

## Unity in the Body

**Psalm 133:1-3** *"How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along! It's like costly anointing oil flowing down head and beard, Flowing down Aaron's beard, flowing down the collar of his priestly robes. It's like the dew on Mount Hermon flowing down the slopes of Zion. Yes, that's where GOD commands the blessing, ordains eternal life."*

### Introduction

Every day we see different churches have some sort of difference of opinion with another church. Some people feel so strongly about these issues, that they will bad mouth other church openly.

I know of many ministries worldwide that have been lambasted from pillar to post by some church or person. This is WRONG! This brings division and this causes the world to laugh at us Christians! And it destroys our testimony.

You just have to go on the internet and Google for your favourite pastor! You will find people praising and others criticising them, some going so far as calling them Godless, after money or performing hoaxes in the name of Christianity.

Many people do not understand that the differences in the church today make us unique but stronger, especially when we choose not to criticise others. The unity of the whole body of Christ is more important than our individual differences.

Today there are many, many churches all over the world and each church is different.

- Some baptise and some do not
- Some have catechism and some do not
- Some speaking in Tongue, some believe it is past.
- Some heal the people and some do not believe that healing is for today.

But we must never, ever criticise another church. If they are clearly doing things that are wrong according to the Word of God, we must go and speak to them and help resolve the issues, we have no place to stand in a pulpit or any other public place, or even in our own homes or those of our friends and bad mouth people from other churches. Especially men and women of God, doing this will bring you under a curse.

We must never take to public outbursts because that only destroys the church of God and brings God's name in disrepute. Shame on anyone who does this!

We must NEVER forget we are all on the SAME Side ,we have ONE commander in chief! We are ALL part of the Church of Jesus Christ here on earth and we should live like it, and speak like it here on earth. All Christians are united with each other through Christ; it is through Him that we are one with one another. It is through Him that we serve God and bring the lost into the Kingdom of God

The Christian church is a unit made up of many fellowships, many different people but One God! I do not want to ever hear anyone say something bad about your pastor, your leadership, the pastor of another church or denomination. Never ever choose to say something against any man or woman of God, you will only bring judgment on yourself.

The scripture is very clear that when the Churches dwells together in unity there is God's blessing on everyone! So if there is no blessing, maybe the church needs to start living in unity.

We call the church in Malawi to sort out your differences, to live in unity and to allow God to use your church

### **Your Church**

Let us take this one step further and bring it home, right here into this meeting! How many of you have been bad mouthing your pastors and leadership in the church? How many of you have said negative things about your Christian brothers and sisters?

Do not look around, I am talking to you! Yes, you! Unless you repent TODAY! You will be under God judgement.

Today I want to talk to you because God's word clearly states that those who judge others will themselves be judged but the same measure that they judge others.

In order for the church of Malawi to rise up as a unit and be in unity all across Malawi we, as the church must change. We must change the way we think, the way we criticize other churches and we must start working together.

I believe the Great Commission is so large so BIG because God never intended it to be done only through one person or one church group but by ALL CHURCHES everywhere.

If you are part of the Church of Jesus Christ then you have a part to play in bringing people to Jesus Christ. If you are a born again believer of God, then you have a part to play!

In order to fulfil the GREAT COMMISSION each one of us has a part to play in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the masses. There is not time to look at our differences but only for us to look at what unites us!

We are not in competition with one another; we are not in a race with anyone else but ourselves. You run your own race not someone else's race.

Jesus Christ is going to ask you what you did, not what I did or how bad I was or how I effected you, but how you ran your race! What did you do with the knowledge

you had of Him! We cannot say yes but Pastor Martin was wrong, his attitude was wrong – God will ask you about you and your attitudes.

The bible is VERY Clear!

**Matthew 7:1-5** <sup>1</sup>*DO NOT judge and criticize and condemn others, so that you may not be judged and criticized and condemned yourselves.*<sup>2</sup>*For just as you judge and criticize and condemn others, you will be judged and criticized and condemned, and in accordance with the measure you [use to] deal out to others, it will be dealt out again to you.* <sup>3</sup>*Why do you stare from without at the very small particle that is in your brother's eye but do not become aware of and consider the beam of timber that is in your own eye?* <sup>4</sup>*Or how can you say to your brother, Let me get the tiny particle out of your eye, when there is the beam <sup>[d]</sup>of timber in your own eye?* <sup>5</sup>*You hypocrite, first get the beam of timber out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the tiny particle out of your brother's eye."*

### **Do not Judge, Criticize, Condemn**

This passage is so clear, **do not judge or criticize or condemn others so that you might not be judges, criticized or condemned.** Maybe this is not too clear so let me explain this in more detail.

