



A HOUSE DIVIDED

For many of us who live in the United States, these past few months, weeks and even more so, days, have been, to say the least, very interesting. The political climate has reached a “fever pitch.” There has been continued accusations and finger pointing. There have been threats of bodily harm to those in the political field. The bottom line is that there is now such a great division within our nation, that I believe, has not been had since the time leading up to the Civil War.

At that time the main issue was slavery. However, as historians note, slavery may have been the issue that was in the forefront but there were many, many other underlying, deep seated issues. Christians on both sides believed their cause to be right and prayed to God for victory. Abraham Lincoln was quoted as saying that a house divided cannot stand. Of course we know that he was referencing a scripture within the Bible that Jesus spoke (Matthew 12:25-26; Mark 3:24; Luke 11:18). In the scriptures, Jesus was actually referring to satan and the kingdom of darkness that satan had rule over at that time. Jesus was being called “Beelzebub” by the religious leaders because He was casting out demons and healing people. Jesus then gave this simple truth as a way of expressing the foolishness of their thoughts.

However, the precept is correct for any institution, nation or family. Just as it was in Abraham Lincoln’s time, so it is today. As a nation, we are becoming a “house” divided. Unfortunately, in this hour, there is something even worse that is taking place. There is another “house” that is being divided.

We know that there is a great divide between the political parties within our nation. We hear from leaders and others on both sides that they want to “bring unity” back to our nation. That sounds like a wonderful thing. The only problem is that the unity they all speak about only will exist if everyone on the opposite side starts to think the way they think. Let me explain. The political left wants unity. However, this unity will come into being only if everyone on the political right comes to realize that they are totally incorrect in their way of thinking and turn from it and “realize” that the political left is the correct way. If you do not agree with the political left then you are considered a bigot, a racist, a heathen, “of the devil” or even possibly the “antichrist.”

Contrariwise, the political right believes unity will come only if those on the political left recognize how wrong they are and “realize” that the political right is the correct way. If you do not agree with the political right then you are considered un-American, unpatriotic, a heathen, “of the devil” or even possibly the “antichrist.” Hmm... Can you see the problem?

The unfortunate thing is that this is not only happening in the secular realm but it is happening within the Body of Christ. There has become a “Christian political left” and a “Christian political right.” They are both joining in with this horrible secular political confrontation. Both sides believe that God agrees with their way of thinking and that they are being the “voice” of God in this hour. Both believe that the other is deceived. Both believe that God is truly on their side.

In the secular realm there is a call for “social justice.” Again, this sounds wonderful. Unfortunately, the same problem holds true. Each side thinks their view of “social justice” is correct and the other side is incorrect and deceived. The only true “social justice” for each side is the social justice that each side sees as correct. Again, unfortunately, this argument concerning “social justice” has entered into the Body of Christ. Each side from their Christian perspective “use” scripture to back their particular position and point of view.

As mentioned there is a great schism within the secular realm within our nation. The greater tragedy, as I have also mentioned, is that there is another “house” that has become truly even more divided than ever before. Obviously, I am referring of course to the “house” of the Lord – the Body of Christ, the “household of faith.

Throughout the history of the Body of Christ there has always been a problem with the “house” being divided. Over the centuries the Body has been divided over theological and doctrinal differences. The problem is basically the same as in the secular realm. Everyone states that they want “unity.” The only problem is that the unity they all speak about will only exist if everyone else starts to think the way the other wants them to think. Wars have been fought not just between differing religions but also amongst those who call themselves Christians. Horrible things have been done in the name of “unifying” the Body of Christ. The horrible events of the Crusades were all done “under, for and in” the Name of Christ to bring the Jewish people and the heathen to Christ. Church history has been tainted with atrocities that have all been done “in the Name of Christ.” The Church has also been divided over political and social issues, as well. It is nothing new.

Jesus warned His disciples, as well as the generations of believers to come that there would be these very problems trying to enter within the Body of Christ. He gave warnings to be aware of this happening and to not let this happen. The enemy has been using these tactics from the very beginning. The enemy loves to bring divisiveness. This was his strategy in the Garden of Eden. He accused and slandered God to Adam and Eve lying to them about God holding back from them. He was trying to divide and bring a wedge into the relationship between God and His most beloved of all creation. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve believed these accusations and lies concerning God. We all know how that turned out for them.

We see throughout the history of Israel the strategy of the enemy in bringing division between the people of God. How many times was Israel divided as a nation? They were divided not just because of “religious issues” but they were divided because of social issues such as taxes, etc.

The very term used for the enemy is the term “satan.” This is not necessarily a name but rather it is a description of the tactics of the enemies of the Kingdom of God. The term “satan” literally means “adversary; accuser; one who brings accusations against or slanders someone.” This is one of the devil’s greatest tools in his arsenal against the Body of Christ. It is a tool that brings division between believers. We must realize that any time any one of us, as believers, hurls accusations or comes against others whether they are unbelievers or believers we are being used as a “tool” for the enemy’s work. It reveals an attitude of heart that is not one that lines up with the Father’s heart.

Jeremiah 29:11 reveals what the Father’s heart is towards all of His creation and especially His people – *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”* Throughout the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, we read of the devil’s strategy of using the “tools” of accusations and slander. He does this between man and man or God with man. He tries to always accuse and slander man before God. We see this in the Book of Job. As we know, when he comes to use this strategy with the Father against His beloved creation, it never works. Why? Because, as it states in Jeremiah 29:11, the Father’s heart is always thinking of peace towards us, as well as, reconciliation and the re-establishing of relationship with His creation. He never thinks evil towards us.

