



Unity In Diversity

Acts 2: 46, 47

“Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.”



Striving For Peace

- Psa 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.
- Mat 5:9 Blessed *[are] the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

- Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant *[it is] for brethren to dwell together in unity!*
- Psa 133:2 *[It is] like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, [even] Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;*
- Psa 133:3 As the dew of Hermon, *[and as the dew] that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, [even] life for evermore.*

Unity in Diversity

- o “It is the Lord's plan that there shall be unity in diversity. **There is no man who can be a criterion for all other men.** Our varied trusts are proportioned to our varied capabilities. I have been distinctly instructed that God endows men with different degrees of capability and then places them where they can do the work for which they are fitted. **Each worker is to give his fellow workers the respect that he wishes to have shown to himself.**” --Lt 111, 1903. {2MCP 423.3}

Respect Each Other

- o **“We each have a work to do. We may be of different nationalities, but we are to be one in Christ.** If we allow peculiarities of character and disposition to separate us here, how can we hope to live together in heaven? **We are to cherish love and respect for one another.** There is to be among us the unity for which Christ prayed. We have been bought with a price, and we are to glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits.—MS 20, 1905. {2MCP 426.4}

Same Thoughts Expressed Differently

- o **“The Creator of all ideas may impress different minds with the same thought, but each may express it in a different way, yet without contradiction.** The fact that this difference exists should not perplex or confuse us. It is seldom that two persons will view and express truth in the very same way. Each dwells on particular points which his constitution and education have fitted him to appreciate. The sunlight falling upon the different objects gives those objects a different hue.” {1SM 22.1}

- 1Co 12:4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
- 1Co 12:5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.
- 1Co 12:6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
- 1Co 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.
- 1Co 12:8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

- 1Co 12:9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
- 1Co 12:10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *[divers] kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:*
- 1Co 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.
- 1Co 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *[is] Christ.*

Balancing Unity & Individuality

- **“Some have advanced the thought that, as we near the close of time, every child of God will act independently of any religious organization.** But I have been instructed by the Lord that in this work there is no such thing as every man's being independent. The stars of heaven are all under law, each influencing the other to do the will of God, yielding their common obedience to the law that controls their action. And, in order that the Lord's work may advance healthfully and solidly, His people must draw together. {9T 258.1}

Balancing Unity & Individuality

- “The spasmodic, fitful movements of some who claim to be Christians are well represented by the work of strong but untrained horses. When one pulls forward, another pulls back, and at the voice of their master one plunges ahead and the other stands immovable. If men will not move in concert in the great and grand work for this time, there will be confusion. It is not a good sign when men refuse to unite with their brethren and prefer to act alone. Let laborers take into their confidence the brethren who are free to point out every departure from right principles. If men wear the yoke of Christ, they can not pull apart; they will draw with Christ. {9T 258.2}

Balancing Unity & Individuality

- o “Some workers pull with all the power that God has given them, but they have not yet learned that they should not pull alone. Instead of isolating themselves, let them draw in harmony with their fellow laborers. Unless they do this, their activity will work at the wrong time and in the wrong way. They will often work counter to that which God would have done, and thus their work is worse than wasted. {9T 258.3}

Balancing Unity & Individuality

- **“On the other hand, the leaders among God's people are to guard against the danger of condemning the methods of individual workers who are led by the Lord to do a special work that but few are fitted to do. Let brethren in responsibility be slow to criticize movements that are not in perfect harmony with their methods of labor.** Let them never suppose that every plan should reflect their own personality. Let them not fear to trust another's methods; for by withholding their confidence from a brother laborer who, with humility and consecrated zeal, is doing a special work in God's appointed way, they are retarding the advancement of the Lord's cause.” {9T 259.1}

No Time To Dwell On Differences

- o “Brethren and sisters, **we have no time to dwell on little differences.** For Christ's sake, to your knees in prayer! Go to God, and ask Him to give you a clean heart. Ask Him to help you to stand where He wants you to be. Labor in harmony with one another, **even though you are not alike.** Do you not know that of the leaves on a tree there are no two exactly alike? From this God would teach us that among His servants there is to be unity in diversity.” {GCB, March 30, 1903 par. 34}

- Phi 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: *[and] again I say, Rejoice.*
- Phi 4:5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *[is] at hand.*
- Phi 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.
- Phi 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
- Phi 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *[are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue, and if [there be] any praise, think on these things.*

