

Love and One Accord in the Scriptures

In Romans, 1 Corinthians, Philippians
footnotes – Recovery version

In the book of Romans, which covers the normal Christian life and church life, Paul speaks about the need to receive the believers in the principle of love. In fact, love is the underlying theme of Paul's writings interwoven throughout nearly every one of his epistles. The following is a summary of Romans 14:13-15, *"If we receive the believers in love, we shall not judge others, not put stumbling blocks before them, not grieve the brothers, not destroy the man for whom Christ died, but rather walk in love."*

For The Kingdom Life

"The receiving of the believers is not an insignificant matter. It is related to the judgement seat in the future, and it concerns the kingdom life in the present."

"Chapter 14 can be considered a supplement to the constitution of the church life. In setting forth every article, the author's heart was tolerant, his attitude was broad, and his view was noble. In order to practice the church life that he instituted in chapter 12, we must strictly observe the supplement set forth in this chapter. Many saints who love the Lord and seek to live the church life have failed because they were either negligent or mistaken in this matter."

*"To practice the Body life revealed in chapter 12, we must learn the practical lessons of receiving the believers, as revealed particularly in 14:1—15:13, **that the church life may be all-inclusive, able to include all kinds of genuine Christians.**"*

Rom. 14:17 -- *"According to the context of this chapter, this verse was written for our receiving of the believers. If we receive believers according to the apostle's instruction in this chapter, we will be right and proper toward those we receive and will have peace with them; thus, we will have joy in the holy Spirit, proving that we are living in the reality of God's kingdom and are under God's rule."*

"When you are about to receive the saints, you must realize that the saints are not to be received according to your doctrinal concepts...."

Serving Christ

Rom. 14:18 -- *"For he who serves Christ in this is well pleasing to God and approved by men."*

"To live in the kingdom of God in the way of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit is to serve Christ as a slave. This is well pleasing to God and approved by men, and it preserves the oneness of the church for the practical Body life."

“This means that to receive the believers is to serve Christ. We have to do this as in the kingdom of God and in the way of serving Christ as a slave, in the way of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, not in the way of taking care of doctrinal concepts. Surely, this way will be well pleasing to God and approved by men. And this way will never cause any division, but always keep the unity of the spirit for the practical Body life.”

The Things of Peace

Rom.14:19 -- “So then let us pursue the things of peace and the things for building up one another.”

“For the proper church life we must pursue the things of peace, the things that keep the oneness of the Body, and we must pursue also the things that build up one another, the things that minister life to our fellow members for mutual building up.”

*“The things that build up one another are the things that minister life to the members of the Body for the mutual building. We must pursue both categories of things. We have to seek after the things that keep the unity of the Body with peace and the things that minister life to others. In order to do this, we have to leave all doctrinal concepts behind and overcome all the frustrations that originate from mental knowledge. **Satan is subtle. Through all the centuries, he has used and still is using doctrinal concepts and mental knowledge to frustrate the ministry of life and to divide the Body of Christ. Therefore, we must overcome his subtlety by pursuing the things of peace for keeping unity, and the things that minister life to others for the building of the Body.**”*

Breaking Down God’s Work

Rom. 14:20 -- “Do not break down the work of God ...it is evil for a man...to be a stumbling block...It is good not to...do anything by which your brother stumbles.”

*“In all saved persons there is a measure of God’s work. God has called and saved them. God has done at least this much divine work in them. **If we cause any of the believers to stumble because of our doctrinal concepts, we break down, destroy, God’s work of grace in him. We should take care of God’s work, not our doctrinal concepts. All our doctrinal concepts must be cast aside for the sake of God’s work of grace in others. We are free to eat anything and to do anything that is not sinful, but we should not eat anything or do anything by which a brother stumbles. We must take care of the building of the brothers in life, not the keeping of our religious concepts in knowledge.**”*

According To Christ

*“Paul was very wise. If we are not in the spirit as we read this portion of Romans, we will miss much of the depth of what Paul wrote. Paul began the section on receiving the saints with the matter of doctrinal concepts...and he concludes it with receiving the saints according to Christ. **We must not receive the believers according to doctrinal concepts, but according to Christ.**”*

“Most of those who talk about the Body in Romans 12 have neglected the practice of Romans 14. However, it is impossible to have the reality of chapter twelve without the proper practice of chapter fourteen.

