

“One Mind, and One Accord”

What we are about to consider now is a principle that I call “One Mind, and One Accord”; but it has been called by others “Unanimity,” and “The Headship of Christ,” which are all very good and descriptive terms of what we shall explain.

Basically, the doctrine is this:

When two or more believers gather to find and do the Lord’s will, it is not decided by a majority vote, but waiting upon the Lord for His mind to be revealed to each believer in whom dwells the Holy Spirit, until they all come into the same undivided judgment concerning the situation.

The scripture repeatedly reports to us this principle when it is written that they were all of “**one mind, and one accord.**” That is “unanimity;” it is looking to the Lord Jesus who is head of His church to manifest His mind to us so that we can be assured of His will and then do it!

I first learned of this teaching through an excellent book on early church history and doctrine entitled *The Churches of God* by G. H. Lang. His eleventh chapter, which I recommend you read, is: "Unanimity: A Divine Rule of Church Order and Christian Co-operation." It is a beautiful treatise, and in its original form was his first published work, under the title, *Unanimity: The Divine Method Of Church Government*. Both are very thorough explanations of this most important doctrine and apostolic practice.

Let us look now at various other revelations from the Old Testament scriptures that reveal to us that God has always operated by this principle and expects us to do the same. Later we shall look at the New Testament scriptures.

In the very first verses of the holy scriptures we discover that God is one and yet is a plurality. For example, we find: "**In the beginning God created**" and "**the Spirit of God was moving,**" and "**Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule. . . .'** And God created man in **His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. . . . Then God said, 'Behold, I have given'" (Gen. 1: 1, 2, 26, 27, 29 NAS). Here we have found God to be the creating Father, the Spirit, and the speaker of the spoken Word; acknowledging that He is a plurality, "**Us . . . Our**"; but acting as one, "**His . . . He . . . I.**" He speaks and creates in a unity and harmony of His own nature as one; yet He is three persons in one. This is of course confirmed in the New Testament.**

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, all speak and act as one. It is unthinkable that They move from a majority position, of two against one. They move in "**one mind, and one accord**" always! Notice too that They acted in unity when They made man; They made him according to Their image and likeness, in other words, to operate like Themselves! They made "**man,**" singular, and then said, "**let them rule,**" plurality. This shows us that our rulership is to be from the same position of unanimity as Theirs. It shows us that a man and his wife are to aspire to this principle also, although the man is the head and is responsible for and must make final decisions. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman, but we are all to aspire for unanimity (1 Cor. 11:3). Notice also that after it is written that God said, "**Let Us**", that we find Him creating man, then the woman, and "**Then God said, 'Behold I,'"** indicating to us again that God speaks from unity and to unity as one, and

that all things are **“from Him and through Him and to Him. . . . To Him be the glory forever. Amen”** (Rom. 11:36).

As we have seen God’s creative power manifested in the unity of the Godhead at creation, we see also the power for evil in unity soon thereafter at the building of the tower of Babel, or Babylon. **“And the Lord said, ‘Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them’”** (Gen. 11:6 NAS). So we see that unity is a most powerful condition. Therefore, if we are going to do successful battle against the enemy, we must be in unity with the Lord — and unanimity is the way to get there!

When God gave instructions to the Israelites to build a tabernacle (which is a type of the church, the tabernacle in which God dwells), they were to make a number of different and separate curtains (representing different parts of His church); but they were to **“join the curtains to one another with the [gold] clasps, that the tabernacle may be a unit [one]”** (Ex. 26:6 NAS). We are to be joined together in the gold of His faith, tried in the fires of His workings, **“one body in Christ,”** united together for His purposes! (Rom. 12:5). We are to be “clasped” together by the bonds of His love and peace, the only uniting bonds that will ever hold us together (Col. 3:14; Eph. 4:3).

Moses declared, **“Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might”** (Deut. 6:4-5 NAS). If we hear this word and do it, we shall be one also! And, in fact, if we do not love God with everything within us, we shall not be one and shall not accomplish His purposes in our lives or in the church!

