

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG97 – The Father Must Grant Us Oneness

I was talking to a dear brother yesterday about podcast number 80, titled, *The End Of Futility*. We were discussing how that related to the issue of oneness in the body of Christ and in the Church, because oneness is such a drive that we have – that I have personally, I know he does also, and many others have in this hour – that we need to see the body of Christ come into oneness. And so we were really speaking of how this issue of futility can affect our ability as believers, as those reaching for maturity, as those wanting to come into sonship, to come into oneness; how the oneness can be affected by this reality of futility.

First, I want to look at John the seventeenth chapter, verse 21. This is Christ speaking, He is praying to the Father before the crucifixion. He says, “That they may all be one, even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.” Here we have Christ praying to the Father for oneness; and I personally believe that this prayer at some point is going to be fulfilled, because of the dynamics of it. I cannot believe that Christ is asking the Father for these things, just prior to the crucifixion, and that at some point in time this prayer of our Lord will not be answered by the Father. It will be answered. We know Christ asked the Father for it; we know the Father will give Him what He has desired; and yet when we look at what is happening, we see the body of Christ, the Church, is very far from oneness. The believers are very far away from this oneness. So you recognize that the dynamic of coming into oneness is something we must pursue and contend for and believe for in the Lord. And I think beyond just asking, ourselves, or praying, we need to look at why we do not have oneness; and I think we need to really strive in the Holy Spirit to understand what it will take for us to come into and be graced with the oneness that Christ spoke of. He said, “I gave them My glory so that they may be one.” So He is investing Himself into this.

This is an interesting thing, because I think it goes beyond just this issue of oneness, which we will focus on in this podcast. I think many times there are promises that we have, that we are believing for, things that we are praying for, that we find Scriptural direction for us to be praying for; and yet, sometimes we do not really understand why there is not fulfillment of what we are asking. Now, personally, I believe that this issue of futility and oneness is a good example of what we face as believers. I think God directs us to pray for things, to strive for things, that we cannot break into or have Him answer those prayers as we are asking them, without certain other requirements being met or certain other things taking place which must happen first before prayers can be fulfilled. I believe that there are things that must come first. So we should understand what those things are, and therefore be able to reach into God to have the release that we need through receiving what He wants us to come into – and, maybe if you want to call it a breakthrough, have breakthroughs into – before some of our prayers and before some of the Scriptural prophecies can be brought about. And again, in talking about oneness and futility, I think we are addressing this bigger issue of why do sometimes our prayers not get answers, and what does it take for us to see our prayers receive answers. We are going to start out by knowing that Christ prayed to the Father that we might be one, that the believers may come into oneness. We know He wants it. We know the Father will, at some point, give it, because Christ Himself asked for it. Now let's see if we can drill

down and find out what is really involved in having this oneness bestowed upon us as the body of Christ, as believers.

In Genesis 11, starting at verses 1-6, we have the story of the Tower of Babel. We are going to read these verses and begin unwrapping this here. “Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.’ And they used bricks for stone, and they used tar for mortar. They said, ‘Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name’” – they were trying to make their name above the name of God – “‘otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’ The Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. The Lord said, ‘Behold, they are one people’” – see, when we strive for oneness, we are striving for something that already existed within humanity back at this time. This is the Lord saying, “‘Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.’” So, because of oneness – which is one of the reasons we reach for oneness in our faith – nothing will be impossible to these people; and God recognized that. That is one of the fruits of oneness: when we are one, what we ask for will happen. That is why we need it, because our prayer life, our prophetic proclamation, is empowered to manifest when we are one. These people were one – they all had one language; they were in agreement; they had the ability to agree and the ability to execute what their will was, because of the power that was in them through their working together, because of oneness.

Verses 7-9, “‘Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.’ So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.” We understand that God brought this curse upon man, where he was unable to understand himself. Obviously, it was manifested in language; He changed their languages, and therefore, they could not understand each other’s speech. But I believe it goes further than that, because it is a curse that the Lord brought on mankind, and He stopped them from being able to understand one another.

We see that reality today in our lives. One of the biggest problems we have is the ability to understand one another – even when we speak the same language. We see that in homes. We see that between many different classes or races of people. We are divided; we are divided by God. And we must get that understanding: God did this. This was not something that satan did, or that man did; this was something that God did, and we still labor under this difficulty. Wherever we see, in our lives or society or culture, the inability to communicate and to understand, we must recognize that this is at the root of it. And it is not enough just to strive to get understanding – which we should do. We should labor to understand one another and to be able to talk things out and to come to an agreement, to have a real grasp of what the other person is feeling or wanting; but we should do more than that. We must pray over the confusion. We must pray about the inability to understand each other; because ultimately, this is a release that we need. If you want to call it a deliverance, I think that would be appropriate. There is a deliverance that we need as humans from this that God brought about, of our inability to understand one another. And why did He do it? He did not do it because He is mean, or because He hates people. God so loved the world, and He loves humanity. The word *world* in Greek could mean *humanity*, not just the earth, as it sounds. He so loved the world, He so loved humanity, that He gave His only begotten

Son, that whosoever believes on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It is the Father who brings salvation, and we must recognize that salvation reaches into these areas where God, as a loving Father, has put constraints and restraints upon us in our nature, in our sin nature; and in our immaturity, He blocks us. You say, "Gosh, I labor to walk in the Word. I labor to see the promises fulfilled in my life." Well, one thing you need to look at is, is it God Himself that is holding you back from experiencing the very things He has encouraged you to press into? And I think many times the answer to that is yes.