*“Without Romans 14, we cannot have the Body, because without the practice of receiving the believers revealed in this chapter, Christians will remain divided over doctrinal concepts. Doctrine divides; life unites. Christian history has proved that no doctrine builds up; every doctrine is divisive. Whether or not a doctrine is scriptural or unscriptural, right or wrong, it still divides. Christianity has been cut into thousands pieces by all the different doctrines. Without exception every doctrine has produced a sect or division. There is no need to say that cultic doctrines divide, even the proper, sound, fundamental, scriptural doctrines are divisive. Therefore, we should not devote our attention to doctrine. Instead, we should pray, ‘Lord, rescue us from all doctrinal concepts. Lord, bring us into yourself. You are our unique concept’. **Our concept is Christ. Christ is one; doctrines are many. Christ must be our unique concept...This was Paul’s meaning when he told us ‘to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus’**” (15:5).*

Bearing the Weak Ones

Rom. 15:1 -- “Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those who are weak, and not to please ourselves”.

*“In receiving the believers, we must bear the weaknesses of the weak and not please ourselves. The Lord Jesus always bears the weaknesses of His believers (2 Cor. 12:9) and does not please Himself. In receiving the believers, **we have to do the same according to Him, not pleasing ourselves, but bearing others’ weaknesses.**”*

Pleasing Our Neighbor

Rom. 15:2-3 -- “Let each of us please his neighbor unto what is good for building. For even Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written, the reproaches of those who reproached you, fell upon Me.”

*“**We have to please ourselves that they may be built up in the Body. For the sake of this purpose, we must pay the price that we may please others. Christ did not please Himself; He pleased the Father by bearing the reproaches, which should have fallen upon the Father. Likewise, we should not please ourselves; we should please others by bearing their weaknesses that they may be built up in the Body of Christ.**”*

Being Likeminded

*Rom. 15:4-5 -- "For whatsoever was written before was written for our instruction, that through endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures we may have hope. Now the God of **endurance and encouragement** grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus."*

*"'Whatever was written' refers to what is quoted in verse 3 concerning Christ and is for the instruction that produces endurance and encouragement with hope. The record concerning Christ in the Scriptures is surely full of instruction. If we receive its instruction, we will be supplied with the endurance and encouragement of Christ that we may have hope. **In receiving the believers, we need to endure the weaknesses of the ones whom we are going to receive.** We also need to be encouraged with the hope that they may improve and be empowered in faith by the Lord's grace. In receiving the weaker believers, we have to realize that our God is the God of endurance and encouragement who can cause us to endure others' weaknesses and to be encouraged with what He can do in others by His grace. If we are so encouraged by such a God, we shall be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, not according to anything else."*

"Since there is only one Christ Jesus, if we are all according to Christ, we shall be likeminded with one another. However, if our mind is in accordance with teachings, concepts, religious practices, or any other such thing, we shall be divided."

*"The only way to be likeminded toward one another is to be according to Christ. To receive the believers according to our teachings, concepts, gifts, or religious practices does not need any endurance or encouragement with hope. **But to receive all believers according to Christ does need an amount of endurance and encouragement** with hope which the very God of endurance and encouragement will supply us if we care for the keeping of unity and the building up of the Body."*

One Accord in Speaking

*Rom. 15:6 -- "That you may with one accord and with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". "Some versions say 'with one mind and with one mouth'. However, in Greek the word is accord, not mind. Nevertheless, the word actually means one mind. We all need to be likeminded. When we are likeminded, we shall be in one accord and shall have one mouth, meaning that we shall have the same concept and the same way of speaking. There will be many believers, but only one mouth. **Whenever we have the same mind and are of one accord, we shall say the same thing. Therefore, with one mind and one mouth we glorify God and the Father of our***

Lord Jesus Christ...If in receiving the believers, we behave ourselves according to the Lord Jesus, we shall glorify God as He does.”

What Christ Has Received

Rom 15:7 -- “Wherefore, receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.” *“This verse, when taken along with 14:3, proves that Christ’s receiving is God’s receiving. What Christ has received, God has received. Christ has received us to the glory of God. Our receiving of the believers must be according to God’s and Christ’s receiving, not according to anything else. Whomever God and Christ has received we have to receive, regardless of how much they differ from us in doctrinal concepts or religious practices. This is for the glory of God.”*

In 1 Corinthians

“After Paul presented a full sketch of the Christian life and the church life in Romans, he gives an illustration of the Christian life, the church life, and the Body life in 1 Corinthians”.

