of creation, but unless he humbles himself in surrender he will remain lost. Only the Life of Jesus and His Spirit's work in man can bring unity that will last. Every man-made "union" or "united" entity will crumble at the coming of the true King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Man will stand alone before a Holy God and face judgment. And that includes those who named the Name of Christ but did not know Him.

One thing is needful for the true ekklesia of God, and that is to continue in the one commandment He gave; the commandment "Love" which is . . .

The "glue"

*But above all these things put on love, which is the **bond of perfection**. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in **one body**; and be thankful.* (Colossians 3:14-15 EMTV)

We close with these powerful words from the Apostle Paul to the ekklesia at Ephesus.

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, **being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all. Ephesians 4:1-6 EMTV

Please read Andrew Murray's *The Fruit of the Spirit is Love*, found at this link: http://ekklesia4him.net/fruit_of_spirit_is_love.html.

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