

Diversified and Working Together

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love, one to another.” (John 13:35)

My curiosity arose as I flipped through pages and pages of local church names in the UPCI Directory. I started listing the most common names of local churches and gave up. There are hundreds of church names affiliated with the UPCI! Wow! I previously thought the number was a few dozen!

Most local churches in US and Canada have their own governing boards, own their properties, acquire tax exemption, pay utilities, maintenance, and other you- name-it administrative costs. It is amazing that in this fast-changing religious world the vast majority of the UPCI leaders still submit to internal rules for sections, districts, and departments and other things. UPCI-affiliated ministers and members attend group meetings of the above and General Conference with their goal, The Whole Gospel to the Whole World by the Whole Church! Most local churches are independently owned, organized and submit to following guidelines they formulated by partaking in conferences. It is not uncommon for three or four generations of family preachers to still maintain their affiliation with the United Pentecostal Church International. In this world of do-it-yourself religion the evidence of all this working together is a miracle. Good men with a great message, methods, and money will even have fun competing with each other at times, over giving to Global Missions. They heard the Master’s call of Mathew 24:14 and Luke 24:47 about the global reach of His Gospel and His Name going into the entire world. Satan as usual, claimed it would not happen and that he would block it. But like David’s brave men who heard their master declare something about water, broke through the strongholds of the Philistines and fulfilled their master’s whim. Working together with hundreds of autonomous churches and names many of these local churches using Faith Promise Plan, a written promise basically by their members to give what they do not have if He will provide it, and channeled through our organization’s structure have planted churches and trained leaders in over 200 nations of the world! That is a miracle God, like Job of old can flaunt in the face of Satan of how his people love Him and His cause and seriously will give and promote it among themselves till the rapture. The Brazilian UPC sees fantastic results of these investments translated into souls saved, leaders trained, and with the same spirit reaching their nation and helping reach others of similar Portuguese culture.

Why do Godly men in church leadership, with secure incomes, skills and talents that at times supersede their district and sectional superiors, submit and put their “shoulder to the wheel” of oneness world evangelism when they could “take their marbles out of the game” and go on down Independence Road to do their own thing? What unites so many different UPCI churches locally owned, that through others sent, preach the fundamental message of salvation around the world? They have a love for truth and its expansion!

“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (Jn. 8:31-32).

The heroes of the faith of our Jesus Name and Oneness movement, in my mind, are the preachers a hundred years ago who would not follow Trinitarian dogma and creed. When

obligated to decide, they preferred the message above all and with their feet, left the convention floor to a world of following truth regardless of the material. After losing local churches and parsonages due to the message they preached, they were “gun shy” of superiors owning the facilities their congregations built and preferred being *affiliated* than owned. They did not want to repeat the past and worked *affiliated* with the larger Oneness groups. Our hat is off to Pastors, Church leaders and UPCI saints who by a bond of fellowship have sacrificially given for decades to plant the Name Jesus that after believing and repentance, remits, pardons, blots out, cancels and washes away sin in baptism. Our affiliated leaders did not HAVE to do that, but a bond of AFFILIATION brought them to help in domestic and overseas missions projects.

If you do not believe that our God is one who loves diversity read in the end of your Bible about who was in heaven, what they believed, how they worshiped, and where they came from! With men and modern means, the little known message of His Name reaches now to many national capitals, large cities, towns, villages, hamlets, rural areas and even indigenous Indian tribes around the world. Some rightfully accuse us of dwelling on “issues of salvation”. A few seconds into the rapture of the church, will any *other* issue be more important?

What makes leaders of our fellowship who do not always agree on every detail, who could do otherwise, UNITE to the fundamental doctrine and for decades consistently support mission projects to accomplish its world-wide goal?

The simple miraculous Bible key of affiliation:

SUBMISSION in LOVE!

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