“In Romans 1:10 Paul says, ‘now I beseech you, brothers, through 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 attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.’ To keep the oneness in the Lord and to avoid divisions, we need to uplift and exalt the unique name of our Lord by dropping all names other than this highest name.”

Speaking The Same Thing

*“In 1 Corinthians 1:10 Paul urges the believers to speak the same thing so that there be no divisions among them. In this Epistle Paul deals with eleven problems among the believers in Corinth. The first is the matter of division. Division is nearly always the leading problem, bringing in all other problems among the believers. It may be considered the root of the problems among the believers. Hence, in dealing with all the problems in the church at Corinth, the apostle’s ax first touches the root, that is, the divisions among them. **The first virtue of the walk worthy of God’s calling is the keeping of the oneness of the Spirit in the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:1-6).**”*

*“In verse 12 Paul goes on to say, ‘Now I mean this, that each of you says, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.’ In principle this is just the same as saying I am a Lutheran, I am a Wesleyan, I am a Presbyterian, I am an Episcopalian, I am a Baptist. All such designations should be condemned and rejected. **They can only be terminated and eliminated by taking Christ as the unique center among all the believers.**”*

“To say ‘I am of Christ’ in the way of excluding the apostles and their teachings or of excluding other believers is as divisive as to say ‘I am of this or of that’.”

“These verses indicate that divisions among Christians always result from placing another name above the name of the Lord Jesus. When certain of the Corinthians said, ‘I am of Apollos’, they automatically uplifted the name of Apollos above the name of Christ.”

*“It is very significant that in verse 10 Paul beseeches the brothers through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This indicates that we should not uplift any name above this name. Through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ Paul charged the believers at Corinth to all **speak the same thing.**”*

“When I was a young Christian, certain Christian leaders told me that I should not expect all Christians ever to speak the same thing. Do you think it is possible for us as Christians to speak the same thing? If you regard this as possible, I would ask you how we can speak the same thing. As we consider the differences among nations and races today, we see that people do not speak the same thing. For example, the Chinese do not speak the same thing as the Japanese, nor the Germans, as the French. How is it possible for believers of different nationalities to speak the same thing? To answer this question we need to understand what Paul means by the expression ‘the same thing’.”

Christ and Him Crucified

“When Paul speaks of ‘the same thing’, he means Christ and Him crucified. Thus, for us to speak the same thing means that we all speak concerning Christ and Christ crucified. From experience I can testify that, although according to history it is impossible for Chinese and Japanese, Germans and French, to be truly one, I have seen real oneness among the believers from these different nationalities. It is beautiful to see the genuine oneness between Chinese and Japanese believers and also between German and French believers. Such a oneness is possible only when we concentrate on Christ as our unique center and unique portion. As our unique center and portion, Christ is in all the saints (Col. 1:27) to even become all the saints (Col. 3:11). Whereas many of today’s Christians are divided because they emphasize many things in place of Christ, we are one because we have nothing but Christ.”

“Because the Lord has raised us up to carry out His recovery, we focus our attention on Christ and not on any practices. We have turned away from everything else to the Lord Himself...In the past some were distracted by what they thought was a better way of meeting. However, our center is not a certain way of meeting – our center is Christ Himself.”

“Many Christians today do not talk at all about Christ. In their conversation they are preoccupied with many other things. In the local churches we all need to speak of Christ crucified. Do not discuss the meetings, whether they are high or low, and do not talk about the church, whether it is good or bad. Likewise, do not speak about the elders, whether they are right or wrong, capable or incapable. Our attitude should be that we

care only for Christ, for the church of God in every place, and for the Lord's recovery. God's goal in His recovery is to recover Christ as everything to us."

"During more than fifty years in the church life, I have observed that many saints in different countries and cities have not yet been absolutely rescued from the degraded situation of Christianity. Even some of the dear saints in the Lord's recovery talk in the way of the practice of today's Christianity. Instead of speaking of Christ and Him crucified, they talk about the meetings, the elders, and the saints. When others want you to talk with them in such a way, you should say, 'I do not have any heart for this. My only preference is Christ. I only care for Christ, not for the condition of the church or the meetings'."

