

The Supernatural Power of Agreement

It was a warm spring afternoon in June 2005. I was just finishing up with my weekly duties at a local insurance company where I worked for seven years. Once a week my friends and I would meet at a local bar, have a few drinks (some weeks more than others) and then call it a night. We would use any football, basketball or baseball game as an excuse to drink and celebrate. This was my life for many years.

I was married at a young age, and I felt somewhat successful climbing a corporate ladder. Everything on the outside seemed great, like I had surpassed all the opinions of man, but something was missing deep inside. My marriage was in disarray. My job had plateaued. My relationship with God was in shambles. In fact, I had spent the last five years mad at Him, mad at church people and mad at myself. I had felt a passion to help people and to serve others since I was a little boy, but I felt extremely inadequate due to many failures and broken dreams.

As evening approached, I felt the Holy Spirit tugging at me as I drove past Abba's House, where our people were building the church my father had dreamed of and the foundation was being poured. The Holy Spirit spoke to my spirit and said, "There lies your destiny. You are needed there now."

This was very strange to me as I hadn't been praying, studying or attending church consistently, which I thought was the only way God would speak to man. I had long given up on the dream of pastoring, and I was far too bitter at the church to represent or serve the church. And yet that night an inner voice or impression grew louder and more real as the night went on. I drank more than usual to try to drown out what the Holy Spirit was impressing on me. Sitting at the bar that

night I fell under conviction, carrying a deep sense of guilt.

When I got home around midnight, my wife and I began to fight, which was typical on the nights I would go out with the guys. But this was no ordinary night. Moments later, I was on my knees, unleashing angry words toward God about things I had done, things that had been done to me and things for which I blamed Him. At one point I was yelling at God about my own father, Ron Phillips. Dad has always been my hero and my best friend, but I had grown very bitter at him as well. I felt as if both of my parents were ashamed of me and that they had helped so many other people in ministry but refused to embrace me.

After two hours of this, my wife was extremely scared. She had never seen me behave like this before. Kelly threatened to call my dad during this ordeal. I yelled back, "Call him—he won't come!" Sure enough, she called, he answered, and he came.

When he came in I immediately attacked him with my words about the ministry and how he was gone too much and how he didn't stand up for me during key times in my life. It wasn't pretty.

But I didn't stay there long. I began to apologize over and over. "I am not worthy to be your son," I said. I confessed and repented about certain things I had done to shame our family.

This became a life-changing night. We prayed, cried and forgave one another. My wife and I repented to one another. My dad and I rekindled our strong bond. Most importantly, I repented to God and gave my life to Him once and for all.

Divide and Conquer

Satan has always deceived believers and nonbelievers into a self-centered narcissism that has brought destruction and

waste. When you follow the enemy's tracks, his goal is always to divide and conquer.

In Eden, Satan brought death, dealing division to Adam and Eve and plunging the human race into the fall. At Babel, Satan sought to use the miracle principle of unity to lead another rebellion against God. The ancient ruler Nimrod sought to usurp God's throne, as had Satan, by building a tower. Consequently, division came and the nations began to war against each other.

Abraham divided his family by siring a boy named Ishmael, the father of the Arab nation. This division now spans more than 3,000 years throughout the Middle East and will culminate with the end-time war of Armageddon.

The division of Jacob's sons and the selling of Joseph into slavery led to famine and shortage for Israel. This would only be remedied by the restoration of these brothers.

The captivities of both Israel and Judah took place after their division into two separate kingdoms under Jeroboam and Rehoboam. Israel could mark its decline from that breach in family relationship.

When Jesus arrived on the scene, the faith of Abraham was divided into Pharisees and Sadducees. They had wrecked the faith, and now the nation lived in slavery under Herod and Rome.

The Cross and Unity

Jesus came to die for individuals, but His cross also made possible miracle-working relationships. His cross reconciles all divisions.

Before His death and resurrection, Jesus gave a hint about miracle power in Matthew 18:19-20: "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask,

it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Read this promise and see its potential. If we can agree, anything becomes possible!

Yet Satan has convinced the Western world that individualism, self-assertion and self-interest are the way. In the communist world, he has divided people into the educated elites and the so-called workers or masses. Here humans lose their souls.

The truth is that the cross redeems the individual and then reconciles that person with all the redeemed. In this new level of agreement, miracles become possible.

