

Unity in All Matters, 2018 Leadership Conference Teaching

Sándor Paull, June 2018

1

1 *Sándor Paull:*

2 So, Jesus that's what we do now. We look up we look towards you. We're so thankful that
3 it's not about us, about our feelings, about our preferences, about our comfort. It's about
4 you, your kingdom, your people, your reign on this Earth, your purpose for those that
5 you've called.

6

7 I'm so thankful that we believe in a sovereign God that orders all things, is in all things,
8 through all things. We're so thankful that we're not under a law where it depends on our
9 behavior. We're so thankful that we are not without faith that it's just a random chance.

10

11 Let us be joyful people. Let us be a people at peace, at rest in our souls. Let us be a
12 people that are free to love 1 another rightly. We give ourselves to you today. We give
13 ourselves to you for what you'll do this week.

14

15 Father, we pray that what you intend to do that it would come to all. That no one would
16 feel marginalized or on the edge or seeing good things happen and others but not in them.
17 We pray that the light and the glory of your son Jesus would shine upon everyone here.

18

19 Jesus, do your work in us. As you know, every word and every thought, every motive
20 behind those things

21 [(0:02:00)]

22 we're shocked that somehow you still love us, you draw near. And so lead us today, be
23 present. Thank you for what you're doing for each of us. Thank you for this family. In
24 Jesus' name, amen.

25

26 All right guys. Well, good morning. I can see some of you. There we go. It's good to be
27 back here and it's wonderful to be together. For some of you, this is your first time with
28 us for this Summer Conference and so we're glad that you're here.

29

30 A couple just kind of basic things going on with a conference. Some of you get over
31 people really, really quickly and so make sure that you can kind of sneak away and get
32 some time to not sort of max out or use up all your bandwidth on the first day.

33

34 Some of you need to sit in the edges or by the doors or those sorts of things, that's okay.
35 Normally, teachings here are about 3 hours and so if you have to get up and stretch and
36 walk out of the back or something that's fine too.

37

38 But we're going to kick things off today then. In a conference that is about God's
39 sovereignty in all things, we're going to start off by talking about being together and

40 being one and being unified. And so we're going to get going in that today.

41

42 If you have a Bible, we're in Philippians chapter 2. I'll be in the first 4 verses as we're
43 starting. Hey, some of you may not have heard that we have 3 churches in Texas now.
44 Isn't that exciting?

45

46 *[audience applauding]*

47

48 ***Sándor Paull:***

49 Yeah. And so if you hear some strange y'all's coming out of me, I've been working on
50 that. And apparently, when you're talking to a bunch of people, it's all y'all. And so if
51 there are some things that you don't really understand me saying, that's where I've lived
52 for the past 12 months.

53

54 We had a guy come by the office last week and I really didn't know what he meant. He
55 was a younger guy and I figured out he wanted a ride someplace. But the place that he
56 was wanting to go to, I knew it was north of where we

57 [(0:04:01)]

58 were but I just couldn't...I said, "Tell me the name again." And he'd say it again real fast
59 and real Southern.

60

61 And I said, "Okay. I'm putting it in my GPS. So spell it for me." And I think the word
62 was like pilot or something. I have no idea. But I never figured out what he meant. I just
63 knew, okay, we're going to go North and go in 21 and I think he won't kill me.

64

65 And so we're along the way. Wasn't quite sure of that. Anyway, if you hear some things
66 out of some of us that sound a little funny, it's not your fault. It's our fault. All right.

67

68 So as we're starting then, we want to talk today about, and there's some work that we
69 need to do together, to talk about this issue of unity and being together. What does the
70 Bible have to say about that as a foundation for his sovereignty?

71

72 For what he's going to do in us about this week and together as a group of churches. And
73 there are some things about this that have kind of all come together for me in the past 12
74 months in a way that is been pretty profound.

75

76 I was talking to 1 of the lead pastors that I coach and he was kind of trying to figure out
77 some things in terms of what is he believed and what is this group of churches believes
78 and does he agree with some of those things.

79

80 And what does that look like? And what happens if he doesn't agree or believe and trying
81 to just wrestle through those kinds of things? Not things that are very dissimilar from you
82 perhaps over the years of...

83

84 Okay. So, here's something whatever the issue is, and what do I think about that? And
85 does it line up with what I think or like or not line up with all of that? And we were
86 talking through that and in the midst of talking it through, it was 1 of those bizarre
87 moments like you've seen in the movies.

88

89 Where I remember exactly where I was. I was driving in my truck, had that phone call on
90 speakerphone, of course. I'm on 2818. You guys don't know what that is? It's Harvey
91 Mitchell then you go, "Oh, Harvey Mitchell."

92

93 I'm going south, heading home from work and I'm right by the George Bush Presidential
94 Library there and as we're talking,

95

[(0:06:00)]

96

97 all of a sudden, it was 1 of those in the movies where they're sort of the scene where all of
98 the clips of the movie, they kind of Flash and all of a sudden this like, "Whoa, I get it"
99 and it all sort of comes together at that moment. It was one of those moments of, "Oh,
man."

100

101 I get something that for 20 years, I've been trying to figure out. And the thing for 20 years
102 I've been trying to figure out is related to unity and being together and it's related to me
103 asking Steve, who leads this group of churches. So, okay on any particular issue, it's okay
104 for a leader to determine its importance and what do you do about it?

105

106 Because leaders, that's what it means to lead, right? That you influence and that you get
107 what you want most times or you're not leading anything. And so, I regularly would say,
108 so tell me the list of things that are as important as this thing that we brought up.

109

110 Okay, I get that, that makes sense. I'm going to recalibrate. It seems like it's more
111 important to you than it has been to me. So I'm going to move it up the list or put it on the
112 different list of "maybe kind of important things but not a big deal", to the list of "you
113 know, you probably need to really consider things." There's another list of "if you're
114 going to be a member here, you probably need to" and then there's another list of "are you
115 even a Christian?"

116

117 And so, I'm trying to figure out so, okay, can I show you my list? And then, as I've
118 worked through that, that question was always deflected. And I thought, "Come on,

119 what's so hard about giving me the list?" I just need to know is it 1 list. Is it 4 lists?

120

121 And I thought, okay. I'm a logical guy. There's a reason why I can't seem to get the list
122 out of my leader. It could be that he doesn't like the word list. So let's talk buckets.

123

124 *[laughter]*

125

126 ***Sándor Paull:***

127 Maybe the first bucket is, "since you've asked, I don't have a strong opinion but it could
128 kind of be like this, some things to consider." The second bucket is "more important
129 things of." The third bucket "if you're going to be a member here, you kind of need to.
130 Yeah, we can help you with that."

131 [(0:08:00)]

132 The other bucket is "if you're evening really going to love Jesus, how do you not?" I
133 thought, "Okay, that doesn't work."

134

135 Maybe it's one of those tests that you can't say it without blowing it. And so maybe I'm
136 supposed to just sort of figure it out on my own and so I've worked for years on. I'll just
137 figure out my list and maybe it's 1 of those secret test leader things that you don't really
138 say that leaders are doing but it's happening.

139

140 And so, okay, I'll get that wink-wink. I can work on my own list and not just sort of have
141 it handed and then that didn't seem to work and I thought, "Okay, Chris Miller, if you
142 ever see a thing called secret list floating around the office. Don't tell Sean door." Maybe
143 that's how I get the list. Maybe got a network kid and kind of work the angles a little bit.

144

145 I mean, I tried for so long to figure it out. So why be so coy about this? Is it that you don't
146 have time to work on the list? Do we need to work on that together? Is it 1 one of those
147 you don't want to say it in public because there are other leaders around? And so maybe
148 just 1 on 1, I can get the list.

149

150 Because it feels like, in my head, how you approach leading is you have a person that you
151 love and that you're trying to help and you're trying to get them their list to match your
152 list on the different things of whatever, drinking or smoking or belief in the Bible on a
153 particular issue or roles in the church or how marriages work or raising kids or drinking
154 or pot or, and I mean, any of those things you have on a list somewhere of "yeah,
155 probably not a good idea."

156

157 And there are some things that are much less good idea than other kinds of things. And so

158 somehow in the midst of this conversation on 2818, Harvey Mitchell right by the George
159 Bush Museum, all of a sudden as I'm describing there is no list because this idea of unity
160 means that all things that your leader has concerns about make them important.

161
162 And is not actually the thing itself as being the thing so that it's sort of intrinsic to the
163 issue is its importance. It's anything that

164 [(0:10:00)]

165 I love the person and I have concerns about becomes the thing.

166
167 And what if I've had the wrong paradigm the whole time? That you can't get there from
168 here is what I like to say that. I've been asking for a list but there is no such thing. It's the
169 wrong question to ask altogether.