To continue further in revelation from the Old Testament concerning this principle, let us consider what happened under Solomon, the son of David, realizing that we are under Jesus Christ, the greater son of David today. We find that when a number of things had been completed in unity, then God moved mightily. First, when Solomon had finished all of the work for the house of the Lord, he brought all of the dedicated silver and gold and utensils into the treasuries of the house of God. Then he assembled all of the elders of God’s people. There was much sacrifice by the people, and all of the priests present (today that is all of us) restored the ark of the Lord (containing the law of God) to its proper place (our hearts and lives). The priests who had come forth from the holy of

holies (a time of communion with God), together in unity without regard for their different groupings (no sectarianism here), completely sanctified themselves (spirit, soul, and body). Then when the priests (remember that this is all of us) with the anointed musicians and singers lifted up their voices in thanksgiving to praise and to glorify the Lord, and to be heard "**as one . . . with one voice . . . saying, 'He indeed is good for His lovingkindness is everlasting,'** **then the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God**" (II Chr. 5 KJV, NAS). Oh, let us understand and continue to pray for this today!

This unity is accomplished among God's people by God Himself when He cleanses them from all sin, and they remove all the detestable things and abominations from their midst; for God says, "**I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances, and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God**" (Eze. 11:17-20 NAS). Ezekiel also prophesies that God's people will no longer be divided, but be one nation having one king and one shepherd over them; and that God shall dwell in their midst forever, manifesting Himself in the sanctuary by His sanctifying presence! (Eze. 37:15-28).

In the New Testament, the most striking and familiar passage for unity is the high priestly prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was given to us the night He was betrayed, His last night upon the earth before He was crucified for our sins and the sins of the whole world. He had concluded supper for the Passover, and these were His last words before He went out to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. This is a prayer to the Father for us, for all who shall believe in Him: "**that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity [into one], that the world may know that Thou didst send Me**" (Jn. 17:22-23 NAS). Here again, we see that God's desire for us is to be so united in harmony of purpose and will that we are all totally committed to the Father's will and that of the Lord Jesus, that we are one and the same in our judgments and decisions with one another and with God Himself. This means that we are of "**one mind, and one accord.**"

We shall now see how the New Testament church operated.

In the book of Acts, our authentic record of the history of the church, we find a key for this important experience in the first reference. It is written of the eleven apostles that remained after Judas fell: **“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication”** (Acts 1:14 KJV). The NAS translates it, **“These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. And at this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, Brethren, the scripture . . .”** (Acts 1:14-16 NAS).

The phrase **“with one accord”** or **“with one mind”** is a translation of the Greek word *ομοθυμαδον*, *homothumadon*. The prefix *ομο*, *homo*, from *ομοσ*, *homos*, means “same”; and *θυμαδον*, *thumadon*, from *θυμοσ*, *thumos*, means “glow, ardor, passion”; thus *ομοθυμαδον*, *homothumadon*, means a state in which people are brought into **“one mind, and one accord.”** The Latin Vulgate translates the word as “unanimiter” which is brought into our English as “unanimity.” The Bauer, Arndt & Gingrich lexicon defines the word as: “with one mind or purpose or impulse; unanimously.” Also, we can see from the words from which it is derived that it can not be a passive state, but one created through intense desires and effort. That is precisely what we find as we continue to look at this word in the scriptures. Let us notice that this experience was first mentioned as the result of continual meeting for prayer. There were ten times as many people praying together than the eleven apostles, and many of the people were women. We need to remember that out of their **“one mind, and one accord”** came their direction from the scripture (to let the office Judas held, be given to another: Matthias).

The next time *homothumadon* is used they were continuing in prayer: **“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place”**; and then the Holy Spirit was poured out so powerfully and dramatically (Acts 2:1-4 KJV). Although this word *homothumadon* does not appear here in the most accurate manuscripts (but it is *ομου*, *homou*, which means “together”), it is clear that they were still in this state of one mind and in one accord together praying for the Holy Spirit which the Lord Jesus had promised and told them to wait for. Today if we will do the same, we can have a wonderful visitation of the Holy Spirit also.