Seeing Christ As The Unique Center

*"Whether or not a local church is a genuine church is not a matter of condition. Do not think that if a certain church is healthy, it is the church, but that it is no longer the church if its condition becomes unhealthy. **Brother so-and-so is the same person whether he is strong or weak, healthy or sick. Likewise, even if the condition of the church is poor and very unhealthy, it is still the church. If we see the church in the Lord's recovery in this way and care only for Christ as our unique center, we shall not have any divisions.**"*

"...Whether the church is good or bad, healthy or unhealthy, living or dead, it is still the church. If we realize this, it indicates that we have seen that Christ is God's unique center"

"It is crucial for us all to learn the secret not to know anything except Christ and Him crucified. However, it is actually quite difficult to practice this. It is not easy for us to speak the same thing. Nevertheless, we need to learn to speak the same thing – Christ and Him crucified."

Attuned In The Same Mind

*"In verse 10 Paul also tells the Corinthians to be 'attuned to the same mind and in the same opinion'. The Greek word rendered attuned is the same word that is translated mending in Matthew 4:21. It means to repair, to restore, to adjust, to mend, making a broken thing thoroughly complete, joined perfectly together. **The Corinthian believers as a whole were divided; their oneness was broken. They needed mending to join them perfectly together that they might be in harmony, having the same mind and the same opinion to speak the same thing, that is, Christ and His cross.**"*

"The testimony of the church in Corinth had been severely damaged, and Paul wrote this Epistle to mend this situation. This mending was also an attuning. The word attune is a musical term. Among the saints in Corinth there was no harmony. In writing this Epistle Paul was seeking to restore the harmony, to attune them so that they might be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion."

A Vision of Christ In God's Economy

“If we would be attuned in the same opinion, we need to have a vision of the place of Christ in God's economy. I am burdened that all the saints would see Christ and know Him. When you have seen the all-inclusive Christ and learned the secret of enjoying Him, your way of thinking and of speaking will be changed. Then you will become pure and simple. Instead of expressing your own opinions, you will care only to enjoy Christ and speak of Him. Having become a person who does not know anything except Christ, you will be faithful to the Lord's recovery.”

“Today the Lord is seeking a people who care only for Him. Collectively, here and there, these people will be lampstands. Among them there will be no preferences or opinions – only Christ. May we all learn this secret.”

“In the Lord's recovery we care only for Christ. In the recovery the Lord is not recovering anything other than Christ Himself in our experience. Only by focusing on Christ can we be saved from division.”

Saved From Divisiveness

*“By nature we are all divisive. We were born with a divisive element. The only way to be rescued from this divisiveness is to see the all-inclusive Christ and learn the secret of enjoying Him. **Please be impressed that the only way to avoid division is to see Christ, receive Christ, and enjoy Christ. This and only this will cause us to be attuned in the same opinion. Then there will be real harmony among us.**”*

“If you visit another locality, do not seek to know things about the church there. Do not ask about the elders or about the young people. Instead, care only for the harmony which comes from the enjoyment of Christ. When I visit any church, I care only to behold such harmony. If this harmony is not present in a particular church, I realize that the saints in that place have not been enjoying Christ adequately. But if we enjoy Christ continually, there will be harmony among us.”

“Whenever you visit another local church, you should seek to be blind and not see anything other than Christ. Then you will be one who has learned the secret, who speaks the same thing, and who has the same mind and the same opinion.”

“Let us learn to have no other choice, preference or taste other than Christ. The all-inclusive Christ is our unique choice, preference, taste, and enjoyment. This will preserve us in the church in the Lord's recovery until He comes back. Otherwise, eventually we shall be disappointed or distracted and forsake the Lord's recovery.”

Christ, Unique and Undivided

“In verse 13 Paul asks, “Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? Christ is unique and not divided. This unique and undivided Christ, taken as the unique center among all the believers, should be the termination of all divisions.”

“Christ, not any other person, was crucified for us. The one who was crucified for us should be the one to whom all the believers belong. This surely is Christ, not anyone else. All believers were baptized into the name, that is, into the Person, of the crucified and resurrected Christ. This issues in an organic union with Him. His unique name and unique Person cannot be replaced by the name and the person of any of His servants.”

“...In verses 10 through 17 Paul goes on to show that Christ is not divided. He beseeches the saints through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to all speak the same thing – Christ and His cross – and to be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.”