170
171 It's kind of like the time I was praying with 1 of the leader's wives and she was saying, "I
172 keep praying and asking Jesus and he won't answer. He's silent. Why won't he talk to me?
173 Like, well, what's been going on? Well, I've been asking him to tell me why I'm such an
174 awful person and terrible Christian, and he just won't say anything." I thought well,
175 because it's a dumb...How is he supposed to answer that?

176
177 *[laughter]*

178
179 ***Sándor Paull:***

180 You're not a terrible person and an awful Christian. Of course, he's going to be silent
181 because you're asking unanswerable things. I didn't realize it. I just thought, come on,
182 throw me a bone.

183
184 I'm just trying to lead people in the same way and I have to know the list, the rules on this
185 sort of a thing. And so there is no list. You'll never get one. And there are no buckets and
186 you'll not get a list of those buckets either.

187
188 Because what we're going to talk about today is true biblical Doctrine. I really believe
189 that. I really believe that what we're going to talk about today in this sort of oneness of
190 mind and this being together in all things. I really, really do believe that there is such
191 clear evidence in the Bible that it's just beyond doubt.

192
193 But I also believe that beyond doubt, it's more than just a Bible truth. That it's the heart of
194 the father. And somehow if we can grasp both, that it is supposed to change our thinking
195 and how we go out things, our belief, our Doctrine.

196

197 But if we can also say this is the heart of the Father, this is the longing of the Father for
198 us individually and for us together, then it would give him joy for

199 [(0:12:00)]

200 us to believe what he said on these things. And also to rejoice, to pursue, to eagerly
201 desire, to make all efforts that his heart for us would really be fulfilled at these things.

202

203 Do you get the difference? It's both of those things. It is Bible Doctrine. And those of you
204 that are wired more linearly and less emotionally, that makes sense. Okay, that's a
205 language that we work with well.

206

207 And for many of you, the other part is helpful too though to know, it is the desire, the
208 longing of Father for us that we would be together. Not just sort of affiliated with the
209 same sort of identifier in some sense. But that we would be together.

210

211 And so here's a passage. Romans 15 says, "May the god of endurance and encouragement
212 grant you to live in such harmony with one another in accord with Christ Jesus that
213 together you may with one voice, glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

214

215 So it's the prayer of Paul then, right? And it's the heart of the Father expressed through
216 his prayer in his longing to a church to say there'd be such crazy harmony and unity with
217 each other that in the eyes of the world and in the hearing of the Father, as he hears our
218 prayers and our longings and our intercession, we would be as 1 voice.

219

220 It would sound like it's not just sort of each of us saying something different or sounded
221 that we would actually be together saying the same take. Acts 4 "now the full number of
222 those who believed were of one heart and soul."

223

224 So, we see oneness of voice, oneness of the things that we're saying, and proclaiming,
225 and believing, and saying and seeking but he also would say in the Bible that there is this
226 oneness of soul, of spirit, of the inner man. the inner woman, 1 heart, 1 longing, unified
227 and together in our desires and passions and affections.

228

229 Second Corinthians 13,

230 [(0:14:00)]

231 "Comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the god of love and
232 peace will be with you." Okay, wait. Let's unpack that for a second. Can you choose to
233 agree if you don't agree? It's like saying you don't like pizza, can you just decide to like
234 pizza and it makes it so because you just pick that?

235

236 You know, those of you who don't like cooked mushrooms because the texture which to
237 me is crazy. I mean, that's the good part of the pizza. Can you just choose to not think
238 they're slimy and gross and it just happens to change what you... We think of it like that,
239 right? It's just our inherent thing that you just can't change. It's just what I am.

240

241 Could it be that we agree with 1 another? That we really do agree. That we really do
242 believe the same things. First Corinthians 1, "I appeal to you brothers by the name of our
243 Lord Jesus Christ that all of you agree that there be no divisions among you but that you
244 may be united in the same mind and the same judgment."

245

246 So, we've seen a oneness of heart, a oneness of soul, oneness of voice. And now, we're
247 seeing the same mind and same judgment. That we really do think the same thing about
248 the same things.

249

250 That you really would say, okay, if you talk to somebody that is a part of this family of
251 churches and then you talk to somebody else that's across the country and eventually
252 overseas, that's going to be pretty neat, guys.

253

254 Do you know how long we prayed to have a church plant overseas? Unbelievable. We're
255 living in good days. We are. We're living in good days. Some of you in your career,
256 you're that's had its side of heydays, it's peak, with the predecessors and other people and
257 it's sort of in decline. I mean, there are things with churches and individual people, they're
258 kind of at their peak and in the end in decline.

259

260 This really is a wonderful time to be a part of this family where there are great things
261 happening and greater things yet coming. That we would be united in the same mind, the
262 same judgment that we really would think the same things.

263 [(0:16:00)]

264

265 There are going to be people that get to know this family called to be a part of us that is
266 in Taiwan that will then meet people there and fall in love with that family. And then
267 we'll get to know them and they'll think, oh, you're just like...It's going to be like that.

268

269 First Peter 3, "Finally, all of you have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender
270 heart, and a humble mind." We're going to see in our verses today that somehow the
271 antidote to this sort of individualism and this I have to be right and some of those things
272 that cause divisions and strife and conflict, that the antidote to that sickness and it is
273 something that in, especially American culture, we're sick with. I mean, it is a disease.

274

275 Independence, individualism, I have to be right. I mean, it is a disease in public discourse
276 and politics, all kinds of areas local and national we see that just constantly this issue. But
277 if somehow it together with us that the areas of responsibility that he's entrusted to us if
278 we would say, "No, I'm going to have a humble mind."

279

280 Our verses in Philippians, I've always taken these first 11 verses in Philippians chapter
281 2:1-11. I've always taken this text to saying there are a few helpful things but then the
282 main part is about this humility of Christ and him being found in human form, obedient
283 to death on a cross and every knee will bow. And that's 1 of those passages that always
284 gives you chills, isn't it? You're like, "Oh, man."

285

286 Okay. Let me read it again and see if it does it again. Then you read it again and it does it
287 again. Then you read it next week and it does it again. You have passages like that, right?
288 It just doesn't wear off. You don't get used to how amazing it is. It does something to
289 your soul.

290

291 To me, the blessing passage in Genesis does the same thing where Israel is on his
292 deathbed and he's 140 years old and he rallies his strength to sit up in bed. And he has his
293 2 grandkids placed on his knee. Joseph brings Ephraim and Manasseh and he crossed his
294 hands

295 [(0:18:01)]

296 and gives a greater blessing to the younger and he says, no father, no. He grabs his hand
297 to move him to the older son.

298

299 And he says, no, father. He grabs his hand to move him to the older son and he says, I
300 know my son. I know. He's going to become a great nation as well but he is being led by
301 God and those things. I read that grandfather's blessing and it just makes me weep every
302 time. It just doesn't wear off.

303

304 I've always taken these verses as the meat of this. The point of this is obviously this
305 incredible truth about Jesus. And yet somehow, I think that all of the 5 through 11 verses
306 are undergirding this greatest idea of verses 1 through 5. And this idea is to be together.

307

308 And the incredible hair-raising example of Jesus and his humility, which we'll talk about,
309 is to then support and leverage this idea. It's to tip this. It's to lift a weight that Paul is
310 trying to say of. It's so important that we love each other. It's so important that we're
311 together. It's so important that we're 1.

312

313 And so let's see if it does that for you as well. I think it will. Philippians chapter 2. Let me
314 just start then with the first 4 verses. "So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any

315 comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit and the affection and sympathy,
316 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord
317 and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility count others
318 more significant than yourselves. That you should be looking out not only to his own
319 interests but also to the interests of others." Let's stop there. And we'll pray.

320

321 Father, we need your help, your grace, your favor, your forgiveness, your courage in
322 these things. That you would heal us where we need to be healed. That you would grant
323 us the great gift

324 [(0:20:00)]

325 of repentance when we need to turn. I know that among us there could even be the roots
326 of bitterness that are growing because of things that we've done and said to each other.

327

328 And I pray that the foundation that you'll build upon the rest of this week, that it would be
329 firm, that it would be secure, that it would be sharp and pure and perfect and able to be
330 built upon to carry the load of what you'll do with us together.

331

332 We pray that you would prepare us for such things. That your Holy Spirit would rest
333 upon us and bless us in our thinking, in our emotional response, in our understanding of
334 our past, of our own role and responsibility in these churches.

335

336 As we think about each other as we all follow imperfect leaders and we all lead and
337 influence in perfectly ourselves. So, I pray that grace would abound today. Towards us
338 and from us and through us. Let grace abound, let Jesus be exalted. We pray in his name.
339 Amen.

340

341 Back at verse 1. If there's any encouragement in Christ. There are 5 things that he begins
342 in this great plea for unity. Five things that he mentions. The first is if there's any
343 encouragement in Christ. If there's anything in Jesus, what is the heart of him and all of
344 this?