Refuse A Trash Can Mind

- o “Bring all the pleasantness that you can into your lives. **Do not make your mind a depository for the enemy's rubbish.** Do not let trifling differences destroy your fellowship with one another. **Do not say that because your brethren differ with you in some particular you can not stand by their side in service.** They do not differ with you any more than you differ with them.” {GCB, March 30, 1903 par. 35}

That They All May Be One

o "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" [verses 20, 21]. {2SAT 263.2}

That They All May Be One

- o “What kind of unity is spoken of in these words? **Unity in diversity.** Our minds do not all run in the same channel, and we have not all been given the same work. God has given to every man his work according to his several ability. There are different kinds of work to be done, and workers of varied capabilities are needed. If our hearts are humble, if we have learned in the school of Christ to be meek and lowly, **we may all press together in the narrow path marked out for us.**” {2SAT 263.3}

Romans 12:9-12

[Let] love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. [Be] kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;"

- It does not seem possible to us now that any should have to stand alone; but if God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when we shall be brought before councils and before thousands for his name's sake, and each one will have to give the reason of his faith. Then will come the severest criticism upon every position that has been taken for the truth. We need, then, to study the word of God, that we may know why we believe the doctrines we advocate. We must critically search the living oracles of Jehovah. {RH, December 18, 1888}

- Let the workers stand alone in God, weeping, praying, laboring for the salvation of their fellow men. Remember that you are running a race, striving for a crown of immortality. While so many love the praise of men more than the favor of God, let it be yours to labor in humility. {CCh 61.5}

- Rom 12:14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.
- Rom 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.
- Rom 12:16 *[Be] of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*
- Rom 12:17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

- Rom 12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.
- Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *[rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
- Rom 12:20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
- Rom 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

- Unity on the Fundamental Truths.--We are one in faith in the fundamental truths of God's word. And one object must be kept in view constantly; that is, harmony and co-operation must be maintained without compromising one principle of truth. And while constantly digging for the truth as for hidden treasure, be careful how you open new and conflicting opinions. We have a world-wide message. The commandments of God and the testimonies of Jesus Christ are the burden of our work. To have unity and love for one another is the great [work] now to be carried on. There is danger of our ministers' dwelling too much on doctrines, preaching altogether too many discourses on argumentative subjects when their own soul needs practical godliness. {CW 79.2}

- The debating spirit has come into the ranks of Sabbathkeepers to take the place of the Spirit of God. They have placed finite men where God should be, but nothing can suffice for us but to have Christ dwell in our hearts by faith. The truth must become ours. Christ must be our Saviour by an experimental knowledge. We should know by faith what it is to have our sins pardoned, and to be born again. We must have a higher, deeper wisdom than man's to guide us amid the perils surrounding our pathway. The Spirit of Christ must be in us just as the blood is in the body, circulating through it as a vitalizing power. {1888 168.3}

- A house divided against itself cannot stand. When Christians contend, Satan comes in to take control. How often has he succeeded in destroying the peace and harmony of churches. What fierce controversies, what bitterness, what hatred, has a very little matter started! What hopes have been blasted, how many families have been rent asunder by discord and contention! {5T 244.1}
- God Is Seldom Glorified.--In some cases, it may be necessary to meet a proud boaster against the truth of God in open debate; but generally these discussions, either oral or written, result in more harm than good. --Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 213. (1872) {Ev 162.1} Discussions cannot always be avoided. . . . People who love to see opponents combat, may clamor for discussion. Others, who have a desire to hear the evidences on both sides, may urge discussion in all honesty of motive; but whenever discussions can be avoided, they should be. . . . God is seldom glorified or the truth advanced in these combats.--Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 424. (1875) {Ev 162.2}

- Brethren should not feel that it is a virtue to stand apart because they do not see all minor points in exactly the same light. If they agree on fundamental truths, they should not differ and dispute about matters of little real importance. To dwell on perplexing questions, that after all are of no vital consequence, tends to call the mind away from truths vital to the saving of the soul. Brethren should be very modest in urging these side-issues, which often they do not themselves understand, points that they do not know to be truth, and that are not essential to salvation. When there is difference of opinion on such points, the less prominence you give to them the better it will be for your own spirituality and for the peace and unity of the church. {3MR 28.2}

- And whoever takes it upon himself to judge and condemn his fellow men is usurping the prerogative of the Creator. {PP 385.2}
- The Bible specially teaches us to beware of lightly bringing accusation against those whom God has called to act as His ambassadors. The apostle Peter, describing a class who are abandoned sinners, says, "Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord." 2 Peter 2:10, 11. And Paul, in his instruction for those who are placed over the church, says, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." 1 Timothy 5:19. He who has placed upon men the heavy responsibility of leaders and teachers of His people will hold the people accountable for the manner in which they treat His servants. We are to honor those whom God has honored. The judgment visited upon Miriam should be a rebuke to all who yield to jealousy, and murmur against those upon whom God lays the burden of His work. {PP 386.1}