In John 15, Jesus teaches us that connections count: “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (vv. 4-5).

First, we must abide in the vine. Using the image of a vineyard, Jesus views believers as clusters of tasty grapes on a flourishing vine. Each grape is delicious, but together they can produce something more valuable: wine. This teaching reflects the Old Testament prophecies of God’s family.

In Isaiah 5, the vineyard fails because of the divisive power of sin and produces a rotten vintage. God removes the protective hedge, and the vineyard is wasted!

Later, Isaiah reminds the people of the favor that is released in the cluster of grapes: “Thus says the Lord: ‘As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, “Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it,” so will I do for My servants’ sake, that I may not destroy them all’” (Is. 65:8).

The prophet Micah mourns the loss of unity under the same image of the cluster of grapes: "Woe is me! For I am like those who gather summer fruits, like those who glean vintage grapes; there is no cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires. The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net" (Mic. 7:1-2).

God is looking for the cluster and instead finds brother pitted against brother. This terrible scene shows how the blessing is forfeited and mourns the absence of new wine. No wonder Jesus did such extensive teaching in John 15 on the vine and branches!

It is amazing that Jesus uses the word *agreement* to describe our relationships. The Greek word is *sumphoneo*. *Sum* is the word *together*, and *phoneo* is *voice* or *say*. We get our word *symphony* from this word. It means to let the same word of faith go forth from all of us in harmony. Every instrument in an orchestra is different, but when all the instruments are led by a capable conductor, the music is miraculous. This is the kind of harmony that is sweet to the ears of God. This kind of relationship makes miracles possible. God loves this kind of unity:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forevermore" (Ps. 133).

In this psalm, we learn that God commands not a blessing but *the* blessing when He beholds a people in unity. This psalm gives a prophetic view of the church clothed in the garments of the High Priest, with the anointing of power flowing from the Head, Jesus. As the church walks in unity, blessings flow

off the Head to the hem of the garment. What a picture and promise!

Jesus came to bring reconciliation. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus declares that our offerings will not bring a harvest until we reconcile with our brothers (Matt. 5:24). Jesus' prayer in John 17 is a cry for unity. This was what was on His great heart right before His bloody death. The whole prayer is in the plural, including us all!

The Secret of Supernatural Agreement

Several years ago I received a teaching from evangelist Damon Thompson called "Joined and Jointed" on the power of true unity. It quickened a deeper study of Paul's view of the church and her lack of power and miracle supply.

As I studied, I found one word exploded in my spirit about how unity can release the Father's supernatural supply. That word is *epichoregos*, and it is found hidden away in Ephesians 4:16: "From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

The New King James Version rightly translates the word as *supplies*. It comes from two words *epi*, which means "upon," and *choregeo*, which means "one who fully furnishes a choir or dance team." Our English word *choreographer* comes from that word. A choreographer sets the stage and coordinates music, dance and drama for the theater.

In the Greek world, *theater* was very important. In fact, our word theater came from the Greek language. In the Greco-Roman world, a *choregos* was also a benefactor who not only took care of all the stage arranging, but also supplied all the finances, food, costuming and salaries for the production.

Everyone who heard this word *epichoregos* understood that they needed God to be their *choregos*. The same word is found in Philippians 1:19, 2 Corinthians 9:10-11 and 1 Peter 4:11. Jesus used a form of the word in Luke 15:25 to describe the prodigal son's return home and the lavish production his father put on to welcome him back. Throughout the Bible, we see God as our *choregos*, the One who directs and supplies our lives.

Understanding that, how does God release that provision to His people as His church? If we go back to Ephesians 4:16, we will see that the church is called a *body*. Furthermore, the church is "fitly joined together" or *sumharmos* in the Greek. This is a compound word with *sum*, which means "together," and *harmos*, from which our word *harmony* comes. The third part in this long word, *legos*, means "to speak." So here is a group that together, in harmony, says the same word of faith!

Paul goes on to say "every joint supplies." There is the miracle word: *epichoregeo*. When we are together in harmony, saying the same word of faith, God opens the window of heaven and pours out His abundant supply. Everything we need is available to us when we are rightly connected with each other. Every failure indicates a lack of right relationships.

This is why relationships are primary to God and to our lives, and it's why disagreement and disunity destroy our opportunity to receive the miraculous God wants to release in, to and through us. There is supernatural power in living life in agreement and unity with other believers!

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