345

346 If there's anything that seeing his life, hearing his words, knowing what he wanted, if
347 there's anything, by the way, out of all of the 5 things, even just 1 of the 5 is enough for
348 us to go, "I get it. I believe it. It's true. It's what he wants."

349

350 Jesus did say by this all people will know that you are my disciples. Remember what he
351 says? By this 1 thing. He could have said lots of things. By this 1 thing. This is the
352 identifier to a condemned world, to a dark and dying world that you belong to me. What's
353 the identifier?

354

355 By the love that you have for each other. By this, all men will know that

356 [(0:22:00)]

357 you're my disciples when they come in and they see this amazing family of God. These
358 people of all different races of all different ages of all different backgrounds, really
359 loving each other.

360

361 I remember years ago, a gal came into vine on a Sunday and she said, you know, I saw
362 everybody talking they're so happy and smiling and then I realize, oh, it's real. They
363 really love each other like this. They're not just sort of faking it.

364

365 Then it was this sobering reality of, oh, my, this is actually a real thing. This isn't just a
366 put-on-time in your service, turn to say hi to your neighbor, oh, hi, very good to meet
367 you. I say next, oh, so good to see you little old lady that I don't really want...

368

369 *[laughter]*

370

371 *Sándor Paull:*

372 That we really do have a love for 1 another. What's the heart of Jesus? If there's any
373 encouragement in Christ, what's the next thing? The second?. If there's any comfort from
374 love, if there's any comfort from this love, what if we were on our own? What if we were
375 doing this by ourselves? What if we were still orphans?

376

377 What if we weren't sought out by the father to belong to him? What if we were trying to
378 figure this out on our own? What if he left us to ourselves? What if he hadn't saved us
379 and we ended up living our lives the way the most broken in our families live their lives.
380 Think about the most unhealthy broken in your families. You don't have to think too far.

381

382 Are we different than them? Are we better than them? If there's any comfort from this
383 love, if there's any comfort from being loved and saved and changed it, is he say next if
384 there's any participation with the Holy Spirit. What does the Holy Spirit want? What's he
385 lead us towards?

386

387 And so it's interesting to think about what I'm trying to establish then is this idea of being
388 together, this shocking, unity that really is shown within the Trinity. It really is shown in
389 the example of Jesus relating to the father, relating to God, the spirit. It really is shown
390 there.

391

392 [(0:24:00)]

393 Keep your spot in Philippians. Turn to John 17. So keep your finger in that spot. If you're
394 saying I'm swiping, I can't...Keep that spot anyway, somehow and turn to John 17 and
395 let's look at verse 20. You're flipping a lot. You should be there by now. Okay. I'm just
396 teasing.

397

398 *[laughter]*

399

400 ***Sándor Paull:***

401 Now. You're turning real quietly. So don't know here.

402

403 *[laughter]*

404

405 ***Sándor Paull:***

406 All right. Jesus prayer. I do not ask for these only the existing living disciples at that time.
407 But also for those who will believe in me through their word. Okay, that's us right? We've
408 believed in Jesus through the words of the Apostles, through scripture, through the Bible.
409 Okay.

410

411 So what's Jesus asking for? What does he want? What's his prayer? Verse 21, "They may
412 all be one." [inaudible] just you father. [inaudible] Still with you? Hearing that? Okay.
413 [inaudible] and I'm in you. You may have to get the other mic. Where are we again?

414

415 *[laughter]*

416

417 ***Sándor Paull:***

418 We're in Carbondale Vine Church. Okay. Got it. Now, Verse 21. "They may all be in
419 me." Okay. So Jesus wants us to be 1 just as how? So this unity, he's saying the unity that
420 we all have together is just like you father are in me and I in you. Is there a gap of unity?
421 Thanks, Casey. I'm glad I'm not hosting this anymore. That's so nice. All kinds of
422 problems. None of those are my problems.

423

424 *[laughter]*

425

426 ***Sándor Paull:***

427 They're all your problems now. God bless you, Casey Raymer. All right. Where are we
428 again? Verse 21. Okay. Jesus wants us to be 1. How? What kind of oneness? Just as you
429 Father are in me and I in you.

430

431 So, is there a gap? Is there a difference? What kind of unity is there and oneness

432 [(0:26:00)]

433 between God Father and God the Son? You'd say well, perfect in every single way. That
434 they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you've sent me. Wonderful. So
435 we see it in the Trinity.

436

437 Those of us that are married, we see it in God's longing and desire for us in marriage.
438 That we would have this unity and oneness between a very different male and female,
439 right? A husband and a wife and somehow working that out in the wonderful, sovereign,
440 complementary, giftings, their personality and ability and the makeup of God.

441

442 It's wonderful that we see that. This hope for him is that you'd see this participation in the
443 Spirit. This example of what the Holy Spirit's doing in our marriages and what the Holy
444 Spirit's doing through the Trinity. And an example of that is the same kind of unity that
445 we're supposed to have. It's shocking to think.

446

447 Remember the disciples saying Jesus, just show us the Father and that's enough for us.
448 What do you mean show you the list? There's no list. What do you mean show you the
449 father? It's the same idea, right? Don't you understand that if you've seen me, you've seen
450 the father? I and the Father are one. You're looking at him. Yeah.

451

452 I mean Hebrew says all Of the fullness of the father is in Jesus in bodily form.
453 Everything. It's that kind of unity. Any affection and sympathy, do we have any affection
454 for each other?

455

456 By the way, it's used 11 times in the New Testament. This word affection and it means
457 literally the inward parts, the bowels, meaning the kind of deep inside of us. We live in a
458 culture that says affection like I love Cheetos or something and people use that word all
459 the time and they mostly use it to mean affections.

460

461 Like I like things. Oh, I like you. I feel friendly things towards you. And so when we hear
462 the word love, it's been so overused, misused, underused, all of that, that we just sort of
463 attributed to sort of affections of I love cheeseburgers more than I love hamburgers kind
464 of a thing.

465 [(0:28:00)]

466

467 But the word used really is about the inward part of who we are. That there's something
468 in the depth of us that would grow with this affection for each other where we so love to

469 see 1 another and to be with 1 another. We don't want it to end. Time sort of flies by and
470 some of you know that's like to have a friend like that. I think it's a Godly wonderful
471 thing.

472

473 There's a couple of guys over the years where I just feel like, "Oh, man." We just never
474 run out of things to say. There are never those awkward silences and I feel like a teenage
475 girl that says, "No, you hang up first. No, you hang up first."

476

477 *[laughter]*

478

479 ***Sándor Paull:***

480 There's a couple of guys like that. Not very many on this Earth but a few of them where it
481 feels like, "Oh, man." It's not worth to be around them. And I don't feel like a pastor ever.
482 I just feel like we're just friends. And it works that way.

483

484 That's what he's saying this affection and then he says this sympathy. If there's any
485 sympathy, the fifth thing in the first verse, what's the effect on others? How is this going
486 to thinking about other people's response and their faith and their life?

487

488 And then what does he say? Verse 2, "Complete my joy." Now, that's no small thing for a
489 leader to say. Complete my joy. If this would just happen then I wouldn't ask or need
490 anything else to ever happen in my life. My joy would be complete. Okay?

491

492 I remember praying that as a brand new Christian. If my mom and dad would just know
493 Jesus, I would never ask you for another thing. Everything else would be gravy. Life
494 would be good. I wouldn't eat anything else. That's isn't that level of a thing. Complete
495 my joy. That's a huge thing for a leader to say.

496

497 Hebrew 17, familiar to many of you. It says, "Obey your leaders and submit to them for
498 they keeping watch over your souls." Picture sort of a high thick wall that's sort of a
499 garden wall and there's a watchtower and they're peeking through the thing looking for
500 ambush, guarding and watching and being careful that there's no siege laid to the city,

501 [(0:30:00)]

502 that the walls don't fall down. They're keeping watch. They're being careful there. They're
503 pacing and being alert, that kind of an idea.

504

505 That those they have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not groaning for
506 that would be of no advantage to you. Complete my joy. And guys, it is a great joy to
507 lead most, no, now all of you.

508

509 *[laughter]*

510

511 *Sándor Paull:*

512 One of my favorite things that we do regularly at Christ's Land Church is what I call the
513 3rd Friday. And it's always funny when I have a group leader asked "So, when's the
514 group leader thing?" "You mean, the 3rd Friday? Well, let's look at a calendar."

515

516 *[laughter]*

517

518 *Sándor Paull:*

519 Third Friday means it would be on this date. I thought by the nature of the title, it would
520 absolve those kinds of conversations completely but apparently, that's not how we roll.