Knowledge Puffs Up

1 Cor. 8:1 -- *“Now knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” “The outward, objective knowledge that puffs up comes from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the source of death. The spiritual, not fleshly love, which is an expression of life as described in chapter thirteen, builds up. It comes from the tree of life, the source of life. This is the love of God (1 John 4:16) infused into us by faith, which has brought us into the organic union with God. By this love we love God (1 Cor. 8:3) and the brothers (1Jn 4:21), and according to this love we should walk (Rom. 14:15). Thus, our walk builds up (1 Cor. 10:23). The expression “builds up” in this verse refers not only to the edification of individual believers, but also to the building up of the corporate Body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:4-5, 12); Eph. 4:16). This book stresses the matter of building up (3:9-12 10:23).*

Causing Weak Brothers to Stumble

1 Cor. 8:9-13 -- *In these verses, “Paul speaks about causing weak brothers to stumble. In verse 9 he says, ‘but beware lest somehow this right of yours becomes a stumbling block to the weak ones’.”*

“Verse 11 says, ‘For the one who is weak is being destroyed by your knowledge, the brother because of whom Christ died.’ The words ‘being destroyed’ signify perishing not for eternity, but in the Christian life. The weak believer may be destroyed by the carelessness of the stronger one’s knowledge. A brother for whom Christ died may be destroyed in the Christian life by our improper eating.”

“In verse 12 Paul declares, ‘and thus, sinning against the brothers and wounding their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.’ The Greek word translated wounding literally

*means smiting unto damage. **Because Christ died for the brothers, we sin against Christ if we wound them and cause them to stumble.***”

*“In verse 13 Paul concludes, ‘wherefore if food stumbles my brother, I will by no means eat meat forever, **that I may not stumble my brother.**’ The Greek word for stumble is ‘skandalizo’, meaning to snare, to entrap. Hence, to stumble the brother is to snare him, to put a trap in his way. In order not to stumble a brother, Paul says that he will ‘by no means eat meat forever.’”*

“It is important to touch Paul’s spirit as revealed in this chapter. Here the burden in Paul’s spirit is absolutely for Christ and His Body. Because Paul was for Christ and all the members of the Body, when he gave instructions concerning eating idol sacrifices, he did not say whether this practice is right or wrong, good or bad. Paul had a completely different view of the situation. His view was focused on Christ and the Body.”

Concerning the matter of eating idol sacrifices, Paul considered how this would affect the members of Christ, whether it would build them up or cause them to stumble. By this we see that Paul’s heart and spirit were concerned for Christ and His members...He wanted the saints to realize that they should consider whether the members of Christ would be caused to stumble or be built up by their eating. Paul wanted them to have regard for Christ and the members of Christ. Therefore, Paul answered the questions and gave instructions from the standpoint of Christ and the Body.

*We all need to learn from Paul to have Christ and the Body in view when we consider various matters. However, we often talk with others about something with no consideration of this view. Instead, we focus on our own interest, profit, or loss. If this is our view, we are far off from the central vision of God’s economy. **In chapter eight we see once again that Paul did not deviate from the central vision of God’s economy. Even in giving instructions concerning the eating of idol sacrifices he endeavored to bring the believers back to the central lane, that is, back to Christ and the Body.***”

Enslaved To All

“This book was written not to help lost sinners to be saved but to help saved sinners to grow (3:6-7).”

“In chapter nine the apostle presented himself to the Corinthian believers as a pattern, that they might not stumble others but build them up by practicing the principle of considerate love set forth in 8: 1, ‘that I may not stumble my brother.’”

1 Cor. 9:19-21 -- “In verse 19 Paul continues, ‘For though I am free from all, I have enslaved myself to all, that I might gain the more.’ By the word all here Paul means all men. He was free from all men...However, being free from all, Paul enslaved himself to all in order to gain more people for the Lord.”

*“...In verse 22 Paul declares, ‘To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. To all men I have become all things, that I might by all means save some.’ To become all things to all men means that Paul adapts himself to all things, that is to different ways of eating and different practices (v.23), for the sake of all men. **He was willing to live in the way followed by others.** For example, when he was with vegetarians, he would not eat meat. With Jews, he would not eat pork. In this way he became all things to all men in order to save some.”*

The Need For Love

“...I have pointed out that there are certain brothers and sisters who apparently do not have any gifts. However, they are absolutely for the Body. To be for the Body is a matter of love, and to care for the members of the Body requires love. If we do not have love how can we care for others? Love is necessary to care for the members so that the Body may be built up. Thus, love is the greatest gift. Nothing edifies people as much as love does. Love is a spiritual antibiotic. If there is love in a local church, there will be no need to worry about spiritual diseases. Love is the best medicine to cure such diseases. Love is a gift, even the greatest gift.