**To Judge** - you make a decision in your heart, good or bad about a person.

**To Criticise** – you see something in a person's life and choose to focus on that and the negative surrounding that aspect and have something to say about it even though you have no right to say it!

**To Condemn** – you see something in a person's life and you judge them by your standards as guilt even though you might not have all the facts.

### **EXAMPLE**

You see a friend of yours, Mr A, who according to you is not serving God as he should. He is fat and overweight. So you start to say to yourself, you know Mr A does not serve God like I serve God! He does not come to church as often as I do and does not even know his bible like I do and he cannot even control his appetite!

Who are you to judge, when the facts are that Mr A has to work on Sunday's and Mr A cannot read English and does not have the money to buy a Chewe bible. And lastly Mr A has an eating disorder, which causes him to gain weight.

You see from seeing a person we cannot make a decision about that person only based what we see. Often all you see is that person and the thing that irritates you – many times you see a problem in others which are really problems in your own life!

None of us know what the other person is doing and why he or she does things in a certain way! None of us really know how much someone loves or does not love Jesus.

We can see through their life style but only God know a person, and only He can see into their heart and judge their motives. Only God can and will judge fairly every time because He has all the facts

So please DO NOT JUDGE others unless you have all the facts!

**Talk about how people see me!**

People see me as successful and doing very well in life. We have a nice house, a car and a very good job and ministry!

But very few people knew me when I was poor and when Suzette and I had to really turn our pennies around!

Many people want to be like me, and I guess that is not so bad but none of your know what we have gone through in our lives and not many of your will be prepared to go through what I went through to get where I am today.

You see we only see a person as they are not. The finished products but there were many days in my life when I served in other ministries, helped them and got absolutely no credit for it.

We were criticized and even held back because people did not realise that God has a plan for us!

You see the same was the story of Jesus, He was born in humble circumstances, in to a poor family. He did not have a wonderful education and was trained to be a carpenter.

Now there is nothing wrong with being a carpenter but what I am saying, He was one person in millions of others. Now one saw His uniqueness but God knew and at the right time, even though many criticized Him, He rose up to be more than anyone ever imagined.

Never judge anyone with your standards because your standards are squewed but your own thoughts, imaginations and your heart, which in itself is evil.

**You will be judged**

Jesus is very clear in the passage that the measure that you judge other, the measure you condemn others or the measure you criticize others is the very same way that you will be judged, condemned and criticized.

This is a law of the Kingdom of God and that law is "What you sow, you will reap". If fact it means that the measure that your sow, so if you sow bountifully, is the same measure your will reap! So if you have nothing good to say about someone, do not be surprise when people have nothing good to say about you.

Each one of us MUST decide today to STOP judging, condemning, and criticising others. Always allow God to judge, condemn and criticize but you NEVER do it.

**What happens when someone is sinning?**

I guess in closing many of you are wondering well what if a person really does something wrong that is clearly a sin, must I just forget it or ignore it.

Again the bible has a lot to say about this but the method that we deal with a situation like this is as follows.

**Matthew 18:15-17** <sup>15</sup>If your brother wrongs you, go and show him his fault, between you and him privately. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. <sup>16</sup>But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two others, so that every word may be confirmed and upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If he pays no attention to them [refusing to listen and obey], tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector.

Firstly we must pray about it. We must ask God to expose the sin in the person's life, but not in a judging way but in a humble and submissive way.

Secondly, we need to talk to the person about the sin issue not in a judgmental way but in love and humility.

Thirdly if they do not want to listen to you then go to the church and ask your pastor to either come with you or send another pastor or church member with you!

If they still do not want to repent then the bible says we must have nothing to do with them (until they repent). It does not say we must bad mouth them to everyone but in love we must leave them alone!

When they do eventually repent and turn back to God then we can restore them in love!

**Closing**

So today we need to come before God and repent of a spirit of judgement, criticizing, and condemnation. Everyone in this place needs to repent. You see unless we repent of this, and on behalf of ourselves and our nation there cannot not be unity!

Our Key Text says this, in **Psalms 133:1-3**, how good it is when brethren dwell together in UNITY! We must unit but before we unit we need to come together and repent of our sins.

**Let's pray!**