521

522 *[laughter]*

523

524 *Sándor Paull:*

525 And so the 3rd Friday comes and I love it. In our home, we get the group leaders together
526 and there are some things to talk about. We worship together. We eat and have fun. Open
527 the Bible together. Pray for 1 another. God shows.

528

529 It's become my absolute favorite thing that we do. And 1 of my favorite things is just
530 before we get started, to just listen to how loud it gets in my house as we're together and
531 we're eating and having fun and loving each other, I just love it.

532

533 Because I love the people. And being with them and seeing how they're doing and some
534 are doing great and it's awesome. And they love Texas way better than knowing that
535 others. It's hard. And it's a different life. And they're getting hit and they're pushed. And
536 their job, if they have 1, is not very easy and things are tough. I love the 3rd Friday. It's
537 the favorite thing that we do.

538

539 And so I've decided I don't want to ever outgrow my house. So we're not going to have
540 any new leaders. We're just going to keep the same.

541

542 *[laughter]*

543

544 *Sándor Paull:*

545 I'm teasing. All right. Look at verse 2. Complete my joy

546 [(0:32:00)]

547 by being what? By being friendly. By not fighting. Is that what it says? Complete my joy
548 by not fighting. Complete my joy by not running anybody off by just sticking it out long-
549 term. Is that what it says? Complete my joy by being of the same mind.

550

551 I don't know if this analogy will help or not. But if you have ever seen pictures of the
552 Doomsday Clock kind of an idea. So it's like a big digital thing that's got a running timer
553 and when it gets down to zero, bad things happen and people hit nuke buttons or
554 something. I don't know what happens. We haven't hugged trees enough or saved enough
555 whales and things melt or bad things happen. It's that kind of an idea. And so what's the
556 point?

557

558 My point is that I think that for many of us, I don't mean all but I do think for many and I
559 know that it's been true for me, my clock was running at 1 time because of things that I
560 didn't know how to resolve that was growing in my heart that would have been terminal
561 if not resolved. Okay?

562

563 Things that I felt frustrated about. Things that I felt mistreated or misunderstood or not
564 heard or hurt or offended or whatever. Some things that I was trapped in that I could not
565 extricate myself from. There have been times over 20 years when my clock was running
566 and unless there was something to intervene or intersect, it was going to get 20 and I was
567 going to blow up. I mean that.

568

569 And I don't think it's true for every single 1 of you but I do know that it's true for many of
570 you. That there have been times when there were some things that you needed to deal
571 with and work out and repent and forgive and humble yourself, and God gave Grace and
572 for many of you, you've walked in that grace and thank Jesus that he gives amazing grace
573 and you get the credit for walking in that grace. Does that make sense?

574 [(0:34:00)]

575

576 It's kind of like saying, hey, parents of well-behaved kids or healthy teenagers, that's not
577 accidental in a broken World. You've done a good job. Well, it's wasn't us. It was Jesus.
578 Yeah, I know, but it was his grace that you chose to use over and over again when they're
579 toddlers and that's ha-ha-ha-hard living.

580

581 I mean, if you had toddlers in a vehicle or a baby in a car for more than 1 hour, it's ha-ha-
582 hard living. Some of you, your clock is going right now and you're okay. It's not a zero
583 yet. You've sort of kicked the can down the street for a little bit. You've not had to deal
584 with it. Ignored and chosen to get past and think about other things.

585

586 But there may be some underlying things that have never really been resolved. Some
587 things that you've never really forgiven. Some things that you've never really had the
588 emotional courage to say and to admit. And to have to really deal with. There are some of
589 you from prior tripped experience.

590
591 There are some things that leave you unable to really trust and open up. That you let
592 people so far but they're certain areas of if they go there I'm going to just ignore it and say
593 no. I'm going to deflect. This is available to them but this part, nobody touches that part.

594
595 There are some of you that your clock is running. And that there are things that Jesus
596 wants to give you a moment of grace to be able to deal with, to be able to resolve. And
597 praying for this morning, I had hoped that many of you would say, I'm going to come and
598 just confess and repent and have a clear conscience for the rest of what Jesus wants to do
599 this week. I'm going to seek someone out and tell them that I forgive them or ask them to
600 forgive me.

601
602 And if it means that we have an uncomfortable conversation, so be it. But I'm going to
603 make every effort to leave my gift at the altar, go and be reconciled,

604 [(0:36:01)]

605 then come back and offer the gift. Jesus seems to put high importance on such things.

606
607 Paul says, in verse 2, complete my joy by being of what does he say next? Same mind,
608 same love, full accord, 1 mind. Look at it again, verse 2. Complete my joy. For Paul to
609 say as a leader, if you do this, I won't ask for another thing. I'll be completely happy and
610 satisfied. Complete my joy. Same mind, Same Love, full accord, 1 mind.

611
612 It must mean some kind of crazy unity of being together. And somehow and now that we
613 actually live 2 hours south of Waco in Texas, people start to get a little edgy about that
614 and go, "How do I know that that's safe? Doesn't that feel a little weird?" "No. It's the
615 definition of safe. That's the definition of safe."

616
617 Those of you that are wives trusting your husbands, is that a dangerous thing to do? Well,
618 if you've married a punk of a man, perhaps. But it's not supposed to be that way. When
619 we submit surrender and Trust Our Lives to Jesus, it wasn't that we somehow lost our
620 independence and lost our way to sort of ruler own destiny. We found true freedom in
621 submission, didn't we? We found it. He rescued us from ourselves.

622
623 Years ago, we were a part of a network of churches and in the vineyard, there was some
624 sort of paradigms to help understand unity. And the paradigms were these sort of made-
625 up words that, and we make up our own words to at times. But the words were there is a

626 bounded set theory of unity.

627

628 There is a centered set and a fuzzy set. And the fuzzy set is just there were graphs of little
629 arrows going every which direction. A fuzzy set is sort of a way of thinking about how
630 we relate. That everybody's kind of thinks whatever they want. And there's no cohesion.
631 It doesn't matter and we just all love each other. Everything's fine.

632

633 The other way of thinking is there's a centered set. The centered set is

634 [(0:38:00)]

635 here are the central most important things. Lots of peripheral things that make no
636 difference and so on the big things, but let's agree. And on everything else, who cares?

637

638 And then there is a bounded set which is there are defined lines of what's in, what's out.
639 What's on the list. What's not. What's in the bucket? What's out of the bucket? What's on
640 the red list? What's on the yellow list? What's on the orange list? That kind of an idea.
641 And so I come out unity and leading thinking about lists and buckets in colors.

642

643 *[laughter]*

644

645 *Sándor Paull:*

646 And the reality is what all came rushing in that day on 2818 Harvey Mitchell next to the
647 George Bush Library was anything that we are not together in becomes an issue. But the
648 practical side of me, says, "Really? On all things big and small, can we really love 1
649 another? How does that practically work? How does that work? Is that really the thing
650 that is the thing?

651

652 Well, I think from the Bible that it is. And I think from the heart of the Father that it is.
653 But then it creates some issues of really, how do we do that in a small group? How do
654 you do that with a husband and a wife? How do you do that with teenagers? How is that
655 even possible? On all things? Because I like some things and believe in some things that
656 y' all don't like. See, there's the y'all?

657

658 You don't like medium rare steaks, it's time you go. Are you kidding? I like cows and so
659 maybe you go "Are you kidding?" So is that what we're talking about? That we all sort of
660 have the same playlist and you all start having to like reggae because [inaudible] is the
661 best music genre out there.

662

663 *[laughter]*

664

665 ***Sándor Paull:***

666 And I'm sorry to say that I'm now from Texas but countries are just bad.

667

668 ***[laughter]***

669

670 ***Sándor Paull:***

671 It's not opinion. It's just arguable truth.

672

673 ***[laughter]***

674

675 ***Sándor Paull:***

676 Really. I mean, come on. It doesn't take a theologian to figure that out.

677 ***[(0:40:00)]***

678

679 ***[laughter]***

680

681 ***Sándor Paull:***

682 Is that what we're talking about? I mean, doesn't it seem absurd when you sort of mock it
683 in that kind of a way. But if the Bible really says it then it has to be true and it does say it.
684 These verses really say it.

685

686 And so how do you get there? What does it mean? Well, it means that you work together.
687 You make every effort to guard the unity of the faith through the bond of peace. We have
688 to work on those things.

689

690 Husbands wives, Do you have to work on stuff? Do you have to have long conversations?
691 Do you wish you could snuggle your wife and just go to bed and said she wants to talk
692 about feelings and things? That's how it goes, isn't it? You bet. I'm like, I don't want to
693 sleep or snuggle and the last thing I want to do is talk.

694

695 ***[laughter]***

696

697 ***Sándor Paull:***

698 That's the last thing that I want to do but we'll talk. We'll work it out.

699

700 ***[laughter]***

701

702 Pastor: I thank Jesus, I have a very low-maintenance wife. I've told her many times.
703 Would you pray and impart your sexy stability to these other young wives? Because
704 husbands need that. I'm digressing in dangerous territory.