Paul takes a whole chapter to emphasize the crucial matter of love. His first emphasis, on speaking, occupies just three verses; his second emphasis, on the Spirit, occupies nine or ten verses; and the third and fourth matter he emphasizes, the Body and administration, occupy sixteen verses and three verses respectively. But when Paul comes to the crucial matter of love, he devotes an entire chapter to it. This shows how important love is.

As those who love the Lord, who are absolute with Him, and who are seeking the building of His Body so that He may have the instrument to carry out God’s administration on earth for the accomplishment of God’s eternal purpose, we must pursue love. Elders and coworkers, you need love. Brothers and sisters, you all need love. Only love builds up the Body. Moreover, according to chapter thirteen, the gift of love is everlasting, for it is constituted of the divine life and is the expression of God, the expression of eternal life. Therefore, we all should pursue love.”

The Definition of Love

“...If we consider the fifteen virtues of love listed in these verses, we shall realize that love is nothing other than God Himself. Who other than God could have all these longsufferings? Only God has all these virtues. Hence, the love described here is God Himself. Furthermore, the Bible elsewhere says clearly that God is love (1 John 4:16). God is also life...The love which is God Himself with His divine essence as life has these fifteen virtues. This is the reason that in 1 Corinthians Paul charges the believers to grow in life. They were short of life, short of love. In other words, they were short of God and needed to grow in life.”

The Excelling of Love

*“In 13:8-13 Paul speaks concerning the excelling of love. In verse 8 he declares, ‘Love never falls away; but whether prophecies, they shall be done away; or tongues, they shall cease; or knowledge, it shall be done away.’ For love never to fall away means that it survives everything, holds its place forever. Love never fails, never fades out or comes to an end. It is like the eternal life of God. **All the gifts, whether prophecies, or tongues, or knowledge, are means for God’s operation; they are not life to express God. Hence, they shall cease and be done away.** They are all dispensational. Only life, which love expresses, is eternal. According to the following verses, all gifts are for the immature child in this age. They will all be done away in the next age. Only love is of a mature man and will last for eternity. When we live and act by love, we have a foretaste of the next age and of eternity.*

Nothing can shake love or remove it. All the other gifts, including prophecy, will eventually be done away with, but love remains. It never falls away. In the coming age there will be love, but there will be no tongues, interpretation, or prophecy. Both tongues, the most childish of the gifts, and prophecy, a more mature gift, will be done away”.

In Philippians

In the foregoing fellowship from Romans and 1 Corinthians, we can see that brother Lee laid a very good foundation for the church to practice the love and one accord revealed in the Scriptures. His exposition of the book of Philippians does likewise, contributing further to the laying of a proper foundation for church life practice. In this book a vivid picture of the one accord is presented by Paul, a one accord that included all the saints, for the letter was written **”to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the overseers and deacons”**. He exhorted the saints there to **“stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel”** and **“to think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing”** (1:27; 2:2).

This exhortation to the Philippians speaks of the one accord of an army. To stand firm in one spirit and strive together with one soul surely requires training and discipline. This heavenly army on earth also required something further. They needed to have the same love for one another, indicating it was also a family. For this army to achieve and maintain their one accord and be one with the Lord for His move on the earth, they were to have such a love.

“It is possible that we in the church life today may not have the same love for all the saints. Instead, our love may be on different levels. We may love a certain brother much more than we love another brother. Because we may love a particular brother only to a small degree, we may not be inclined to render much service to him...It is

possible in the church life to have different levels of love for different saints. If this is our situation, our love is not the love with one soul ...As a result, instead of practical oneness, there will be dissension.”

Ice men In The Lord's Recovery – Minoru Chen

In a message given by Minoru Chen in 1998, he expressed his feeling about his own condition and that of the recovery. There were other messages that were given also by other brothers on the matter of shepherding taken from the book of Ezekiel, but Minoru's message stood out due to his transparency in dealing with the real situation among us.