- There are men who have educated themselves as combatants. It is their policy to misstate an opponent and to cover up clear arguments with dishonest quibbles. They have devoted their God-given powers to this dishonest work, for there is nothing in their hearts in harmony with the pure principles of truth. They seize any argument they can get with which to tear down the advocates of truth, when they themselves do not believe the things they urge against them. They bolster themselves up in their chosen position, irrespective of justice and truth. They do not consider that before them is the judgment, and that then their ill-gotten triumph, with all its disastrous results, will appear in its true character. Error, with all its deceptive policies, its windings and twistings and turnings to change the truth into a lie, will then appear in all its deformity. No victory will stand in the day of God, except that which truth, pure, elevated, sacred truth, shall win to the glory of God. {3T 425.1}

- If there is disunion among those who claim to believe the truth, the world will conclude that this people cannot be of God, because they are working against one another. When we are one with Christ, we shall be united among ourselves. Those who are not yoked up with Christ always pull the wrong way. They possess a temperament that belongs to man's carnal nature, and at the least excuse passion is wide awake to meet passion. This causes a collision; and loud voices are heard in committee meetings, in board meetings, and in public assemblies, opposing reform methods. {6T 139.2}

- When you do your appointed work without contention or criticism of others, a freedom, a light, and a power will attend it that will give character and influence to the institutions and enterprises with which you are connected. {9T 184.3}.
- Remember that you are never on vantage ground when you are ruffled and when you carry the burden of setting right every soul who comes near you. If you yield to the temptation to criticize others, to point out their faults, to tear down what they are doing, you may be sure that you will fail to act your own part nobly and well. {9T 184.4}

- I see your danger; you can readily put your thoughts into words. You put things in a strong light; and your language is not guarded. Your views on some points are so expressed that you make your brethren afraid of you. This need not be. You should not try to get as far from your brethren as you can, making it appear that you do not see alike. {1SM 176.2}
- Some workers in the cause of God have been too ready to hurl denunciations against the sinner; the grace and love of the Father in giving His Son to die for the sinful race have been put in the background. The teacher needs the grace of Christ upon his own soul, in order to make known to the sinner what God really is--a Father waiting with yearning love to receive the returning prodigal, not hurling at him accusations in wrath, but preparing a festival of joy to welcome his return (Zephaniah 3:14-17). {1SM 184.1}

- Unity existing among the followers of Christ is an evidence that the Father has sent His Son to save sinners. It is a witness to His power; for nothing short of the miraculous power of God can bring human beings with their different temperaments together in harmonious action, their one aim being to speak the truth in love. {9T 194.2}
- Ten members, who were walking in all humbleness of mind, would have a far greater power upon the world than has the entire church, with its present numbers and lack of unity. The more there is of the divided, inharmonious element, the less power will the church have for good in the world. {5T 119.1}

- Those who are destitute of sympathy, tenderness, and love cannot do Christ's work. Before the prophecy can be fulfilled, The weak shall be "as David," and the house of David "as the angel of the Lord" (Zechariah 12:8), the children of God must put away every thought of suspicion in regard to their brethren. Heart must beat in unison with heart. Christian benevolence and brotherly love must be far more abundantly shown. The words are ringing in my ears: "Draw together, draw together." The solemn, sacred truth for this time is to unify the people of God. The desire for pre-eminence must die. One subject of emulation must swallow up all others--who will most nearly resemble Christ in character? who will most entirely hide self in Jesus? {6T 42.2}

- Workers should not feel that it is a virtue to stand apart because they do not see all minor points in exactly the same light. If they agree on fundamental truths, they should not differ and dispute about matters of little real importance. To dwell on perplexing questions, that after all are of no vital consequence, tends to call the mind away from truths vital to the saving of the soul. . . . {CTr 362.5}