705

706 *[laughter]*

707

708 ***Sándor Paull:***

709 We work on it guys. We ask Jesus to change us. We say, wait if a person that I love and
710 trust is concerned, how can I not be concerned about that? The technical rightness or
711 wrongness on any issue, I mean, think of it this way wives. If you trust and love and
712 follow your husband in a way that's pleasing to the Father and he's wrong, what happens
713 then? You're honored by God. And he's got to deal with that.

714

715 See, we often think about technical rightness. And there are times that your leaders are
716 just wrong and you're right. It's true. It's going to happen. It shouldn't happen most of the
717 time. You should be leading that person instead of them leading you. But it's going to
718 happen sometimes.

719

720 I think that being 1 is greater than a particular rightness on any 1 individual thing. I think
721 that. I think that somehow we would say, I'm going to choose to trust

722 [(0:42:00)]

723 and somehow say away Jesus has put my leader in this place and if they're wrong, he'll
724 speak to my leader on that.

725

726 And my leader has the ability to hear Jesus. That's been proven over time and they have
727 enough humility that Jesus speaks, they'll turn and they'll change and they'll come to a
728 different conclusion. And if they don't and we go forward, I'm still blessed by God in all
729 of this.

730

731 Now. Does that sound like crazy? It's a little self-serving, right? Because as a leader
732 myself, it's like, well, I want everybody to do that so that they just do what I say and
733 think what I think.

734

735 It seems to be a little self-serving but somehow we have to get past that to say, but wait,
736 if it really is in the Bible and God's will for us, if it really is his heart, if it really is how he
737 intends marriages to work and it is true in the Trinity that there's just a oneness, if there's
738 something that because of the water we swim in, it's so hard because there's conflict and
739 individualism.

740

741 What really burns my toast nowadays is that everything I do, I get an email survey of
742 how was your Chick-fil-A Burger? How could we have served you better? And I think
743 you can't, Chick-fil-A is awesome.

744

745 *[laughter]*

746

747 ***Sándor Paull:***

748 You guys, this is a fantastic job in the Chick-fil-A sauce. There's some magic in that. I
749 don't know what they put in there but I could just eat that. I think. Wait. Why do you care
750 about my opinion of what my experience was like on the customer helpline, with my
751 home warranty company I mean, how does that matter? My opinion doesn't matter. It
752 shouldn't matter about those kinds of things. Why are you asking me?

753

754 So we're trained in our culture, especially in the last 10 years. That you leave a review.
755 You have any experience, people have to know about every single thing that you think
756 about everything that's ever happened to you. That you leave some commentary and your
757 opinion. People are trained now. We are trained and conditioned that I have to give my
758 opinion. My voice has to be heard.

759

760 And the truth is on many things, your voice and your opinion don't matter. If Jesus hasn't
761 put you in that role of responsibility

762 [(0:44:00)]

763 in coming back into Southern, Illinois. I don't know if you realize it but SIU is in a hard
764 spot. It's been kind of a mess. And that's painful because we love SIU and those of us that
765 have graduated, our degrees are worth even less than it was when we got those degrees.

766

767 But Jesus has entrusted to me a new responsibility at SIU. Is that make sense? I'm not
768 held due and accounted for anything that happens there. My sphere of influence is not
769 SIU in any remote way.

770

771 And so my opinion of the president, the chancellor, my opinion of the board's voting of
772 this or that and no confident, my opinion of it SIUE, SIUC, consolidating campus, I
773 mean, those kinds of things that are going on at SIU, my opinion makes no difference.
774 Because it's irrelevant. It's unimportant.

775

776 I think we think too highly of ourselves and that gets to the actual problem. See the thing
777 that makes us feel like how as this soon-to-be 20 churches turns into 40, and 60, and
778 whatever Jesus does in the future, how can it really happen? How can even 1 church

779 really have this together?

780

781 Well, Paul helps us with all of that. Look at the next verse. Do nothing from 2 things. He
782 begins then sort of kind of talk through then the sickness and then he gives the
783 prescription. What's the sickness? What's the reason that it seems so impossible for us to
784 imagine, conceive this. Do nothing from 2 things, selfish ambition or conceit?

785

786 So, there it is. It's hard to imagine, isn't it? That the problem is probably us in these
787 things. Now, I came to that conclusion in a bit of a salty way years ago. Most things that I
788 struggle with end up being my fault 1 way or another. Most things that go wrong

789 [(0:46:00)]

790 in the church are my fault 1 way or another. And it stinks and I can have self-pity but it
791 just happens to be true most times.

792

793 Seventeenth-century French Theologian John Calvin on these verses says this. There are
794 2 most dangerous pests for disturbing the peace of the church. Strife is awakened when
795 everyone is prepared to maintain perniciously his own opinion. And when it is begun to
796 rage, it rushes headlong in the direction from which it has entered.

797

798 Vainglory tickles, men's minds so that everyone is delighted with his own inventions, his
799 own opinions. Hence, the only way of guarding against dissensions is when we avoid
800 strifes by deliberating and acting peacefully especially if we are not actuated by ambition,
801 for ambition is a means of fanning all strifes.

802

803 And so think about who has left the church or left badly. It's 1 of the things that I feel
804 like, am I going to be able to do this long-term because I love people that aren't with us
805 any longer. That's been so...I've had staff members, pastors. I had 4 staff members leave
806 in 1 semester and I remember calling Steven saying Steve, is it me?

807

808 Because sometimes it is, right? Sometimes that's the scary, awful thing about leading
809 people. Sometimes, yeah, it is you. You are the fault. You are the issue. And when he
810 said, I don't think so. I think they've got their things. I chose to trust him because I believe
811 that if it was me, he loves me enough that he'd tell me.

812

813 And you should demand of your leader that they love you enough to tell you what they
814 really think. And they've got to gauge than are you mature enough to handle and is it the
815 time that the Holy Spirit set out for the different things? Of course, all of that. But we're
816 compelled by love to speak the truth.

817 [(0:48:00)]

818 I mean, if I'm often some sketchy thinking or behavior and my leader sees it and is just
819 praying but not saying when it's the time to say it, that's a problem, isn't it? We're
820 compelled by love to protect and defend and to say and then to forgive and not to have to
821 say it perfectly in just the right way. We're compelled by love if your leader really
822 believes something and you're unwilling to hear them on it, that's a problem. That's a
823 problem.

824

825 See, some of you have leaders on different ends of the spectrum. Some that are easier to
826 follow because their opinions either line up more closely with yours or they don't hold
827 those things strongly enough that they kind of say, well whatever you want. Let me just
828 say my piece. And there are some things that are helpful about that and some things that
829 are dangerous.

830

831 And then other leaders are really strong in their convictions and in their beliefs and to
832 maintain unity with a leader like that means that you've got to really wrestle through
833 because if they have a problem and they're concerned and they're not at peace with
834 something and they have an issue, then it's something that you can't go forward in or do
835 an end-run around them.

836

837 You ever done that where you ask your leader, hey, what do you think? And then when
838 they say it you're like, oh, man. Now, how do I go forward? Now that the [inaudible]
839 what they think and they told me what they think. How do I then go do that? Because
840 they've said, you have 3 puppies, the fourth 1 is crazy and I really want that fourth puppy
841 I mean, whatever the thing is, you put yourself in a hard spot.

842

843 But if you are led by the same person for very long and you get to a place or thing, I
844 think, I know what they would say about the fourth puppy. We can't have people over
845 because my house is covered with dog hair already and it just stinks like a kennel. I think
846 I know what they'd say, so I'm not going to ask. I'll ask somebody else. Because I think I
847 know that they might say something that gives me the outcome that I want.

848

849 See, we're not above such things, are we? I remember it wasn't too far from here that I
850 was

851 [(0:50:00)]

852 riding my Yamaha R1 with a group of guys and we were hitting some back roads which
853 are fun to do. And we're on 127 coming back in the Murfreesboro and a cop's come in the
854 other direction and he hits his lights and I think, okay, he got me. I look down. I'm doing
855 95 which when you're doing 140 plus 95 feels like nothing.

856

857 And so I remember thinking I'm not going very fast. They'll just say boys are boys but I

858 look down doing 95 and I calculate in my mind, he's going to just say nothing. And so in
859 a couple of moments, I downshift and they say in Southern Illinois, I shower down on it
860 which means floor it. And so I'm running from the cops now as a pastor of a church...

861

862 *[laughter]*

863

864 *Sándor Paull:*

865 True story. And I'm coming in the Murfreesboro and I come down Tomcat Hill, any
866 Murfreesboro guys in the room? Do you know Tomcat Hill? It's a big old downhill on
867 127. And I looked down the speedometer and it shows 189 on the speedometer of my R1.

