

VEN. DAVE. NWANEKPE

ADOTT REGION 4 CLERGY & WIFE MEETING ON THE 5TH OF FEB 2022.

THEME :ONE IN CHRIST

TIME: 8 AM-10AM

CONVENER: BISHOP DR.AUGUSTINE UNIGBE

TOPIC: The Power of Oneness

Scriptures: John 17:20-26

A second-grade teacher gave an assignment to her class for the students to bring an item from home that represented their religious background. She wanted to teach the kids about the diversity in the world about worshiping God. At show and tell time, they began to share what their particular item meant to their faith. A Catholic child brought some rosary beads and shared with the class how they used the beads in prayer. There was a Native American child who brought a dream catcher. He told the class how to place dream catchers above their head to capture their dreams that they had in the night. It would filter out the bad ones and hold the good dreams in their memory. A Jewish child brought a candle and shared how it was used to celebrate Hanukkah. One kid pulled some food out of his bag. He said, "I'm Southern Baptist, and I brought a chicken casserole."

I. The power of unity

A. Misconceptions

There are many misconceptions about fellowship as illustrated in the opening story about bringing chicken casserole. When we think about fellowship, we think of an event that would take place beyond the regularly scheduled church services. It's an informal gathering where the saints enjoy each other's company. These fun meetings of the saints include fellowship, but fellowship is far more than hanging out with friends. Jesus calls attention to the fact that genuine fellowship is one of the most powerful tools for evangelism for the church.

B. Might

Our text says that Jesus prayed for all who would call upon His name to be one, and a watching world would be drawn to believe in Christ (John 17:20-21). Here Jesus shares one of the most overlooked tools of evangelism. Jesus says, "When a watching lost world looks at a body of believers, they see something that they can't find anywhere else. They desire love, support, encouragement, and acceptance, and they will be drawn to the Savior." He didn't say the world is going to be drawn because of great preaching. He didn't say great singing would cause hoards of people to be drawn to Christ. He said, in effect, "I'm praying that they will be one as the heavenly Father and I are one, and that unity they will draw them to the gospel."

II. The prescription for unity

Using the word, UNITY, as an acronym, we can identify several characteristics of Christ-honoring fellowship.

A. Uplift

One way to develop unity within the body of Christ and in your home is to make a commitment to follow the commands of God to uplift one another. Imagine the incredible spirit of uplifting these men experienced in this final phase of Jesus ministry with his disciples. He spoke of their great contribution when He said, "Guys, you're going to take my gospel to the world". They're thinking, maybe I'll go to my hometown or to the next village. Jesus says, "I've chosen you

because I believe you can change the world. The world is going to know about the love I have for them." Can you imagine how that energized them?

B. Need

God has placed us here so that we can meet the needs of others. My favorite story about meeting the needs of others is about the child who wanted a bike for his birthday. When his dad tucked him in for bed, he prayed with an extremely loud voice, "God, I really want that blue bike from Wal-Mart." His grandparents were visiting, so the father instructed the boy not to be so loud, "Son, God's not deaf." The little boy said, "I know, but grandpa is!" That child knew that God usually meets needs through the lives of other saints. Unity becomes possible when we acknowledge our personal needs and our responsibility to help other with their needs.

C. Integrity

Jesus says, "I have given them glory" (17:22). Glory calls attention to the holiness and the purity of God. Jesus represented the glory and the holiness of God, and we have received the call to represent that same type of integrity or holiness. Verse 19 says that they would be sanctified in Christ. I John 1:7 says if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. Unity flourishes when we live holy, clean, and pure lives. The dictionary defines integrity as a state of being that is complete or unified. Integrity means wholeness or completeness. The Bible reveals that Christ fills the longing of our soul, binds up broken hearts, or makes our life complete. as clergy of this adott. we must uphold integrity

D. Trust

When there is integrity, the saints of God are willing to trust one another. The experience of unity is accompanied by a confidence in your brothers and sisters to fulfill their responsibility without being coerced or begged. You can focus on your assigned area because you trust other saints to do their job. In these closing chapters of John, you find Jesus calling these men to be one in Christ by trusting one another with their lives. They are going to work together, serve together, and some are even going to die together. As men and women of GOD in this Diocese we must lean to trust each other and also trust God

E. Yielding

Two areas of our lives require yielding. First, we yield to the Lordship of Christ. Because God has exalted Christ, we submit our life to the authority of Christ. Jesus is Lord. Then, having yielded to the Lordship of Christ, we have the capacity to yield to one another in the glorious cause sharing the gospel. The driving call is "that the world may know." We should be willing to yield our selfish desires to the greater goal of extending the love of Christ to a lost world.

Conclusion

Several centuries ago, ancient China wanted to secure its borders from its northern invaders. They had an ingenious plan. They built a great wall to protect the border. It was so thick that no one could knock it down. It was so long that no one could get around it. They posted soldiers at different places. It was built wide enough on the top for chariots to patrol. If they heard of an attack at distant location, they could easily get to it. They were up high giving them a superior advantage over their enemies. They knew that they had protected their borders sufficiently against all enemies.

But, in the first 100 years of the Great Wall of China, the nation was invaded three times. How? An enemy bribed the gatekeeper and entered into the land undetected.

When we diminish the importance of unity in the body of Christ, we risk being invaded by the enemy. God has called us to divine fellowship. That fellowship is one of the most powerful tools of witness to a lost and dying world. If we don't protect it, strive for it, and do everything we can to promote it, we open the gate to the enemy. The enemy will attack your family and your church, causing ineffectiveness and destruction. LET US PRAY.....

David Nwanekpe