

Unity – Untapped Potential

Servanthood is a magnet that attracts people! But that magnet has an opposite pole that repels!

Temptation has killed its thousands, but disunity its ten thousands! And babies die easiest in a fight! No one has ever left the church because of God!

God's reputation can be ruined because of His children!

Romans 2:23-24 ²³Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? ²⁴For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

"I would have become a Christian, were it not for observing Christians." - Ghandi

William Seymour – head in pulpit (humility)

On May 27, 1989, [radio commentator] Paul Harvey reported that blue whales actually sing. The biggest mammal in the world doesn't speak, but it does sing.

And that's not all of the story. **Blue whales sing the same song at the same time — all over the world!** It is reported that the singing sound produced by the blue whale can reach 188 decibels — a volume level that exceeds the volume of a jet engine.

Not only do these amazing mammals sing the same song, but they also sometimes change the tune in perfect unity. When the Pacific Ocean blue whales change their "tune," tests have proven that the song changes among the blue whales in the Atlantic, too. It is as if there is some "mastermind" orchestrating their music.

Geese illustration – flying in "V" formation

New Testament: "tithes" – 24X, "offerings" – 265X, "fasting" – over 100X, "prayer" – over 100X

Note: "together" – 484X, "gathered together" – 97X

John 17:21 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.

Jesus' final prayer request – this is the only prayer that the church can answer!

In the beginning was the LOGOS. Ancient Greek theatrical term describing the work of a playwright as he dreams up the plot of a play. "In the beginning was the DREAM."

The church's greatest power lies in UNITY. What about prayer? Not as powerful as UNIFIED prayer! What about worship? Not as powerful as UNIFIED worship! Etc.

At the tower of Babel, absolute unity made nothing impossible to humanity. How much more is this true when God's favor rests on His own people?

Genesis 11:6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Unity does not mean uniformity!

1 Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Bricks are uniform; stones are unique!

Every member is not the same shape, but all are fitly joined together by the Master Craftsman.

You don't lose your personality when you gain your identity in Christ!

John 17:21 – why was this so important to Jesus? Because God's dream can be held captive by our limitations, if we are not unified!

He prayed this in the presence of His bickering, prestige-seeking disciples? How must they have felt? How should WE feel if we are not honoring His request?

The will of God is subject to the will of man where the church is concerned.

Psalms 78:61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.

When a father wrestles with his child, he restrains his strength (i.e. Jacob) – his strength is made weakness, and to a great extent, the child's will is imposed.

Basketball was invented at the YMCA Training School in Springfield, MA in the winter of 1891

James Naismith, a young PE instructor, nailed two peach baskets to the balcony at either end of the gym and came up with two teams of 9 players, 13 rules, and a soccer ball

It was the US that perfected the game of basketball and even campaigned to have it included in the Olympics

But, in setting guidelines for its Olympic team, the US originally specified that only those who had never received any money for playing basketball could qualify

No other country had this restriction, and the US suffered repeated losses because it could not field its best team

The US team was being beaten on the basis of a mere technicality!

This continued until the rules were changed for the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain

The Dream Team was born in 1992 – 11 of the greatest professionals of all time including Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson and Larry Bird

The Dream Team was bankrolled by no fewer than 16 corporate sponsors, and won all their games by a huge margin of 43.8 points

“I think people looking back 100 years from now will view that as the most significant two weeks in the history of basketball. It sent the sport into high gear around the world.” - Rick Welts, President, NBA Properties, Inc.

God is often unable to put His best team on the field because of our unsubmitted wills!

The church has taken some beatings at the game that God invented!

Child's question: Can God make a rock so heavy that He can't lift it? Yes, He did exactly that with your will!

But God will not always do this!

Genesis 6:3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

The world will believe in HIM when they can believe in US!

Disunity cost us our credibility, because the world already sees lots of that! Our cities are not lost because the devil's power is greater than God's, but because we expend our energies on self-promotion instead of self-sacrifice!

We cannot pray “Thy kingdom come” until we pray “My kingdom go!”

You can preserve your rights or abdicate your throne – not both! Repent and resign!