868

869 And there's a turn at the bottom of Tomcat Hill and I hit that 1 at about 185 and the
870 straight away after that, some of, you know that straight away after that? The bottom of
871 Tomcat Hill? A State Trooper's coming in the other direction and I remember thinking,
872 oh, oh.

873

874 *[laughter]*

875

876 *Sándor Paull:*

877 He doesn't turn on his lights. He doesn't turn around. He doesn't do anything. Well, I hit
878 the brakes hard and turn into the sign by McNutt Orchards and I weave around, I find a
879 driveway, I turn the bike off, I sit in the grass and I cry.

880

881 And then I pray and I wait for the heat, the fuzz to die down and I come back saying,
882 well, and now what? What do you do with that 1? Well, I have to tell somebody but I
883 know who I'm not telling.

884

885 *[laughter]*

886

887 *Sándor Paull:*

888 And so the other pastor was Ben. So, I told Ben, "Ben, would you pray for me?"

889

890 *[laughter]*

891

892 *Sándor Paull:*

893 "I just ran from the cops at 189 miles an hour and I know I have to confess and deal with
894 it but I don't want to really deal with it because I know what really dealing with it would
895 mean.

896 [(0:52:00)]

897 We kind of work things to our own end, don't we? We kind of know who... You ask the
898 dog lover about this fourth puppy, you don't ask the cat lover because they're going to
899 say, are you nuts?

900

901 Let's not overestimate our ability to kind of get our own means, to get our own ends, to
902 sort of work a problem to get what we want. What if in these verses it's not about what
903 we want.

904

905 Do you see that in these verses somewhere? Some great priority for individualism. Our
906 independence. Us getting what we want. Is that in these verses? Is this in the heart of
907 Paul? The longing of Father for us that we all get what we want?

908

909 Is that in here somewhere and I've just missed it? What about the rest of the gospels of
910 the Bible? Is that somehow in there? And I'm just sort of overlooking that and sort of
911 prioritizing something?

912

913 Am I misunderstanding things? See who left the church and left badly? Were they sick
914 with this selfish ambition? Were they metastasized? Was it cancer growing with conceit
915 with these sort of issues?

916

917 See, I've heard this many times. A person that I'm leading saying I hear you and so pray
918 for me. And what it means is, I'm going to seek Jesus, pray that he tells me what I'm
919 supposed to do whether you're right or not. Pray for me. I hear you and I'm gonna go
920 consider and see God and consider what you've said.

921

922 I'm going to add that into the mix of the things and I'll let you know. I'll get back to you
923 and let you know whether or not it's going to make sense, I'm going to do it or not. It's
924 kind of what they mean. And so I'll consider but I want to hear you. I want to hear what
925 you think and I'll get back to you on that. I'll consider it. I'll let you know.

926

927 If you have said that, or have felt that, or that's been said to you, verse 3 is at play. Do
928 nothing from selfish ambition or conceit. That's really what it is. We're all in danger of
929 thinking too highly of our own opinions. All of us. We're all in danger of that

930 [(0:54:00)]

931 because our opinions are right in our own mind or you wouldn't think that. Agreed?

932

933 You wouldn't think that. Is it smart for the Spurs to trade Leonard? Some of you say
934 yeah, some of you say no. You think that because that's your opinion and you wouldn't

935 think it if you didn't think it was the right thing. We're all in danger of that.

936

937 My second favorite author C.S. Lewis, I've got your interest, don't I? Johnny Bill
938 James[?] is number 1 for me right now. C.S. Lewis is a close second. He writes this in
939 Perelandra, the middle book of the space trilogy where he writes and this is, by the way,
940 the Eve character talking to the Ransom character regarding a rule from the god figure in
941 the books about where they're living and these floating land versus fixed lands.

942

943 You'd have to read it. I'm not going to explain it. If you haven't read it yet. It's your fault.
944 He says I think he made 1 law of that kind. Meaning doesn't go to the fixed lands. They're
945 in the floating lands. In order that there might be obedience and all these other matters,
946 what you call obeying Him is but doing what seems good in your own eyes also. Is love
947 content with that?

948

949 Meaning. I'll do them if I also agree. See, there's no benefit in us only doing it when we
950 also agree. That's actually not being led. That's just we happen to have the good
951 coincidence of sort of feeling similarly and so we act similarly. The real test of "are we
952 leadable or not" is when we don't like it when we don't agree. That's the real test.

953

954 And any pastor and lead pastor worth their salt is going to before releasing anybody as a
955 leader, they're to find something to press them on that the person doesn't agree with to
956 find out what are they going to get.

957

958 They're going to find something to correct on because all of us are pretty happy when
959 we're getting our own way.

960 [(0:56:00)]

961 Most kids eating an ice cream sundae are not grouchy kids. But the real question becomes
962 what happens when we don't get our way?

963

964 And I've seen some highs become apart that you would not imagine that a person had the
965 capacity to do when they didn't get their way. Some of the most well put together,
966 mature. I thought I want to be like them and they on a minor thing, they just come
967 sideways.

968

969 She going on as love content with that. You do them indeed because they are his will. But
970 not only because they are his will. Where can you taste the joy of obeying unless he bids
971 you to do something for which his bidding is the only reason?

972

973 See, here's the thing guys. There is a joy that you miss out on when you only follow when
974 you agree. There is a joy in saying I trust the father. There is a joy in saying I'm going to

975 consider other people's opinions more important than my own and I'm blessed. Even
976 they're wrong, God is going to honor me for this and the greater importance of my own
977 rightness on an issue is this family.

978

979 And the sympathy that we have because if I blow my life and my marriage up and I'm
980 gone, I know what that does to the hearts of everybody else in this family that we love
981 because it's happened to me. All of you have people that you love that aren't in your local
982 church any longer. Agreed?

983

984 Vine people. Are there any people that you love and did life with wanting to look like
985 them and be like them and they're not at Vine any longer? Some of them don't even act
986 like Christians any longer. They're doing something else somewhere else.

987

988 Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying if you leave this, you're not in God's will
989 and you can't be a Christian if you're not in this group. Don't understand me to say that.
990 Please don't go there.

991

992 But all of us grieve over people that know they were supposed to be in this family. And I
993 know that everybody that left that was called here, it could have been worked out if they
994 were able to let it get worked out. In every single time.

995

996 I've been at this, for 20 years and there's not been 1 time where I thought, oh, man. Every
997 single time, if they would have been willing to deal with it,

998 [(0:58:00)]

999 we could have gotten this resolved. It could have worked out. It should have worked out.
1000 It had to have been workable because we're a family.

1001

1002 We're called to the same body and it has to be that there isn't some context of
1003 conversation and situation that makes things untenable. The clock was ticking and you
1004 just couldn't stop it. Runaway train. I don't believe that at all.

1005

1006 See sometimes, obeying precedes the agreeing. That's true a lot of times. A lot of times
1007 I've said I don't technically agree but oh, man if you think that's an important thing, I'm
1008 in. I'll do it. And there were times that after that, pretty quick after that, I thought, oh my
1009 goodness. I couldn't see that. I was blinded by my own opinions and perception.

1010

1011 All of us have massive blind spots. Wives, your husbands have blind spots. Sure they do.
1012 All of us have blind spots. And it's the fool of a person that doesn't allow God's great
1013 sovereignty in having people that he's put around us to protect us from ourselves. It's the
1014 fool of a person.

1015

1016 You can read the Bible. David had people around him. They gave him right and good
1017 counsel and warnings that time. We all need that. See, the antidote to this, again, verse 3.
1018 Complete my joy.

1019

1020 And guys, I had a survey 1 time. How many hours per week do you spend on conflict
1021 resolution? It's a multiple-choice? Answer A was like 3 to 5 hours a week. I was shocked
1022 that the lowest answer was like 5 hours a week on resolving internal conflicts and messes
1023 within the church. I thought, really?

1024

1025 Oh man, I spend 5 hours a semester, 5 hours a year on Conbliss[?] it's just not very
1026 common. Some of you have come from churches where on the outside it's all hippie-
1027 skippy we love each other huggy but on the inside, it's a mess. And deacons are cussing
1028 out the pastor and they're doing votes. And some of you have been in those places.

1029

1030 I've got friends outside of this group of churches that have been in those kinds of

1031 [(0:60:00)]

1032 town hall meetings where this it's just vitriol. It's ugly. That we really do love each other.
1033 Complete my joy. Same mind. Same Love. Full accord. One mind. Don't be selfish. Don't
1034 be conceited. But what's the antidote to this sickness?

1035

1036 That our culture is just ate up with. It's true. We're just ate up with it. You can't talk to
1037 anybody that's in local or national government. It's a mess of a deal. In humility, consider
1038 others more significant. So the issue is humility and then tied to humility, verse 4.