Here we see the sterling example. God Himself came down, and when He saw man in his fallen state, when He saw man in his rebellion, when He saw man in his sin, He recognized that He, as a loving father, needed to restrain that part of humanity, or the human will – not take away the free will of man, but make it impossible for man to accomplish his own will, in his own way, without first coming to the Father and getting rid of sin, getting rid of rebellion, growing into sonship; all of these things are required. So God, as a father, treats humanity like a father. And as a father, as a loving father, He is not going to allow us to hurt ourselves, or one another, or to destroy His Kingdom, or the earth, hopefully; so He puts restraints. These restraints can come as this restraint came, as a curse from God – confusing the languages, confusing the tongues, giving an inability for people to understand one another. So God did this to say, "No, you cannot do what you are trying to do. I will not let you accomplish this. I am not removing your free will; you can want to do it, and you can will to do it all you want. But as the Creator, I have the ability to restrain you from being successful at accomplishing your own will. And I am doing that in hope" – as Romans 8 says, He brought futility in hope, that at some point it would be removed. But it is removed as we are driven to mature in God, and to grow up as sons, and have our will conform to His will, and have our desires conform to His desire.

We see this reality, and you need to understand this if you are going to have a walk with God. God is going to treat you as a father. If you come and give yourself to Him, and you experience salvation, He will, as a father, restrain you through the use of futility and other blocks, lest our actions cause irrevocable destruction and hurt. This is what God does. I will give you an example of this out of Genesis 3. Starting at verses 22-24, it says, "Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever'—therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life." When man sinned, we know that God brought curses: He cursed the land, He did different things, He removed Adam and Eve from the Garden. Why? Because in the state they were in, He could not allow them access to the Garden lest they destroy the creation. He also protected the tree of life, so that they were unable to reach into resurrection life, or eternal life, without first being absolved of their human nature, and their sin nature, and their rebellion from Him. So God protected the tree of life. This is what God does as a father: He is protecting the things that we would potentially destroy, including each other, including ourselves, including relationships, including the earth, including the heavens, everything. God will protect it from us in our immaturity, just like a natural-level father and mother would do.

You do not give the child the car keys when they are five years old, because you know it would be destructive potentially to themselves, or to someone else, or to property, or something. You do not allow, parents do not allow, children to hurt themselves, to kill themselves, by accidents which can be prevented by actions taken from those parents. So you teach them "No," and you constrain them from

doing things. You teach them not to run out into the street. This simply is what God has done through history with humanity. He has put a restraint of futility upon us, and He has restrained us in other ways – not for bad; not because He hates us; not because He is terrible; but because He so loves us, and so hopes and knows that He will continue to work with us until we grow and mature, until our will is linked with His and our rebellion is something of the past, our sins are washed away, and we are wholly given to Him. When Christ reached this place of sonship, all things were given into His hand; all things that were the Father's were given into the hand of Christ. But it was because He grew, and became mature, and was able to do the will of God, and His will was absolutely linked to the will of the Father.

Imagine what would happen if God would just let mankind do whatever was in his heart to do. I mean, look around the world, it is bad enough right now. I am recording this during the Ukraine crisis, and what a tragedy and what a horrible situation it is; but it shows what even one man driven by the forces that are driving him can do in the world that is so destructive. Imagine if God was not restraining so many areas of humanity.

I am going to look at Luke the ninth chapter, starting at verses 52-56. “And He sent messengers on ahead of Him,” speaking of Christ, “and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him. But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem. When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, ‘Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?’ But He turned and rebuked them, and said, ‘You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.’ And they went on to another village.” Here we have a great example. These are the disciples. They are walking with Jesus, with Yeshua, and they see people rejecting Him. They are ready to call fire down from heaven and burn these people up! Imagine if everything we really wanted or felt or desired, we were able to pray and have it instantly manifest. And yet, isn't that what the Scripture says? Ask, and you shall receive. If two or more agree on anything, you shall have what you have asked for. That is true, and it is a promise. But believe me: God has restraints on the ability for that to happen, until we grow into the place of spiritual maturity that is worthy of that type of responsibility before God.

We understand that God treats us as sons, and I am going to read a few more Scriptures that give illustration of this. Proverbs 3:11-12: “My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord or loath His reproof, for whom the Lord loves He reproofs, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.” This is repeated in the book of Hebrews by Paul. In chapter 12, it talks about this same principle, and quotes this same thing: “Do not lightly receive the correction of the Father.” I will start in verses 4-10: “You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, ‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproofed by Him; for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.’ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.”