After the Holy Spirit was poured out, **“they were continually devoting themselves to . . . prayer,”** and thus they were **“day by**

day continuing with **one mind** [*homothumadon*] in the temple," our next reference (Acts 2:42, 46 NAS). The results were astonishing: "they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer [lit. the prayers]. And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number [lit. to the church] day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:42-47 NAS).

The next reference has them praying again. Immediately after the apostles had been threatened and released by the chief priests and the elders, and returned to their own, we read: "**And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord** [*homothumadon*]" (Acts 4:21-24 NAS). We can see from these first three references that the apostles and other disciples were continually praying. This last reference gives us their prayer which was so powerful that God shook the place where they were all gathered together praying. The result was that they were not only filled with the Holy Spirit again, and began to speak the Word of God with boldness, but also "[lit. the multitude] of those who believed were of one heart and soul." Such great grace was upon them that they were sharing whatever they owned and selling their properties and laying it at the apostles' feet. And the apostles were distributing the proceeds and witnessing with such great power it amazes us even today! (Acts 4:25-37 NAS).

It is in this context of such an outpouring of God's grace that greed was revealed in their midst, and the judgment of God brought such fear that it produced the next reference of "**one mind, and one accord**" (Acts 5:1-16). This is very interesting, as it shows us the power of the fear of God in maintaining a true unity in purity. Ananias and Sapphira were judged for their sins of greed, lying, and putting the Spirit of the Lord to the test: by death! I might add, you will see this judgment increasingly as the end of this age comes to a close. Consequently "**great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things. And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among**

the people; and they were all with one accord [*homothumadon*] in Solomon's portico. But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem" (Acts 5:11-13 NAS).

The next occasion for this word which tells us of how the Holy Spirit of God unifies people for His purposes is when Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans. Because of the great release of the true power of God, it brought them into unity, for we read, **"the multitudes with one accord [*homothumadon*] were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was much rejoicing in that city"** (Acts 8:6-8 NAS).

Now, the last occurrence in the book of Acts for "good" is when the apostles and elders met in Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas **"to see about this word"** (lit. from 15:6) concerning whether the Gentile brethren needed to be **"circumcised according to the custom of Moses"** to **"be saved"** (Acts 15:1-6 NAS). We need to look at this portion of scripture very carefully, as many erroneous interpretations have been made concerning it; for it contains very valuable insight as to how these men functioned together under the Holy Spirit's direction and anointing. First the apostles and elders gathered together and debated among themselves the issue at hand (vv. 6-7). Then God chose Peter (an apostle and the one to whom God had first given the **"keys of the kingdom"** to open the door of salvation to the Jews and the Gentiles) to stand up and speak forth his judgment; and all the men were silent under the Holy Spirit's presence (Mt. 16:19; Acts 2; 10; 15:7-12). As the entire church continued in the apostles teaching, they remembered Peter's explanation of how God had first started saving the Gentiles, and had done so under the direction of the Holy Spirit, accompanied with His manifestations of the supernatural (Acts 2:42; 10; 11). They were reminded again through Peter that they are being saved by grace and not by keeping the Law (which no matter how right it was and how hard they tried, no one was ever able to keep, except of course the Lord Jesus), and that God is saving both themselves, as Jews, and the Gentiles by faith through the grace of the Lord Jesus (Acts 15:7-11). During the silence of the presence of the Lord, Barnabas and Paul began relating what signs and wonders God had done through them

among the Gentiles, which confirmed what Peter had said (v. 12). After Barnabas and Paul stopped speaking, James arose under the Holy Spirit's anointing and confirmed with scripture what Peter had said, and then spoke forth his concluding judgment as to what they consequently should do (vv. 12-21). All of the apostles and elders agreed with James' judgment that this was what the Holy Spirit wanted done; and as they shared this with the whole church, the church also agreed that this should be done (v. 22). A letter was written from the apostles and the men who were elders, to the Gentile brethren; in it they explained that they had "**become of one mind** [*homothumadon*]," and that "**it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us**" what should be done (Acts 15:23, 25, 28 NAS).

