

BUILDING CONSENSUS

Monday, December 7, 2020 1900 hours

Written by The Holy Spirit and scribed by Deacon Dr. Timothy K. Price, Sr.

START RECORDING!

OPENING SCRIPTURE & PRAYER

1. Opening song Let Us Break Bread Together On Our Knees
2. Scripture and Prayer - Appointee
3. Learning Objectives and Focus Scripture
4. Prayer Deacon Dr. Price, Sr.

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Area for Study and Contemplation
2. Bible, Notepad, Pencil

TONIGHT'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. The learner will know that without consensus, organizations fail
2. The learner will be able to identify areas where even though there might be different priorities, agreement can still be reached
3. The learner will understand that we are tasked with finding consensus

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Good evening saints,

I was evaluating where we are as 2020 is quickly coming to a close. I acknowledge that I love the Lord, and I love my church, but there is still more work to be done. Then as I looked out over all the things that need to be done, the Holy Spirit reminded me that this is not an undertaking I should attempt on my own, but I should search the word of God and see what it says about the situation. The results of my search are what I am delivering to you tonight.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

***Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!***

STUDY TOPICS

- 1. Which Group Am I In?**
- 2. Know What Your Role Is**
- 3. What You Should Be Doing?**

STUDY TOPICS

- 1. Which Group Am I In?**

Self-reflection and evaluation of situations are important. If we fail to complete these two tasks on a frequent basis, we will look up and find one of two things, either time has passed us by and we haven't made any progress, or that we are obsolete and no longer relevant. Neither one of these outcomes are desirable for the church, the bride of Jesus Christ. The question is, during the pandemic, which is where we are, where are you? After asking some of these questions myself, and talking with a group of church leaders, I believe that right now everyone is one of three groups with regard to church. Deacon

Leaphart thought of this, and after looking at it, it really makes sense. Group one consists of those who believe that being in the building called church is of utmost importance, and as soon as the doors are opened, they rush back. The second group is made up of folks that due to health concerns are not going back to the building right now, and are using technological avenues to provide for their spiritual growth and well being. The third group is a hybrid group, who doesn't mind going to the building with proper precautions and protocols, and takes advantage of the technological route as well. I don't know which group everyone fits in, but I do know that the Holy Spirit has revealed to me that the church building is not where God dwells, for He placed His spirit in me. Therefore, wherever I am, the church is, because He lives in me. Now that the Holy Spirit has revealed this truth, the love that I have for the people that make up our church organization drives me to reach out to the other two groups to help our church organization get to see the kingdom of God together and to realize the unity spoken of in Psalm 133:1. Its not about which group we're in, the question is can we see that the groups don't have to see eye to eye on everything, but they do need to reach consensus if we are going be unified as God would have us to be. In **1 John 5:8** it reads ***And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.*** This is the type of agreement these three groups will need if we are to accomplish God's will through the church.

2. Know What Your Role Is

In the 4th chapter of the book of Ephesians, we find the different roles that God has given to man to perform. ***Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists,***

and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [e]difying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; It takes all of these roles for man to come to the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God; if they were not necessary, God would not have given them to man. Once we have asked God to reveal to us what our role is, we have to get busy using it to build the church organization God would be pleased with. One where everyone is capable of contributing his or her gift, and that those gifts provide unity, preparation for ministry, worship of God, and not division. **1**

Corinthians 11:18 reads ***For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.*** These divisions strip the church of its power and effectiveness, just like our inability to find consensus amongst the three groups that make up our church now strip it of its power and effectiveness. We must pray that God allows us to find the consensus necessary to meld these three distinct groups together to create an organization that is effective for God. How does God measure the effectiveness of the church? Our answer is found in ***Ephesians 4:14-16*** which reads ***that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*** God's expectation is that we grow up, spiritually not physically, speak with truth in love, which can sometimes be painful but is

necessary for growth to occur, and for everyone of us to do our share of what He has called us to do. This is true whether you are in a position of leadership or not. Remember, God said that His Kingdom was coming, but the church that is in us is already here, so we need to be about the business of asking Him to help us make sure it functions according to His will. Then the body will grow in love as God intended, and we will no longer hold up our neighbors shortcomings before we examine our own. I am sure that once we have asked God to identify our roles, and He shows them to us, that we will find that there is something more we could be doing to make sure the love God has for His people and the church that He placed in us functions as He intended it to. We can always ask for strength to do more, but we cannot do less.

3. What Should You Be Doing?

I do not believe that anyone who examines our church organization feels it is living up to the mission God set out for it. A closer examination of the groups will probably reveal that each group is functioning well within itself, but is not complementary to the definition of effectiveness revealed in Ephesians 4:14-16. I have listened to enough of our members' concerns about how they feel about our church organization to know this to be true. What should we do? The first thing not to do is found in **James 5:9-11**, which reads ***Do not [g]rumble against one another, brethren, lest you be [h]condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! 10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and***

merciful. Mercy definitely suits our case here, hold up the mirror before you hold up the magnifying glass. The first thing we should do is found in the same book, same chapter, verses 13:16. ***Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 [j]Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, [k]fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*** When we pray and turn from our wicked ways, (the belief that our group is the only one that is right), God will hear from heaven and heal our land. Our church organization needs healing saints, the factions have to come together and find consensus, or God might decide that our church organization is one He can do without because of its unwillingness to work together to find common ground. Where is the love in that? The second thing to do is that we must have faith to believe that God will fix it. ***Hebrews 11:6*** reads ***But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*** When we go to God asking Him to fix this issue, we must believe that He will before we ask, and that we will be better for the asking. Our faith will sustain us and allow God to help us find the consensus that we seek, so that even though we are apart, we can be better together however we get there. Our reward will be that everyone who is a member of our church organization will feel loved, know that their contributions are valued, and that the time they spent working to find consensus will be blessed by fulfilling God's expectations for us.