- Reformers are not destroyers. They will never seek to ruin those who do not harmonize with their plans and assimilate to them. Reformers must advance, not retreat. They must be decided, firm, resolute, unflinching; but firmness must not degenerate into a domineering spirit. God desires to have all who serve Him firm as a rock where principle is concerned, but meek and lowly of heart, as was Christ. Then, abiding in Christ, they can do the work He would do were He in their place. A rude, condemnatory spirit is not essential to heroism in the reforms for this time. All selfish methods in the service of God are an abomination in His sight. {6T 151.1}
- Satan works to make the prayer of Christ of none effect. He makes continual efforts to create bitterness and discord; for where there is unity there is strength, a oneness which all the powers of hell cannot break. All who shall aid the enemies of God by bringing weakness and sorrow and discouragement upon any of God's people, through their own perverse ways and tempers, are working directly against the prayer of Christ. {6T 151.2}

- Kindness to Those Who Differ in Doctrine.-- Those who differ with us in faith and doctrine should be treated kindly. They are the property of Christ, and we must meet them in the great day of final account. We shall have to face one another in the judgment, and behold the record of our thoughts, words, and deeds, not as we have viewed them, but as they were in truth. God has enjoined upon us the duty of loving one another as Christ has loved us.--The Youth's Instructor, Dec. 9, 1897. {Ev 638.5}

- God calls upon those who are half awake to arouse, and engage in earnest labor, praying to Him for strength for service. Workers are needed. It is not necessary to follow rules of exact precision. Receive the Holy Spirit, and your efforts will be successful. Christ's presence is that which gives power. Let all dissension and strife cease. Let love and unity prevail. Let all move under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If God's people will give themselves wholly to Him, He will restore to them the power they have lost by division. May God help us all to realize that disunion is weakness and that union is strength.-- Letter 32, 1903. {1SM 85.2}

- No one has the right to start out on his own responsibility and advance ideas in our papers on Bible doctrines when it is known that others among us hold different opinions on the subject and that it will create controversy. The first-day Adventists have done this. Each has followed his own independent judgment and sought to present original ideas, until there is no concerted action among them, except, perhaps, in opposing Seventh-day Adventists. We should not follow their example. Each laborer should act with reference to the others. Followers of Jesus Christ will not act independently one of another. Our strength must be in God, and it must be husbanded, to be put forth in noble, concentrated action. It must not be wasted in meaningless movements. {5T 534.2}

- We must have genuine faith. As yet we scarcely grasp the reality of the truth. We only half believe the Word of God. A man will act out all the faith he has. Notwithstanding that the signs of the times are fulfilling all over the world, faith in the Lord's coming has been growing feeble. Clear, distinct, certain, the warnings are to be given. At the peril of our souls we are to learn the prescribed conditions under which we are to work out our own salvation, remembering that it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. {1SM 93.1}
- It will not do for us to float along with the current, guided by tradition and presumptuous fallacies. We are called laborers together with God. Then let us arise and shine. There is no time to spend in controversy. Those who have a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus must now become one in heart and purpose. All differences must be swept away. The members of the church must work unitedly under the great Head of the church. {1SM 93.2}

- Christ Calls for Unity
- Our church members see that there are differences of opinion among the leading men, and they themselves enter into controversy regarding the subjects under dispute. Christ calls for unity. But He does not call for us to unify on wrong practices. The God of heaven draws a sharp contrast between pure, elevating, ennobling truth and false, misleading doctrines. He calls sin and impenitence by the right name. He does not gloss over wrongdoing with a coat of untempered mortar. I urge our brethren to unify upon a true, scriptural basis.--Manuscript 10, 1905. {1SM 175.1}

- Satan's object is accomplished just as surely when men run ahead of Christ and do the work He has never entrusted to their hand, as when they remain in the Laodicean state, lukewarm, feeling rich and increased with goods, and in need of nothing. The two classes are equally stumbling blocks. {1SM 180.4}
- Some zealous ones who are aiming and straining every energy for originality have made a grave mistake in trying to get something startling, wonderful, entrancing before the people, something that they think others do not comprehend; but they do not themselves know what they are talking about. They speculate upon God's Word, advancing ideas that are not a whit of help to themselves or to the churches. For the time being they may excite the imagination, but there is a reaction, and these very ideas become a hindrance. Faith is confounded with fancy, and their views may bias the mind in a wrong direction. {1SM 180.5}
- Let the plain, simple statements of the Word of God be food for the mind; this speculating upon ideas that are not clearly presented there is dangerous business. {1SM 181.1}
- You are naturally combative. You do not care much whether you harmonize with your brethren or not. You would like to enter into controversy, would like to fight for your particular ideas; but you should lay this aside, for this is not developing the Christian graces. Work with all your power to answer the prayer of Christ, that His disciples may be one, as He is one with the Father. {1SM 181.2}
- Not a soul of us is safe unless we learn of Jesus daily, His meekness, His lowliness of heart. When you go to any place to labor, do not be dictatorial, do not be severe, do not be antagonistic. Preach the love of Christ, and this will melt and subdue hearts. Seek to be of one mind and of one judgment, coming close in harmony with your brethren, and to speak the same things. {1SM 181.3}
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- Talk Not of Divisions
- This talking about divisions because all do not have the same ideas as present themselves to your mind, is not the work of God, but of the enemy. Talk the simple truths wherein you can agree. Talk of unity; do not become narrow and conceited; let your mind broaden. {1SM 181.4}