What we must see from this, dear brethren, is that a serious matter of doctrine was decided only after the leaders had come to "**one mind, and one accord.**" The men who were involved were: first the apostles; and secondly the other elders of the church, the shepherds of the flock (some of whom were prophets and teachers as well) (I Cor. 12:28; Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23, 32; I Pet. 5:1-4; Jam. 3:1). Peter was not the head of this meeting, the Lord Jesus was; and the Lord's presence was known and sensed through the Holy Spirit. James was not the head of this Jerusalem church, nor the president of this council of leaders, Jesus was! Peter and the other ten (James the brother of John had been put to death with the sword), and Barnabas, Paul, and James (the Lord's brother) were all apostles, recognized and respected as such; and they spoke under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The elders understood this (the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ), how He is present in every meeting to direct and manifest Himself by His Spirit, if we will but wait upon Him and give Him and His chosen vessels their proper place.

We must do away with our church traditions that are contrary to God's word, and return to the realization that we are a kingdom with the King present. We are not a democracy or hierarchical structure of Babylonish darkness, but the very kingdom of God and light on this earth! We can have the "**light of life,**" if we will open our eyes and see! But alas, our hardened hearts and selfish ambitions, our rebellious ways and demonic pride — these have blinded our eyes so that we can not see the obvious. We are like God's people of old. "**Give us a king**" that we can see with our natural eyes and hear with our natural ears, a mere man; not the One who is ever present with us, who is discerned by our spiritual eyes and spiritual ears, the very "**Lord of glory, King of kings and**

Lord of lords.” He is the all powerful God who is not only mighty to save, but so desirous of us having His never failing direction, instead of our fumbling failures! Let us repent! Repent now!! What is your decision, brother? Let me remind you, it has eternal consequences, both now and forever!

Now, let us continue on in the epistles to see that God is consistently exhorting us to be of **“one mind, and one accord,”** and that this is not only a most important but a well established principle in His Word.

We read, **“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind [*αυτοσ φρονειν, autos phronein*] with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice [*ινα ομοθυμαδον εν ενι στοματι, hina homothumadon en eni stomati*; lit. in order that with one accord in one mouth you may] glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Rom. 15:4-6 NAS). Notice that God must grant us by His grace to be of the same mind in order that we then will be in one accord and consequently speak with one voice! We will only be of one mind when we relinquish our own and wait upon Him for His!

Paul exhorts the Corinthians also. **“Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree [lit. speak the same thing], and there be no divisions [lit. schisms] among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment”** (I Cor. 1:10 NAS). In the second letter he again exhorts them to **“be of one mind”** (II Cor. 13:11 KJV).

To the Philippians he writes, **“Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind [lit. soul] striving together for the faith of the gospel”** (1:27 NAS). Then when he repeats this a few verses later, Paul reveals to us really how we can attain this condition. **“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded [lit. of the same mind], having the same love, being of one accord [lit. joined in soul], of one mind [lit. minding one thing]. Let nothing be done through strife [*επιθειαν, eritheian*; lit. selfish ambition] or vainglory [lit. self-glory]; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other [lit. one another as] better than [*υπερεχοντασ, huperechontas*; lit. to hold above] themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.**

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped [seized], but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:2-9 KJV & NAS).

The above scripture verses give us not only the goal, the exhortation to be of **“one mind, and one accord,”** but how to attain this in the Lord. To the degree that we humble ourselves, surrendering all of self and becoming a bond-slave with no rights of our own, will we be able to walk regularly in **“one mind, and one accord.”**

Now, we need to consider more carefully this business of majority rule, since it is by far the most common method of church government today. It is of the world, because the world seldom can attain to **“one mind, and one accord,”** except when the situation is obvious. The world operates in the spirit of this world, which is the spirit of the evil one. We have four more occurrences in the book of Acts where the word *homothumadon* is used, and they are all examples of this evil.