*“...Get this burden: the Lord needs to bring in a revival in His recovery, a revival that is only brought in by a prevailing shepherding church life everywhere. Saints, this is what was on the heart of brother Lee. I hope that there will be a genuine revival among us by our receiving the burden of shepherding. If all the churches receive this teaching to participate in Christ's wonderful shepherding, there will be a big revival. In the recovery. I thought revival would come in some other way, but brother Lee left us with a clear promise, that **if we receive this burden of shepherding in the recovery across the board, there will be a certain revival.** I believe this is not just a word of men, but a word from the Lord's heart. Saints, don't we want a revival, a revival where there is blessing that we cannot contain, a revival that overwhelms and baffles us. **Don't you think that kind of revival belongs to the Lord's recovery?**”*

*I tell you, right now someone is waiting for your shepherding. It may be a young person, or it may be a backslidden saint, or one sitting in the periphery. It may be one in your family. Dear saints, someone needs shepherding. You may say, didn't you say the Lord is shepherding them. Yes, but the Lord today is moving in the principle of incarnation. Even I say this with reverence to the Lord, there are some things He cannot do. **He wants so desperately to shepherd that weak one, but He can only do so much. If there is not a member of His that would respond to Him, correspond with Him, to pray and to be filled with the heart of God, that one will stay in that condition for quite a long time. And, we have seen this among us. We have seen this in the churches.** And, we have seen this in our lives. Think about it, how many times you wish the doorbell would ring. You may say you are just being bad, you are just being naughty, but actually you wish so-and-so would come now. Saints, we need to shepherd. All of God's recovery work by life is in this shepherding. I tell you, our main service in the church is shepherding.*

I say again that shepherding is the all-inclusive care that includes two things: the side of cherishing and the side of nourishing. Cherishing is in His humanity; nourishing is in His divinity. Cherishing is just to warm up someone, to make them happy, to make them joyful...By then they would be ready for any message you want to give them. Don't

despise cherishing. I feel, actually, in the Lord's move we are rather short of shepherding. This is why in many places the feeling is cold, the atmosphere is icy, the relationship is distant in many churches. It is not warm, it is not ardent, it is not hot, it is not burning. Dear saints, don't try to pray and then the Spirit comes down and we will all be hot. Start to care and start to warm up. I don't mean this in a natural way. We have to do this in the humanity of Christ, which is altogether in resurrection and not in the natural man. Nevertheless, Christ in resurrection is not cold. I tell you, some of us think that the ascended Christ must be like a piece of ice, ruling and reigning there. I don't think so. I think today His Manhood is more than ever before. Why? He's become a man! I tell you, He is the warmest Person in the universe. Saints, let His warmth go as the electrum through you. Let His warmth come out of you.

You know, I was born an icy person. I still am. Oh, I need help. I really do. Because I found out my icy nature is not suitable for shepherding or for God's recovery work. Too many times when I see a saint I turn away or pretend not to see them. For people like me, I need to practice hugging. Brother, come up here. I need to practice hugging. (He hugs the brother.) I don't mean holy hug movement. Please don't do that. But, surely, the recovery has a lot of icemen that need to practice some hugging. I know that if it is from the source of God, something is transmitted, passed on of a healing nature, of an encouraging nature. Dear saints, how about let's make all of our church life hot, loving. How about that? You can do it with the love of God. Love prevails. Love prevails. I tell you, to do this kind of shepherding, love is the first thing. Love is everything. In fact, if you read 1 Corinthians 13 love believes, endures, hopes, love is everything. Why? Because in true shepherding, the greatest need is longsuffering and patience. That is something I found out. Maybe I'm wrong, but that's what I found out. Oh, you look at this one and almost you hate him. But you cannot hate him, he is your brother. In fact, you have to shepherd him. Oh, what do you need? You need something you don't have. It's called what? Not just love, but patience, endurance. Yesterday, I talked to a brother. Oh, I just complained to him about this one. Afterwards, I had to call the brother and say 'brother, I'm sorry'. What kind of shepherd is this? Oh dear saints, we need the Lord as our longsuffering, as our endurance, and as our hope. I tell you, in shepherding the saints you have to be always hopeful. Even the worst situation is hopeful; the most terrible brother, hopeful; the most impossible case, hopeful. Then you can shepherd. Aren't you a hopeless case yourself? Anyway, the burden is, may the Lord recover the spirit and heart of shepherding in His recovery, to bring in a genuine revival that will carry out God's recovery work of life...."