- There are the main pillars of our faith, subjects which are of vital interest, the Sabbath, the keeping of the commandments of God. Speculative ideas should not be agitated; for there are peculiar minds that love to get some point that others do not accept, and argue and attract everything to that one point, urging that point, magnifying that point, when it is really a matter which is not of vital importance, and will be understood differently. Twice I have been shown that everything of a character to cause our brethren to be diverted from the very points now essential for this time, should be kept in the background. {CW 77.1}

- Those who are truly connected with God will not be at variance with one another. . . . His Spirit ruling in their hearts will create harmony, love, and unity. The opposite of this works in the children of Satan; there is with them a continual contradiction. Strife and envy and jealousy are the ruling elements. The characteristic of the Christian is the meekness of Christ. Benevolence, kindness, mercy, and love originate from Infinite Wisdom, while the opposite is the unholy fruit of a heart that is not in harmony with Jesus Christ. . . .In union there is strength. In division there is weakness and defeat. {OHC 170.3}

- Strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings, and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ. Before the heavenly universe, and before the church and the world, you will bear unmistakable evidence that you are God's sons and daughters. God will be glorified in the example that you set. {9T 188.1}
- The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love. It needs to see the Lord's people sitting together in heavenly places in Christ. Will you not give in your lives an evidence of what the truth of God can do for those who love and serve Him? God knows what you can be. He knows what divine grace can do for you if you will be partakers of the divine nature. {9T 188.2}

- Introducing Side Issues.--Brethren should not feel that it is a virtue to stand apart because they do not see all minor points in exactly the same light. If they agree on fundamental truths, they should not differ and dispute about matters of little real importance. To dwell on perplexing questions, that after all are of no vital consequence, tends to call the mind away from truths vital to the saving of the soul. Brethren should be very modest in urging these side issues which often they do not themselves understand, points that they do not know to be truth and that are not essential to salvation. . . . {Ev 182.3}

- I saw that Luther was ardent and zealous, fearless and bold, in reproving sin and advocating the truth. He cared not for wicked men or devils; he knew that he had One with him mightier than they all. Luther possessed zeal, courage, and boldness, and at times was in danger of going to extremes. But God raised up Melanchthon, who was just the opposite in character, to aid Luther in carrying on the work of reformation. Melanchthon was timid, fearful, cautious, and possessed great patience. He was greatly beloved of God. His knowledge of the Scriptures was great, and his judgment and wisdom excellent. His love for the cause of God was equal to Luther's. The hearts of these men the Lord knit together; they were inseparable friends. Luther was a great help to Melanchthon when in danger of being fearful and slow, and Melanchthon in turn was a great help to Luther when in danger of moving too fast. Melanchthon's farseeing caution often averted trouble which would have come upon the cause had the work been left alone to Luther; and oftentimes the work would not have been pushed forward had it been left to Melanchthon alone. I was shown the wisdom of God in choosing these two men to carry on the work of reformation. {EW 224.1}

- I have been shown that it is the device of the enemy to lead minds to dwell upon some obscure or unimportant point, something that is not fully revealed or is not essential to our salvation. This is made the absorbing theme, the "present truth," when all their investigations and suppositions only serve to make matters more obscure than before, and to confuse the minds of some who ought to be seeking for oneness through sanctification of the truth.--Letter 7, 1891. {1SM 159.3}

- Unity of Utterance.--Those who speak to the people through our periodicals should preserve unity among themselves. Nothing that savors of dissension should be found in our publications. Satan is always seeking to cause dissension, for well he knows that by this means he can most effectually counteract the work of God. We should not give place to his devices. Christ's prayer of His disciples was, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." John 17:21. All true laborers for God will work in harmony with this prayer. In their efforts to advance the work, all will manifest that oneness of sentiment and practice which reveals that they are God's witnesses, that they love one another. To a world that is broken up by discord and strife, their love and unity will testify to their connection with heaven. It is the convincing evidence of the divine character of their mission.-- Testimonies, Vol. 7, pp. 156, 157. (1902.) {CW 74.1}
- "No one has the right to start out on his own responsibility, and advance ideas in our papers on Bible doctrines, when it is known that others among us hold different opinions on the subject, and that it will create controversy."-- Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 534 (1889.) {CW 74.2}