The first occurrence is when Stephen was testifying to the unbelieving Jews and telling them they were always resisting the Holy Spirit, for they had now betrayed and murdered the Lord Jesus (Acts 7:51-60). God then gave him a vision of the heavens opening up and the Lord standing at the Father’s right hand. When he told them this, Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit, but they were filled with the spirit of the evil one; for **“Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord [*homothumadon*],”** and stoned him to death (Acts 7:57 KJV).

The second occurrence in Acts of the spirit of this world uniting unbelievers is when Herod **“was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord [*homothumadon*] they came to him”** seeking peace. Shortly afterward at his oratory, they tried to puff him up and gain his favor by declaring he was a god and not a man. An angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and so he was eaten alive with worms and died (Acts 12:20-23; Josephus has an interesting description of

this: Antiquities of the Jews XIX.viii.2). Isn't it remarkable how the people of this world unite in the same spirit when their souls or their lives are at stake, as in these two incidents. But we have two more.

The third occurrence is after Paul had been teaching in Corinth for eighteen months unafraid because the Lord had revealed to him that He had many people in the city. The Jews of the synagogue had resisted the truth of the gospel and the Holy Spirit, so Paul turned away from them to the Gentiles. Then the Jews got so angry about this that they "**with one accord** [*homothumadon*] **rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat**" accusing him of teaching the people to worship God contrary to the law (Acts 18:12 NAS). Gallio, the proconsul of that area, refused to hear the Jews, and drove them away from the judgment seat. Then the people took hold of Sosthenes, the new leader of the Holy Spirit rejecting congregation (the "new" leader, because the one when Paul had come had been won to Christ), and beat him right there before the judgment seat where he and the other Jews had sought punishment for Paul (Acts 18:8-17).

Can you see how the unbelieving can unite in a spirit of antichrist, particularly when envy and selfish ambition reigns in their hearts, so that they turn in a united persecution on the one who is in the true Spirit of Christ? But praise be to our God, judgment is sure, both now and forever. However, let us consider this truth and not let it happen to us, and be unbelieving believers, in persecuting those who are moving in the Holy Spirit in ways we do not understand or believe.

The fourth and last occurrence of this most interesting word in the book of Acts is of a most interesting and significant situation. Paul had been preaching in Ephesus; and a silversmith of idols gathered other craftsmen and workers of his trade, and warned them that their prosperity was in danger because Paul was "**saying that they be [are] no gods which are made with hands**" (Acts 19:26 KJV). They used a religious ploy by charging that Paul was not only turning away many from their (idolatrous) craft, but he would cause the temple of their great Babylonish goddess, Diana, to be regarded as worthless, and be dethroned from her world-wide worship and majesty. This caused Satan to move and fill them with great wrath. "**And the city** [in which, many had come to know the truth] **was filled with the confusion**" (Acts 19:29 NAS). This word means literally "a pouring together, a commingling," hence its translation as "confusion" or "confounding." Truth and

error, the Spirit of God and the spirit of greed, had collided head on. The uproar was so great that the majority did not even know why they had all come together. It was in this state of shouting and incitement against Paul, full of rage and confusion, that **“they rushed with one accord [homothumadon] into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia”** (Acts 19:29 NAS).

God marvelously preserved His servants in this exciting story. What we want to understand here is that two of the greatest bondages that men have, religious traditions and the love of money, can enable Satan to so excite a mob that they will be totally united **“in one mind, and one accord”** against the truth of God’s Word. We have seen this in the four scriptural incidents given, two with antichrist Jews and two with Gentiles (one was a morally corrupt people and the other a totally Babylonish religious mob). And unfortunately this can happen in a church today that is not a true church. However, even in Babylonish Christianity, God is faithful to raise up voices of protest against error, provided this mixture of truth and error still has some who are indwelt with the Holy Spirit. But unless people humble themselves and look to their Lord and King (being sensitive to the indwelling Holy Spirit who alone can quicken us in the Spirit of truth to know His will in any matter that comes before us) the majority of Christians can and often will be in the wrong. That is why we need to wait upon the Lord until we all come into **“one mind, and one accord.”**

To confirm this, let us look at the two very well known examples in scripture where the people of God acted on a majority vote instead of waiting for unanimity — and the consequences were so disastrous!