1039

1040 Don't think about what your own interest is because we all get tunnel vision on our right
1041 and us, but think about what's happening to everybody else. There's a greater thing. You
1042 might win the battle, but lose the war, right? You might technically be right but you've
1043 just simply blown up a whole bunch of other things.

1044

1045 And then verse 5 have this mind among yourselves. So he's saying, humility is the deal,
1046 guys. Preferring and thinking about each other is the deal. Don't be selfish, don't be
1047 conceited, humility is the deal.

1048

1049 And here's the example that Paul gives. Let's look at it together, verse 5. Have this in
1050 mind the point of the next verses. This kind of unity and oneness is so incredible the way
1051 to do it is to have this mind which is yours in Christ Jesus who though he was in the form
1052 of God did not count equality with God. Something to be grasped emptied himself, taking
1053 the form of a servant being born in the likeness of man being found in human form. Pause
1054 there.

1055

1056 So the first thing is this infinite condescension of the Christ that he is doesn't have to
1057 grasp equality with God. He is in the form of God. He is God. And so God takes on a
1058 human body. Crazy humility. Always existed, all things made through the sun. All things
1059 held together. Even at Hebrews 1. It's 1 of my favorite places.

1060

1061 This kind of humility that God would take on a human

1062 [(0:62:00)]

1063 body and become one of us, the likeness of men found in human form shocking. Close
1064 the book, move on, we all pray and cry and feel good and go home.

1065

1066 There's more, what's next. Humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,
1067 even death on a cross. Then the exaltation comes later than in the next verses. So the 2
1068 things that Paul says are this awesome incredible, shocking, humility of Christ that he
1069 would come into this Earth as a human and that he would allow himself to be crucified
1070 and murdered by the very people that he made, incredible. If you have this heart, if you
1071 have this, we will not fail.

1072

1073 Guys, it is the heart of the Father that we would be one. And how amazing will it be
1074 when there are more people that English is not their first language. How amazing will it
1075 be that most people? This idea of Christianity is not their default. I think the statistics in
1076 College Station where we're living now is that they're 55% of people identify as
1077 Christian.

1078

1079 I have not met very many that I think really loved him. Very few out of that 55% actually
1080 really loved him and their life looks anything like a biblical disciple. But they believe in
1081 the Bible. They would say their affiliate was Jesus. What's it going to look like when
1082 there are more people that are not like us?

1083

1084 What's it going to look like when there are more people that think differently than us.
1085 See, there are already some things that pull at the fabric in the unity of our church when it
1086 comes to politics. Is Trump Satan. Or is Hillary Satan? Or both of them Satan's?

1087

1088 *[laughter]*

1089

1090 *Sándor Paull:*

1091 I mean, it doesn't take much, doesn't take much. Whispering and gossip and bitterness. It
1092 doesn't take much of passive-aggressive. And if there's anybody that knows passive-

1093 aggressive, I know passive. I'm better at being passive-aggressive than y 'all are at being
1094 passive-aggressive.

1095 [(0:64:00)]

1096 Doesn't take much of that. Doesn't take much relational tension.

1097

1098 In a bigger church, you can kind of kick the can on the street but in a smaller church
1099 especially, age just doesn't fly. It just doesn't work. You just can't avoid it. You can't
1100 evade it. There's a hundred of you. You got to see him. You got to sit by him. You got to
1101 do life together. You got to work it out somehow. It is what God wants for us.

1102

1103 It is clear in the Bible that we are going to be together. And so what is that mean? What
1104 do we do? We asked him for help. We humble ourselves at every opportunity. We are
1105 open-handed with the things that even for us or the top-tier, most important things that we
1106 believe.

1107

1108 That we somehow say, I'm gonna trust my leader. I'm going to trust them. They're not
1109 perfect. They're not doing it right but I don't want their job of watching for my soul in the
1110 Watchtower, hand on the rifle, I don't want that to be a burden. I don't want them to grow
1111 under the burden of having to put up with me. And deal with me and talked me off the
1112 ledge again.

1113

1114 Let me, let me say this about being on a Ledge. If you're the kind of person that has to be
1115 talked off a ledge, talked into trust, in believing over and over and over again, at some
1116 point, you're unrecoverable.

1117

1118 I've just seen it for too many times in too many people over the years. And I don't mind
1119 talking people off a ledge and trying to help and recover and know really it's okay. And
1120 when we said this, it wasn't that, I meant this.

1121

1122 But at some point, in every single person that I've seen, it's there's something that's tipped
1123 it beyond all recovery. So if your clock is ticking, you don't have to just sort of bidding
1124 your time or make a hasty or polite exit. You can deal with it. Let me put it to you this
1125 way.

1126

1127 The warnings of God in the Bible of, I mean, you can just think about say Nineveh. I'm
1128 going to destroy this city. The wickedness is come up to me. The city is going down,
1129 120000 people, right?

1130 [(0:66:00)]

1131 Do you get swallowed by a fish? Vomited back up? He goes in the opposite direction.

1132

1133 I mean, he's supposed to go to Nineveh and he goes the opposite direction. He's in Joppa
1134 heading off to the Mediterranean Sea going the opposite way. Why did God say that? So
1135 that they would just sort of say their last goodbyes before they all go up in smoke?

1136

1137 Why were those warnings in the Bible given? That they would turn. That they would
1138 repent. That they would do something. That's why those warnings are given in the Bible.
1139 And we can see evidence of times when they humble themselves and they prevented the
1140 outcome? We see other times where they didn't and it happened to them.

1141

1142 And so maybe there is an opportunity of grace. That here we could reconcile. We could
1143 forgive people in our past churches and experience that turned out to be a little sketchy,
1144 or to be a little bit self-serving, or to be a little whatever. And it makes us hard to actually
1145 trust now.

1146

1147 Could be something that you butted heads with on your leader. It could be something that
1148 even with husbands and wives. If you guys can't do this at home and I can be able to do
1149 this in the church. I'm just sorry. It's just not gonna work. Some of you want to be a joy to
1150 lead. Some of you want to somehow grow in this issue of preferring others and having
1151 this mind of Christ, this great humility.

1152

1153 Back at verse 1, if there's any, we'd say no, there's every encouragement in Christ. If
1154 there's any comfort, know there's all comfort from love. If there's any participation with
1155 the Spirit, know we are participating with the Spirit. We are 1 in dwelling of the Holy
1156 Spirit, you believe in Jesus. You wouldn't be here. Can you be a leader in this group of
1157 churches and not love Jesus? No, that's on the list.

1158

1159 *[laughter]*

1160

1161 ***Sándor Paull:***

1162 The secret list that Chris gave me that he found on Steve's desk. There's any affection and
1163 sympathy we have affection sympathy. We love each other. I remember it wasn't that
1164 long ago.

1165 [(0:68:00)]

1166 We were at a team meeting and I remember it as though it was yesterday. It was probably
1167 12 years ago though.

1168

1169 And I was leading the kids' portion of the team meeting before the rest of it. And I said,

1170 don't y' all just love 1 another? Isn't it just great to be together? There's 1 gal at the back
1171 of the room and she's going, "No." She mouthed no, "No."

1172

1173 *[laughter]*

1174

1175 ***Sándor Paull:***

1176 Her name is Joanie. Joanie. Whoa. Really? Yeah. And I cared for those guys. We walked
1177 by their house and prayed for them and helped them in ways that they didn't know where
1178 your help them. We love those guys. It wasn't long after Joanie and Chip were
1179 somewhere else.

1180

1181 See, we love each other. We are called to this family. This isn't just a temporary
1182 affiliation and then there may be some other thing that you do because your job takes you
1183 somewhere else. And then you're part of another thing. [whispers] I believe that the
1184 greatest things that God's going to do might exceed our generation.

1185

1186 A lot of groups and businesses, when the founders are at their prime, they flourish. And
1187 when it comes to succession they flounder. Because they're built on an individual. See,
1188 this family of churches is not built on an individual. It's not built on a particular leader or
1189 set of leaders. This is something that Jesus is doing. Did you ever feel that? Hey, God's
1190 going to do something to us.

1191

1192 And he's got some things that are really beyond and above and past me and not ultimately
1193 about me. I believe the greatest things that he's promised and whispered hope is going to
1194 be after we are part of that great host of heaven and we are looking down and it's our
1195 children and our children's children that are a part of this. Which is why, if I can climb on
1196 a soapbox for a second.

1197

1198 I think it's of great importance for us to raise our kids well and rightly. I think it's of
1199 significant importance that our kids when they're choosing

1200 [(0:70:00)]

1201 College, they don't just sort of pick the program they like or the best financial aid
1202 package or I like the trees on this campus more than the trees on that campus. But you
1203 say, come on. There are soon to be 20 places where there are amazing college campuses.
1204 Pick 1 of those.