- If you differ with your brethren as to your understanding of the grace of Christ and the operations of His Spirit, you should not make these differences prominent. You view the matter from one point; another, just as devoted to God, views the same question from another point, and speaks of the things that make the deepest impression on his mind; another viewing it from a still different point, presents another phase; and how foolish it is to get into contention over these things, when there is really nothing to contend about. Let God work on the mind and impress the heart. {1SM 183.1}
- In Wesley's time, as in all ages of the church's history, men of different gifts performed their appointed work. They did not harmonize upon every point of doctrine, but all were moved by the Spirit of God, and united in the absorbing aim to win souls to Christ. The differences between Whitefield and the Wesleys threatened at one time to create alienation; but as they learned meekness in the school of Christ, mutual forbearance and charity reconciled them. They had no time to dispute, while error and iniquity were teeming everywhere, and sinners were going down to ruin. {GC 257.3}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o “Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians, and investigate the position presented, in the light of God’s word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillar of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Phariseeism cherished among us. When Christ came to his own, his own received him not; and it is a matter of solemn interest to us that we should not pursue a similar course in refusing light from heaven.” — Review and Herald, June 18, 1889 par. 5 – EGW
- o “Suppose a brother should come to us, and present some matter to us in a different light from that in which we had ever looked at it before, should we come together with those who agree with us, to make sarcastic remarks, to ridicule his position, and to form a confederacy to misrepresent his arguments and ideas? Should we manifest a bitter spirit toward him, while neglecting to seek wisdom of God in earnest prayer,—while failing to seek counsel of Heaven? Would you think you were keeping the commandments of God while pursuing such a course toward your brother? Would you be in a condition to recognize the bright beams of heaven’s light should it be flashed upon your pathway? Would your heart be ready to receive divine illumination?—No; you would not recognize the light. All this spirit of bigotry and intolerance must be taken away, and the meekness and lowliness of Christ must take its place before the Spirit of God can impress your minds with divine truth. We should come right down to the root of the matter presented, and should not be in a position where we shall have no love for our brother because his ideas differ from our views. If you do take this position, you say by your attitude that you consider your own opinion perfection, and your brother’s erroneous.” — Review and Herald, August 27, 1889 par. 5 – EGW

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- o “To hold yourselves aloof from an investigation of truth is not the way to carry out the Saviour’s injunction to “search the Scriptures.” Is it digging for hidden treasures to call the result’s of some one’s labor a mass of rubbish, and make no critical examination to see whether or not there are precious jewels of truth in the collection of thought which you condemn? Will those who have almost everything to learn keep themselves away from every meeting where there is an opportunity to investigate the messages that come to the people, simply because they imagine the views held by the teachers of the truth may be out of harmony with what they have conceived as truth? Thus it was that the Jews did in the days of Christ, and we are warned not to do as they did, and be led to choose darkness rather than light, because there was in them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. No one of those who imagine that they know it all is too old or too intelligent to learn from the humblest of the messengers of the living God.” — S. S. W., June, 1892. {TSS 65.2} – EGW
- o “We are on dangerous ground when we cannot meet together like Christians, and courteously examine controverted points. I feel like fleeing from the place lest I receive the mold of those who cannot candidly investigate the doctrines of the Bible.” — Selected Messages, Vol. 1, p. 411.1 – EGW