First was when Moses was told by God to send out a leader from each of the tribes of Israel to spy out the land of Canaan which He was going to give the sons of Israel (Num. 13 & 14). We remember the story, how they listened to the ten who gave an evil report rather than to the two who gave a good report. Not only was the majority wrong, it brought disastrous results. It immediately cost the ten their lives as God killed them with a plague; and then the whole congregation of God who listened to their wicked words and rebelled against the Lord were doomed to wander in the wilderness forty years (a year for every day the leaders they had listened to had spied out the land) until their carcasses would be wasted in the wilderness. What a shame!

This is a major incident in the history of God’s people, so let

us look at aspects of it more closely. The leaders were fearful because they judged an immediate challenge with their eyes rather than remember the greatness of God and what He had done for them in bringing them out of Egypt. The years of servitude under the Egyptians had more influence than the more recent grand and marvelous victory God had given over Pharaoh and his army. They were terrified of the giants in the land, and disregarded the fact that it would be God who could and would give them victory, not themselves.

We must have no confidence in the flesh, only in our great God! We must not listen to Satan and yield to his spirits of fear, unbelief, and rebellion. The majority of the leaders gave out an “**evil report**” by saying that they were not able to go up against the people of the land for they were too strong for them; the people were of such great size, giants! And consequently, because of a wrong spirit, they saw themselves as grasshoppers compared to their enemies; and they believed their enemies saw themselves that way also, which later would be found as a lie of the devil (Num. 13:31-33). It was afterward when Israel was to enter the land, God would put a spirit of fear upon their enemies so that their hearts would melt and be fearful of the Israelites and fearful of God for what He had done to Israel’s enemies (Josh. 2:9-11). The issue is not our abilities but God’s! The result of Israel’s bad leadership ministering fear and unbelief to the people was that the people cried, gathered together against God, and turned upon their God appointed leadership. They murmured, complained, and wished they were either back in Egypt or dead. They rebelled and planned to appoint new leadership which would lead them according to their unbelief. When Joshua and Caleb, the minority leaders, tried to encourage the people and exhort them not to rebel nor fear, the people all agreed to stone them to death. But God intervened with His glorious presence and now “reports” on them! The people were spurning (rejecting with contempt) and not believing in Him; they had put Him to the test and not listened to His voice, in spite of seeing His signs and His glory which He had performed in Egypt. Because Moses interceded for them, God forgave them according to His mercy, but judged them according to His righteousness. They had rejected the land of promise, so they would never enter into it. They accused God of hating them, because they said their wives and children would become a prey, so their own corpses would fall in the wilderness. Because of their spiritual fornication, their children would have to suffer during God’s long judgment; but

their children would be the ones to eventually enter and possess the promised land. What a tragedy! The whole nation had to wander for forty years! And, except for the two faithful leaders and the innocent children, they had to die in a wilderness without ever seeing or receiving their God promised inheritance.

We can see from this story the importance of godly leadership, so let us look more carefully at theirs. First was Joshua, who from his youth was a close attendant to Moses, and faithfully followed his words and ways (Num. 11:28). Important! The other was Caleb, whom God called “**My servant**,” and said that he had a “**different spirit**” and “**has followed Me fully**.” This expression, “**followed me fully**,” is used seven times concerning this incident. Once it is stated that the people did not follow the Lord fully, once that Joshua and Caleb had, and five times that Caleb had (therefore, he would see and enter the promised land and gain his inheritance). Forty-five years later after entering the promised land, he won the mountain of the giants and the city of Hebron (then called Kiriath-arba, meaning “the city of Arba”; Arba being the greatest giant of all (Num. 14:24; 32:11-12; Deut. 1:36; Josh. 14:8-15).

