

# “United or Divided, Choose Carefully”

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This statement was a theme for America in World War II and not only for America but used by Winston Churchill addressing England during the same time of WWII.

## **Philippians 1:27-30 (AMPC)**

“27 Only be sure as citizens so to conduct yourselves [that] your manner of life [will be] worthy of the good news (the Gospel) of Christ, so that whether I [do] come and see you or am absent, I may hear this of you: that you are standing firm in united spirit and purpose, striving side by side and contending with a single mind for the faith of the glad tidings (the Gospel). 28 And do not [for a moment] be frightened or intimidated in anything by your opponents and adversaries, for such [constancy and fearlessness] will be a clear sign (proof and seal) to them of [their impending] destruction, but [a sure token and evidence] of your deliverance and salvation, and that from God. 29 For you have been granted [the privilege] for Christ’s sake not only to believe in (adhere to, rely on, and trust in) Him, but also to suffer in His behalf. 30 So you are engaged in the same conflict which you saw me [wage] and which you now hear to be mine [still].”

1. Vs 27...Standing firm means: “not soft or yielding when pressed; standing on firm ground; securely fixed in place; not a continuous shaking or trembling; steady: a firm voice; not likely to change; fixed; settled; unalterable: a firm belief; steadfast or unwavering, as persons or principles: firm friends; indicating firmness or determination; not fluctuating or falling...”

a. Stand firm in united spirit and purpose.

We are experiencing a time in the church of Jesus Christ, the body of Christ, and our nation in which the kingdom of darkness is doing everything in their power to divide us, why?

## **Mark 3:24-27 (AMP)**

“24 And if a kingdom is divided and rebelling against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided (split into factions and rebelling) against itself, that house will not be able to last. 26 And if Satan has raised an insurrection against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is [surely] coming to an end. 27 But no one can go into a strong man’s house and ransack his household goods right and left and seize them as plunder unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may [thoroughly] plunder his house.”

- How could Jesus move and destroy the works of the devil so successfully? He was in unity with His Father and the Holy Spirit. (**John 10:30 (NKJV)**...“I and My Father are one.”)
- The power of God is manifested in the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ.

## **Matthew 16:18-19 (NKJV)**

“18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

## **Matthew 18:18-20 (NKJV)**

“18 “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 19 “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

b. Is it possible for a NT church to become divided and split and allow the devil and demons to come in and plunder the congregation and eventually destroy it?

### **1 Corinthians 1:10-13 (NKJV)**

“10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment(purpose). 11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, “I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ.” 13 Is Christ divided?”

- The answer to the question is NO!!!

### **Ephesians 4:4-6 (NKJV)**

“4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

- Paul is addressing the sin of sectarianism in the church: Sectarianism is a form of prejudice, discrimination, or hatred arising from attaching relations of inferiority and superiority to differences between subdivisions within a group. Common examples are denominations of a religion, ethnic identity, class, or region for citizens of a state and factions of a political movement.
- The Apostle Paul goes on and deals with the same attitude of division in chapter 3 and gives us the explanation of why sectarianism is in the church.

### **1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (NKJV)**

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?”

c. To be carnally or fleshly minded is a very dangerous position for a Christian, a family, and a local church. It also means defeat and destruction when waging spiritual warfare and it is very displeasing to God.

### **Romans 8:5-8 (NKJV)**

“5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

2. What is the devil's purpose to instigate division? What does he know about unity that the Body of Christ is still seemly struggling to understand?

**Genesis 11:1-8 (NLT)**

“1 At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. 2 As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there. 3 They began saying to each other, “Let’s make bricks and harden them with fire.” (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) 4 Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world.” 5 But the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. 6 “Look!” he said. “The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! 7 Come, let’s go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won’t be able to understand each other.” 8 In that way, the LORD scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city.”

a. Why does the devil fear the unity of the Body of Christ and local churches?

**Psalm 133 (NKJV)**

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. 3 It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing—Life forevermore.”

b. Why does the devil promote strife and selfishness in our homes?

**1 Peter 3:7 (NLT)**

“7 In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God’s gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.”

**Colossians 3:18-20 (NLT)**

“18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. 19 Husbands love your wives and never treat them harshly. 20 Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord.”

c. Unity is a key ingredient for the world to know Jesus.

**John 17:20-23 (NKJV)**

20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.