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- o But when unpopular Bible truths are presented, many refuse to make this investigation. Though unable to controvert the plain teachings of Scripture, they yet manifest the utmost reluctance to study the evidences offered. Some assume that even if these doctrines are indeed true, it matters little whether or not they accept the new light, and they cling to pleasing fables which the enemy uses to lead souls astray. Thus their minds are blinded by error, and they become separated from heaven. {AA 232.1}
- o
- o Not to Be Suspected.--When a doctrine is presented that does not meet our minds, we should go to the word of God, seek the Lord in prayer, and give no place for the enemy to come in with suspicion and prejudice. We should never permit the spirit to be manifested that arraigned the priests and rulers against the Redeemer of the world. They complained that He disturbed the people, and they wished He would let them alone; for He caused perplexity and dissension. The Lord sends light to us to prove what manner of spirit we are of. We are not to deceive ourselves. {CW 43.1}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o In 1844, when anything came to our attention that we did not understand, we kneeled down and asked God to help us take the right position; and then we were able to come to a right understanding and see eye to eye. There was no dissension, no enmity, no evil-surmising, no misjudging of our brethren. If we but knew the evil of the spirit of intolerance, how carefully would we shun it!--Gospel Workers, pp. 301, 302. (1915.) {CW 43.2}
- o
- o The Test of New Light.--Our brethren should be willing to investigate in a candid way every point of controversy. If a brother is teaching error, those who are in responsible positions ought to know it; and if he is teaching truth, they ought to take their stand at his side. We should all know what is being taught among us; for if it is truth, we need it. We are all under obligation to God to know what He sends us. He has given directions by which we may test every doctrine,--"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If the light presented meets this test, we are not to refuse to accept it because it does not agree with our ideas.--Gospel Workers, pp. 300, 301. {CW 43.3}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o Examination of New Views.—Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth as much as we do. Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented, in the light of God's word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of pharisaism cherished among us. When Christ came to His own, His own received Him not; and it is a matter of solemn interest to us that we should not pursue a similar course in refusing light from heaven. {CW 44.1, 2}
- o Submit New Light to Experienced Brethren. —There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for "in the multitude of counselors there is safety."—Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 291-293. (1885.) {CW 47.1}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o Attitude to Those Claiming to Have New Light.--Cling close to your Bible, for its sacred truths can purify, ennoble, and sanctify the soul. You must hold the truth and teach it as it is in Jesus, else it is of no value to you. Before the light of God's truth let human opinions and ideas and human wisdom appear as they are in the sight of God,--as foolishness. . . . {CW 50.1}
- o
- o If a brother differ with you on some points of truth, do not stoop to ridicule, do not place him in a false light, or misconstrue his words, making sport of them; do not misinterpret his words and wrest them of their true meaning. This is not conscientious argument. Do not present him before others as a heretic, when you have not with him investigated his positions, taking the Scriptures text by text in the spirit of Christ to show him what is truth. You do not yourself really know the evidence he has for his faith, and you cannot really clearly define your own position. Take your Bible, and in a kindly spirit weigh every argument that he presents and show him by the Scriptures if he is in error. When you do this without unkind feelings, you will do only that which is your duty and the duty of every minister of Jesus Christ.-- Letter 21, 1888. {CW 50.2}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o Hear Before You Condemn.--When new light is presented to the church, it is perilous to shut yourselves away from it. Refusing to hear because you are prejudiced against the message or the messenger will not make your case excusable before God. To condemn that which you have not heard and do not understand will not exalt your wisdom in the eyes of those who are candid in their investigations of truth. And to speak with contempt of those whom God has sent with a message of truth, is folly and madness. If our youth are seeking to educate themselves to be workers in His cause, they should learn the way of the Lord, and live by every word that proceedeth out of His mouth. They are not to make up their minds that the whole truth has been unfolded, and that the Infinite One has no more light for His people. If they entrench themselves in the belief that the whole truth has been revealed, they will be in danger of discarding precious jewels of truth that shall be discovered as men turn their attention to the searching of the rich mine of God's word.--Counsels on Sabbath School Work, pp. 32, 33. (1892.) {CW 51.1}

o

How to deal with those we differ with

- o The momentous issues at stake through neglect of the word of God should be carefully considered. The study of the Bible is worthy of the best mental effort, the most sanctified ability. When new light is presented to the church, it is perilous to shut yourselves away from it. Refusing to hear because you are prejudiced against the message to the messenger will not make your case excusable before God. To condemn that which you have not heard and do not understand will not exalt your wisdom in the eyes of those who are candid in their investigations of truth. And to speak with contempt of those whom God has sent with a message of truth, is folly and madness. If our youth are seeking to educate themselves to be workers in His cause, they should learn the way of the Lord, and live by every word that proceedeth out of His mouth. They are not to make up their minds that the whole truth has been unfolded, and that the Infinite One has no more light for His people. If they entrench themselves in the belief that the whole truth has been revealed, they will be in danger of discarding precious jewels of truth that shall be discovered as men turn their attention to the searching of the rich mine of God's word. {CSW 32.1}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each one might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer and, without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation. At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another. {TM 25.3}
- o
- o When a brother receives new light upon the Scriptures, he should frankly explain his position, and every minister should search the Scriptures with the spirit of candor to see if the points presented can be substantiated by the Inspired Word. "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Timothy 2:24, 25. {TM 30.3}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o The time has come when those who are rooted and grounded in the truth may manifest their firmness and decision, may make known the fact that they are unmoved by the sophistry, maxims, or fables of the ignorant and wavering. Without foundation men will make statements with all the positiveness of truth; but it is of no use to argue with them concerning their spurious assertions. The best way to deal with error is to present the truth, and leave wild ideas to die out for want of notice. Contrasted with truth, the weakness of error is made apparent to every intelligent mind. The more the erroneous assertions of opposers, and of those who rise up among us to deceive souls, are repeated, the better the cause of error is served. The more publicity is given to the suggestions of Satan, the better pleased is his satanic majesty; for unsanctified hearts will be prepared to receive the chaff that he provides for them. We shall have to meet difficulties of this order even in the church. Men will make a world of an atom and an atom of a world. {TM 165.1}
- o
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How to deal with those we differ with