1205

1206 Because if we're talking about unity, what is it that we either believe in the Bible or that
1207 we hold you with a value that you'd say, meh, M-E-H, meh.

1208

1209 *[laughter]*

1210

1211 ***Sándor Paull:***

1212 I don't care about that. Are there any of those things? You see praying for each other, I
1213 get it's in the Bible and whatnot but I'm fine if I never prayed for another person that
1214 didn't pray for me. You know, this is not being hyper churchy with our language and I
1215 don't really care about that and being accessible to them in church or just being careful
1216 with culture.

1217

1218 I'd really like to have more beer at my small group parties and events and all of that. It'd
1219 be so much more fun. If we can just all loosen up and be more cool. If we could just be
1220 more cool, more people would...What is it that we value that you'd say, I don't care about
1221 that, it's irrelevant? What is it that in the Bible you'd say, I don't believe that at all?

1222

1223 What Jesus has asked us to be, does not exist anywhere else on this Earth. This family
1224 that we have, it does not exist anywhere else on this Earth at all. Now, there are places
1225 that are closer, New Frontiers, closer more things that line up with what Jesus has asked
1226 us to be as a family with what we believe in the Bible and how we live that out in terms
1227 of values, but it does not exist. Think of it another way.

1228

1229 What if you left your local church and went to another 1 in town? What would you be
1230 giving up? What would that mean for you? Okay? Think about that. Say, High Rock.
1231 What if you left High Rock and went to the big church in town instead? Is it a bad place?
1232 Maybe not. Is it the same, similar enough?

1233 [(0:72:00)]

1234 Oh, not by a mile. Not even close. Not at all.

1235

1236 Why would you entrust your kids to some other place that's gonna be different in
1237 significant things of belief and practice? Significant things in terms of relationships. Is
1238 that what you want? Is the quality of the piece of paper and their degree in their program
1239 of greater value than what happens to them Spiritually over the next 4 years. Really?

1240

1241 I mean, that's a big deal to me. Why? Because I've gotten some college students and
1242 seeing them for many years that have had some rough experience and heard some awful
1243 stories of they get the degree, all right but what're the contents of their faith?

1244

1245 What do they actually believe? What's happened to them in some...That's why we're
1246 planning churches. And Jesus is asking us to go at breakneck speed. Vine, is it
1247 breakneck?

1248

1249 Yeah. They're all like, yeah, breakneck. Man, whiplash.

1250

1251 *[laughter]*

1252

1253 ***Sándor Paull:***

1254 Alex Diekman again? We just sent...What church in Texas? Yes. Breakneck speed. Why?
1255 Because it's Jesus as well. Because there are people that he wants to save. There are not
1256 enough healthy churches.

1257

1258 There are not enough places where people can hear about him and be a part of what he's
1259 asked us to be a part of. I think we need to be thankful to the father for him, calling us to
1260 him and to each other.

1261

1262 I think we need to be thankful to the Father for him calling us to him and to each other. I
1263 think we need to be humble to say there are other churches that Jesus is blessing and
1264 doing great things but this is my family. This is my home.

1265

1266 Just like every husband would say, yeah, there are other women out there that are pretty, I
1267 guess, but my wife, she's my wife. She's asked me to do life with. It's Jesus' will for her
1268 and none else. That's the exclusive nature of what he's called us to in a covenant of
1269 marriage and as a part of a family.

1270

1271 To me, I'm called to be a part of this. My family thus is called to be a part of this. My
1272 kids thus are called to be a part of this. I've got kids that are thinking about college, and
1273 yeah, you can think about college, but you're going to think about 19 places. Taiwan is a
1274 little far.

1275

1276 *[laughter]*

1277

1278 ***Sándor Paull:***

1279 Just saying.

1280 [(0:74:00)]

1281 Probably is a good college there but I love my kids. I want to be able to see them
1282 sometimes at least. And I know if my kids are in Oregon, oh, man, I know they're going
1283 to be loved and taught the Bible and disciplined. I know they're going to have leaders that
1284 love them. They are trustworthy. I would be sad but I would be overjoyed. I would not
1285 worry about my favorite girl.

1286

1287 If she was in Bloomington, Indiana, she isn't Bloomington-Normal, I would not worry
1288 about my little girl at Penn State, Bowling Green, Kentucky. Austin, you choose a little
1289 sketchy place but I think she'd be okay there too.

1290

1291 *[laughter]*

1292

1293 ***Sándor Paull:***

1294 Do we think so little of our kids? Do we think so little of what God's asking? Jesus is
1295 doing something special here, guys. He is. He's doing something wonderful with us and
1296 we don't fully grasp what it is. We don't.

1297

1298 And there were 13 people in a living room and we were considering buying land and
1299 we're looking at 10 acres, I thought, are you kidding? We'd never need that much. I just
1300 thought we can get to make it to 100 people, we'll be doing well. We can get to 200,
1301 game over. We've arrived.

1302

1303 I think hardly any of us can really grasp what Jesus intends to do. What he really wants to
1304 do with us. And it's not about us. It's about the people that he's going to bring and bring
1305 into this family. Are we going to bust apart at the seams because of some rift or issue or
1306 thing? I've been at this long enough to know people come and go. They do. And we keep
1307 going.

1308

1309 People, come and go. I may come and go. We keep going. We keep trusting Jesus and
1310 doing what he's asked us to do. Come what may. The Bible makes it plain. The heart of
1311 the Father is for these things that we would really love 1 another. That we would be 1.
1312 One love.

1313 [(0:76:00)]

1314 Full Accord. One mind in all things. In all things? In all things. And as your leader, if you
1315 like country, I'll deal with it. And I'll still love you. And I won't be too worried.

1316

1317 But there are other things that we probably should talk about. And we'll work out
1318 together. And if we love each other, we trust that love. Love is load-bearing, isn't it? It's
1319 load-bearing. You lean on it. It covers a multitude of sins.

1320

1321 We really can pull together not affection love, not friendliness, we're-all-nice-to-each-
1322 other love. But this depth of love, the inner parts, this affection of Christ that we've
1323 experienced and we have to each other. It's amazing what he's done. Let's ask him to
1324 work this out as we pray. Please stand.

1325

1326 I'm going to linger and spend some time before I invite you down front. So don't check
1327 out. Don't think about tacos, yet. There's stuff that we need to do. Jesus, would you do
1328 this in us? It is our great hope. It is our longing. It is what we believe. And we seek that
1329 we pursue together.

1330

1331 How is it possible in 20 different churches spread all over the US and overseas that we
1332 could be like this? But yet it's true in the Trinity. When God the Son came to this earth.
1333 It's true. We see evidence in the Bible that it is.

1334

1335 What would make every leaders' joy complete?

1336

[(0:78:00)]

1337 Holy Spirit that leads us into the truth, would you shine the light of truth into our heart
1338 now, into our motive, into our thinking, into our opinions. Shine a light and truth into us
1339 right now.

1340

1341 Any root of bitterness that has taken root, let it be uprooted now. That we submitted
1342 without agreeing and it's made us bitter. That we've taken 1 on the chin thinking they
1343 were wrong being frustrated but somehow smiling but in our hearts, we didn't smile. We
1344 didn't feel it.

1345

1346 If we've gotten to know our leaders' weaknesses and somehow it's eroded our courage,
1347 but they can be right on most things because we've seen them wrong on some things.

1348

1349 We ask you together, Lord, if there is selfish ambition in us, if somehow we've caught the
1350 sickness of this condemned world that we have to be promoted to be affirmed to feel like
1351 we're valuable, we have to work our way up the ranks. Because we're here to lead a
1352 conference it means we're doing something, right?

1353

1354 But there's the next thing, there's the stuff thing, there's the, whatever position, title, if
1355 there is ambition in us, would you reveal it by grace? Would you love us enough to show
1356 us that we have selfish ambition?

1357

1358 If leading people is more about us and how we are seeing and how we feel about
1359 ourselves been serving and loving the people that you've entrusted, if leading small group
1360 is about us and not about loving them, helping them grow as disciples, would you reveal
1361 it?

1362

1363 If we are constantly comparing in a crowded room ourselves to others, if we're watching
1364 out of the corner of our eyes, our leader talking more to somebody else than to me, if we

1365 have to be affirmed over and over again to feel like we're valuable. Jesus, let us not think
1366 more highly of ourselves than we ought.

1367

1368 We are simply servants that have done our duty. Unworthy servants doing our duty trying
1369 to be faithful to what you've entrusted, what you've discharged to us as our accountability
1370 to you. Jesus, let us be like you in any of the things that you would ask us to condescend.
1371 That there would never be anything that would be beneath us or that we are better than, or
1372 greater than but let us be servants of all.

1373

1374

1375 [END]

1376

1377

1378