And this is the critical issue, will we “**follow the Lord fully**” or only part way? It is obvious from the fact that God has repeated this seven perfect times that He considers this factor of utmost importance! Do we? I believe that only eternity will tell how this effects our ministries now and our eternal destiny and rewards later. “Babylon” nurtures half-hearted responses and deceives the vast majority into choosing lukewarm commitments! In fact, the theology of “Babylon” is one of comforting the lukewarm and tickling their ears; it is a “Theology of the Lukewarm!”

Now, let us learn some more lessons from the meaning of the names of the twelve spies.

First, Joshua, the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, means “Jehovah is salvation”; thus first and foremost we must follow our Savior if we are ever to enter our promised land. Moses changed his name from Hoshea meaning “Salvation” to Joshua meaning “Jehovah is salvation”; thus we must forever realize our Savior is God and God is our Savior and not any man. He was the son of Nun, which means fish; and this gives us a double witness as the word fish in Greek, *ΙΧΘΥΣ*, *ICHTHUS*, has an acrostic which the early Christians used which meant:

Ιησουσ Χριστος Θεος Υιος Σωτηρ,
Iesus Christos Theos Huios Soter,
Jesus Christ God's Son our Savior.

The leaders we follow must also be men who follow the Savior wherever He leads, and not the traditions of men. His Word, as given to us by His holy apostles and prophets, both from the scriptures and from others past and present, must be our guide as we and our leaders follow under Christ's headship. He is our military Commander-in-chief and we must make a commitment to "**follow the Lord fully.**" We can not stress this enough. Ephraim means "fruitful"; and when we are truly led by our Savior, we will always be fruitful in whatever we do.

Second is Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, of the tribe of Judah. The meaning of Caleb is uncertain, but it is believed to mean either "dog" or "bold." Either way, we must have that faithful characteristic of a dog's loving service and commitment to his master until death, which Caleb certainly had; as well as faith in God, and boldness to take on the biggest giants of them all, praise the Lord! He was the son of Jephunneh meaning "it will be prepared," and his father had undoubtedly prepared him well. He was of the tribe of Judah, which means "praise"; and we must always go forth with praise to our God. We saw this shortly after they entered the promised land and shouted the victory as the walls of Jericho, which means "fragrant," came tumbling down miraculously. What a sweet smelling fragrance to our God when we are prepared and go forth faithfully and boldly in praise, following our Savior fully to reap a fruitful harvest.

Now for the ten rebellious spies and what we must not be if we are to enter into our promised land now.

The first is Shammua the son of Zaccur from the tribe of Reuben. Shammua means "one that is heard," "heard-about," or "renowned" or "fame." And certainly this spy was being heard, busy talking, instead of listening. He was talking unbelief, fear, and rebellion rather than listening to what God had said, was saying, or was about to do. He missed it forever! And how many leaders miss God for the same reason. Just look and observe how many are busy talking, preaching and teaching, and doing so little listening to God — doing so little hiding away in their prayer closet to listen for the only One who can lead into victory and fruitfulness. And then it can mean one who loves to be heard and be famous. What shame is being brought upon the body of Christ by those with such selfish ambition and pride. But God will shake everything and everyone, and only those who are building upon the unshakable rock of Christ's words and His kingdom will see it through these last days (Mt. 7:15-27; Heb. 12:25-29). This talker

was the son of Zaccur meaning “thoughtful,” and “mindful,” which makes me laugh. How he wishes he had been more thoughtful of what he said and of God’s instruction and power, than of his observations and the conclusions of his own mind in the promised land. He was from the tribe of Reuben, which means “behold a son.” Here again we need to hear what God is saying; and that is to “behold The Son,” our Lord, Savior, Head, and our Commander-in-chief who always causes us to triumph in Himself. Too many are beholding “their son” and what they have produced and not what God has produced.