Jesus’ last prayer on this earth is found in John 17. This was during the Last Supper and expressed just after the institution of communion which represents the New Covenant that was about to be established through the precious blood of Jesus. We read in John 17:20-23, *“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. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that **they may be one**, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”*

The fundamental desire that was, and still is, in the heart of Jesus was that His disciples would be as “one” just as He and the Father were one. His prayer was that as His disciples would desire and work at being in this oneness with each other, that this “oneness” would lead the way in bringing them into a greater “oneness” with Him and the Father. This “oneness” within believers can only come and is only because of the Spirit of God that is now within every believer. I believe that this is the prayer that Jesus continues to pray and intercedes for on our behalf as our Intercessor.

The Holy Spirit within now gives every believer the ability to walk in the “new commandment” that Jesus gave His disciples. (John 13:34) We are to love one another just as Jesus loved and continues to love each of us. As mentioned previously, the desire of the enemy is to bring the Body of Christ into doing just the opposite. Unfortunately, many of us do not even realize and we are blinded to the fact that we are being used in bringing division to the Body.

In Romans 4:19 Paul tells us, “*Let us therefore follow after the things which **make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.***” We as disciples of Jesus are to strive after peace with each other. We are to work at not causing others to stumble. We are to strive after being obedient to the commandment of Jesus. We are to desire to not just be in unity but rather we are to be **as one** with each other. This means that we are to surrender and give up our own identity; our own carnal ways of thinking; our own wants and desires. We are called to be dead to self and alive in Christ.

The scriptures tell us that, now as a born again child of God, each of us is a new creation, a totally new species of being. (2Corinthians 5:17) We are no longer who we were. In Jesus there is no longer Jew or Gentile, male or female, Scythian or barbarian, conservative or liberal, distinctions concerning the color of one’s skin or their ethnicity, etc. (Colossians 3:11) We are “one new man in Christ. (Ephesians 2:15; Galatians 3:28) The scriptures are clear. We are no longer citizens of this earth but rather we have a new citizenship – eternity in the presence of God.

Yes, we are to be concerned about the social environment we are in – socially and morally. Yes, we are to continually pray for our leaders and our nation. Most importantly we are to be praying for God’s will and His plans to be accomplished. The truth is that His will and His plans may not always line up with what we think they should be. They may be very different from what we think and even believe. We must come to terms with the simple fact that God is sovereign and that His ways and thoughts are not our ways and thoughts. There cannot nor will there ever be true “unity” in the secular realm. This is simply because they lack and refuse to bring Jesus and the true principles of righteousness into the midst of the scenario. The scriptures are clear on this. These things that we are seeing are all signs of the end times that we are living in which point to the soon return of Jesus.

We, as the Body of Christ, are to never place anything above the primary desire and heart of Jesus and the Father which is “oneness” within the Body of Christ and within His “household of faith.” Yes, it is true that we are not to compromise or yield to sin and unrighteousness. Yes, we are to stand for righteousness and the things of God. However, we must be careful that in doing so, we do not become or act like the very things we hate. Hmmm....

The problem is that the above can mean different things to different people, even to those in the Body of Christ, if our hearts are not set on the primary purposes of the heart of the Father. Colossians 3:2 teaches us to, *“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”* We must remember that the primary message of all believers and the primary truth that should unite all believers into “oneness” is - “Christ crucified; Christ resurrected; Christ will come again.” Anything else that detracts our attention from this primary message may just be a tool of the enemy to bring us into division.

I recognize that I am not as qualified as others in discussing this topic. I am just a fellow brother in the Lord. However, as I had mentioned in my last few essays, I believe that the Lord is bringing the Body of Christ into and through a “season of correction.” The purpose, I believe, of this season of correction is to bring those that truly have “ears to hear” back into oneness with Jesus, the Father and with each other. Jesus, through the work of the Holy Spirit, is preparing His Bride for His soon return.

Are we willing to put aside our own thoughts, concepts and even our own identities to yield to the Lord’s correction? Jesus’ instructions were very clear to those who would be looking forward to His return. He taught over and over again that His disciples were to always “watch, pray and be ready.”

I would like to conclude with a passage of scripture that is so insightful and right on the mark to all believers in this hour. It may seem as though evil is prevailing, but God.....

Malachi 3:13-18 (AMP)

“13 Your words have been strong and hard against Me, says the Lord. Yet you say, What have we spoken against You?

14 You have said, It is useless to serve God, and what profit is it if we keep His ordinances and walk gloomily and as if in mourning apparel before the Lord of hosts?

15 And now we consider the proud and arrogant to be happy and favored; evildoers are exalted and prosper; yes, and when they test God, they escape [unpunished].

16 Then those who feared the Lord talked often one to another; and the Lord listened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him of those who revered and worshipfully feared the Lord and who thought on His name.

17 And they shall be Mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I publicly recognize and openly declare them to be My jewels (My special possession, My peculiar treasure). And I will spare them, as a man spares his own son who serves him.

18 Then shall you return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him who serves God and him who does not serve Him.”

Malachi 4:1-3 (AMP)

“1 FOR BEHOLD, the day comes that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud and arrogant, yes, and all that do wickedly and are lawless, shall be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. [Isaiah 5:21-25; Matthew 3:12]

2 But unto you who revere and worshipfully fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings and His beams, and you shall go forth and gambol like calves [released] from the stall and leap for joy.

3 And you shall tread down the lawless and wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, says the Lord of hosts.”