- o There must be no duplicity, no crookedness, in the life of the worker. While error even when held in sincerity, is dangerous to anyone, insincerity in the truth is fatal.--Medical Missionary, January, 1891. {Ev 632.3}
- o
- o The first-day Adventists as a class are the most difficult to reach. They generally reject the truth, as did the Jews. We should, as far as possible, go forward as though there were not such a people in existence. They are the elements of confusion, and immoralities exist among them to a fearful extent. It would be the greatest calamity to have many of their number embrace the truth. They would have to unlearn everything and learn anew, or they would cause us great trouble. There are occasions where their glaring misrepresentations will have to be met. When this is the case, it should be done promptly and briefly, and we should then pass on to our work. The plan of Christ's teaching should be ours. He was plain and simple, striking directly at the root of the matter, and the minds of all were met. {3T 37.2}

How to deal with those we differ with

- o If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God. {3T 280.3}
- o
- o When men endanger the work and cause of God by their own wrong course of action, shall they hear no voice of reproof? If the wrongdoer only were concerned, and the work reached no farther than him, he alone should have the words of warning; but when his course of action is doing positive harm to the cause of truth, and souls are imperiled, God requires that the warning be as broad as the injury done. {2SM 152.4}
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- o We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth? {1SM 205.1}

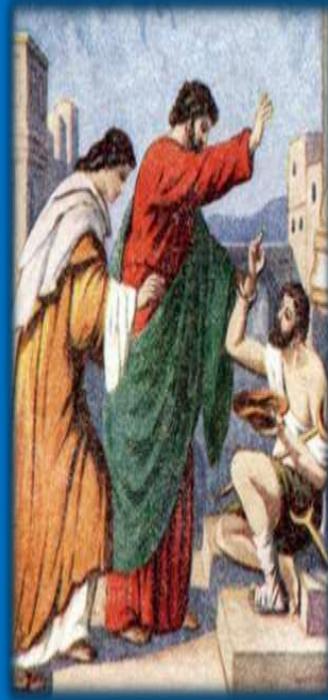
- One man may be conversant with the Scriptures, and some particular portion of the Scripture may be especially appreciated by him; another sees another portion as very important, and thus one may present one point, and another, another point, and both may be of highest value. This is all in the order of God. But if a man makes a mistake in his interpretation of some portion of the Scripture, shall this cause diversity and disunion? God forbid. We cannot then take a position that the unity of the church consists in viewing every text of Scripture in the very same light. The church may pass resolution upon resolution to put down all disagreement of opinions, but we cannot force the mind and will, and thus root out disagreement. These resolutions may conceal the discord, but they cannot quench it and establish perfect agreement. Nothing can perfect unity in the church but the spirit of Christlike forbearance. Satan can sow discord; Christ alone can harmonize the disagreeing elements. Then let every soul sit down in Christ's school and learn of Christ, who declares Himself to be meek and lowly of heart. Christ says that if we learn of Him, worries will cease and we shall find rest to our souls. {11MR 266.1}

- Christianity is not manifested in pugilistic accusations and condemnations.—

6T 397 (1900).



Healing the Lame Beggar



Peter's Second Sermon



**In the Portico of
Solomon Peter taught
them to follow Jesus'
example**

3:17 "I wot that through ignorance ye did it," said Peter; but this ignorance did not excuse the action; for they had had great light granted unto them. The statement is made that had they known that He was the Prince of life, they would not have crucified Him. But why did they not know?--because they chose not to know. They had no interest to search and study, and their ignorance proved their eternal ruin. They had had the strongest evidence on which to base their faith, and they were under obligation to God to accept the evidence He had given them. Their unbelief made them guilty of the blood of the only begotten Son of the infinite God (MS 9, 1898).