God is seeking that discipline which brings us into holiness, that brings us into absolute conformity to His will, absolute submission and obedience – just as Christ was. He learned obedience, it says, through the things which He suffered. What He suffered was the discipline of the Father. In Deuteronomy 8:5-6 it

says, “Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.” This is addressing Israel, talking to them about their time in the wilderness and what God was doing. He was disciplining them, as a father disciplines his children.

In second Samuel – and this is important, because it is a prophecy that comes from Nathan to David, and of course, it applies to Solomon; but it also is very Messianic in its message. Second Samuel 7, starting at verses 12-13, says, “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers,” speaking to David, “I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” See, now obviously, the first part of that sentence is talking about Solomon. The second part is talking about Messiah: “I will establish His Kingdom forever.” Verses 14-17, “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men.” In other words, circumstances that surround his life. “But My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.’ In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.” So we see this reality that God has worked with. He worked with David; He worked with Solomon; He worked with Messiah, as a father disciplining his son. He worked with Israel, and He continues to do so. And in Hebrews, Paul is saying He does this with the believers who are coming forth in Yeshua. This is a way that God relates to us who believe in Him, who seek after Him, who strive to be part of His Kingdom. And this is why things do not always go our way, and things do not immediately happen when we pray over them; and why sometimes when we ask, it does not seem to happen immediately. But He gives us the answer, doesn't He? He says, “Ask,” and, “keep on asking. Seek, and keep on seeking. Knock, and keep on knocking.” Why? Because in that process, God will perfect your spirit, and God will mature you; and God will bring you to the place you need to be in for Him to give the answers. He longs to give the answers. He is driven to give you the answers, more than many times we are driven to have the answers to our prayers. So we see this principle; we see how it applies to our oneness.

I am going to read out of Galatians chapter 4, starting at verse 1. “Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything.” That is the way we are. As long as we are immature, we may be owners of everything through Christ, and we may be heirs of Christ and heirs of the promises; but we are like slaves, in the timeframe that we are in, and as long as we remain in our immaturity, He will treat us in that manner, and He will continue to discipline us. Verse 2 says, “But he is under guardians and managers” – this son, this heir of everything, is under guardians and managers – “until the date set by the father.” Will there be oneness? Yes. When? Well, it will come at the date set by the Father – when God allows it, when God bestows it, when God turns it over to us – because of what we have attained in oneness and submission and obedience and righteousness, He will give us oneness. He is not going to let the body of Christ wander around through the earth like James and John, calling fire down out of heaven. He is not going to allow us to be as they were in Genesis, to build another Babylon, because of the oneness that we have without our wills being conformed to His will. He will not do it; He will not let our prayers be answered. He gives the answer to prayer; that is where the answers to prayer come from. And He is a good Father, and He is not going to give you something that would be detrimental – you can pray for a pair of scissors at three years old, but your parents are not going to answer that prayer; and there are many other things that they will not do and

will not give you. And it is the same with our Father in heaven: our prayers must be mingled with our process of growing in God to a place of maturity, where He is able to answer those prayers.

“As long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave even though he is owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.” Verses 3-7: “So also we, while we were children,” – or shall we say, are children – “were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.” We are held under futility. We are held under these curses, like the curse that came on Babylon, where we cannot all speak the same language, we cannot understand one another the way we need to, to come into oneness and agreement so that we are equipped with the power from on high to accomplish things. “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” We cry for this maturity! “Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir.” If a son, if we come into this maturity, then we are heirs of God. What is an heir of God? Somebody who receives His authority and His power and enabling.

Verses 8-9. “However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?” So God faces this problem: we may be believers, but how often do we turn back to the worthless things, the elemental things? How often do we fail to walk in His will? We were taught to pray that by Yeshua, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.” But He is still waiting for us to be the ones who do His will, and do it perfectly; who do not serve other gods; who do not walk under the elemental spirits of this age, but instead we walk in total submission to His will and to His Lordship. When we have that, believe me, He will bestow upon us the answer to Yeshua's prayer, “Father, that they may all be one, as You and I are one.” We will be one. The body of Christ will be one. But it will be something bestowed upon us when we have achieved what He is looking for out of us. It will come at the time set by the Father.

I want to remind us of a few points. God is our Father, and He disciplines us as a father. Number two, because of our immaturity and rebellion, God blocks our ability to accomplish our will through the use of futility which restrains us. Another thought: if we had oneness without our full maturity as sons, we would create another Tower of Babel, and build another city called Babylon. Lastly, we must have oneness, but first we must have maturity.

Lord, we do cry unto You, “Abba!” We ask You to bring us to this place of maturity. Yeshua, we ask You to bring us into Your likeness, that we may walk as You walked, as a mature Son. Help us, transform us, and change us into sons in Your image. We believe for it in Your name. Amen.