

COOPERATION

I. Successful Warfare Demands Cooperation of Allies Operating Under a Supreme Commander

- A. Individual units in a fighting force are designed to perform different tasks
 - 1. Infantry
 - 2. Artillery
 - 3. Air Force
- B. Successful warfare depends on the interaction of these various forces
- C. Effective interaction depends on loyalty to a supreme commander

II. In Matters of the Church, Cooperation Is the Concept of Love (Jim Wilson)

- A. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another
- B. If you love Me, keep My commandments

By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

~ John 13:35

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

~ John 14:15

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

~ I Corinthians 12:4-7

For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

~ Ephesians 2:14-16

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

~ Ephesians 4:1-3

III. Nature of the Church - Unity of Diversity

- A. Church unity is not the unity of conformity
 - like an army

- B. Unity of diversity
 - 1. We are all different but share a common life

 - 2. Each is equipped differently by the Spirit of God

 - 3. No member is equipped for independence

 - 4. The will of God is accomplished by cooperation (love) among members contributing according to their capacity from God

- C. The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace
 - 1. Peace here has to do with an end of conflict between diverse groups on earth
 - a. Christians have peace with one another on the basis of a loyalty to Christ as the head

- b. He is our peace who made both groups (Jews and Gentiles) into one

- c. No loyalty must be placed higher than our loyalty to Christ as head

IV. Applications

- A. Warfare is not a private matter
 - 1. My success or failure affects the whole body

- B. I must get along with the rest of the body of Christ

- C. Ministry always involves teamwork because I am not capable on my own

- D. My central loyalty must be to the Lord and not to a group

- E. Loyalty to Jesus Christ necessitates loyalty to the rest of the members of the Church