The second wicked spy is Shaphat the son of Hori from the tribe of Simeon. Shaphat means “he hath judged,” and God certainly did. Because of his leading the people of God in rebellion, he was judged unworthy to even live. He was the son of Hori, which means “cave-dweller”; and how many men have been brought into ministry, birthed by men who when they see trouble, go find a hole to hide in. And some are so fearful they even learn to live there. We must be bold and believe God; we must be as Caleb who said, “**Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it**” (Num. 13:30 KJV). Simeon means “heard”; and we repeat, we must listen to what we have heard God say to us, and do what he has told us to do, and not listen to our own fears and circumstances. They had mightily been delivered from Egypt by following what God had said through their leader Moses, in spite of what looked like an impossible situation at the Red Sea with Pharaoh’s army storming down upon them; but God had spoken, and so delivered them according to His word. They now rebelled against His word spoken through Moses, took a majority vote, because they would not be persuaded to follow God’s way, and perished! Shaphat! “He hath judged!”

Next is Igal the son of Joseph from the tribe of Issachar. Igal means “He Redeems”; and we are reminded of what happens when we get our eyes off our Redeemer and upon the enemy, we fail. His father’s name, Joseph means “may he add, or increase”; and how we need to be reminded that our heavenly father wants to add to us so that we increase, but He will not when we are disobedient and unbelieving. Issachar means “he will bring a reward” or “there is recompense”; and here we need to be reminded again from “our fathers” that there is recompense with God — success and blessing for obedient faith, and judgment and death for unbelief and disobedience.

Next is Palti the son of Raphu from the tribe of Benjamin.

Palti means “deliverance,” and is an abbreviation of Paltiel meaning “deliverance of God.” How God is trying to drive home the point that there is no deliverance without Him, that we must not leave Him out of the picture, that there is no abbreviated way for victory, that we must keep our eyes on Him and follow Him completely!

We could continue making application from the meaning of names but since this is not the emphasis of this teaching, we will give you the meanings and leave the rest to you. Raphu means “healed” and Benjamin means “son of the right hand.”

Next is Gaddiel the son of Sodi from the tribe of Zebulun. Gaddiel means “God is my fortune,” Sodi means “intimate,” and Zebulun means “habitation.”

Next is Gaddi the son of Susi from the tribes of Joseph and Manasseh. Gaddi means “my fortune,” Susi means “a horseman,” Joseph means “may he add, or increase,” and Manasseh means “forgetting.”

Next is Ammiel the son of Gemalli from the tribe of Dan. Ammiel means “my kinsman is God,” Gemalli means “abundance,” and Dan means “judge.”

Next is Sethur the son of Michael from the tribe of Asher. Sethur means “hidden,” Michael means “who is like God?” and Asher means “happy.”

Next is Nahbi the son of Vophsi from the tribe of Naphtali. Nahbi means “concealed,” Vophsi means “additional,” and Naphtali means “my wrestling.”

Next is Geuel the son of Machi from the tribe of Gad. Geuel means “majesty of El (God),” and Machi possibly means “pining” or “bought,” and Gad means “fortune.”

Now that we have seen the meaning of the names of the spies and some application, let us look briefly at the meaning of the names of the men God chose Himself to represent the tribes of Israel as they entered to possess the promised land. The first twelve the people had asked for, and Moses appointed them from the leaders the people had chosen (Deut. 1:13-15; 22-24; Num. 13:1-16); but now after forty years the Lord chose them. When the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and part of the half tribe of Manasseh decided to stay on the east side of the Jordan for their inheritance, God chose a priest, plus a leader over all, and a leader for each of the remaining nine and a half tribes Himself (Num. 34:13-29). Moses, which means “drawn out” because he was drawn out of the water, represents one of us as we are drawn out and born of the waters of baptism. As one of us, Moses’ choices were the best that a human being

could make because he was the meekest man upon the face of the whole earth, referring to his humble, submissive obedience. But his choices could not be compared with the choices that God made. This is now to be done by Jesus, who is not subject to the limitations of human frailty, but is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent; who will always cause us to triumph! What a lesson to learn!

The first man God chose is Eleazar the priest. Eleazar means "God has helped"; and in those days the priests were the ones who inquired of the Lord for His Word and direction. When we function properly with the priests of God, the special prayer warriors interceding before and during the battles of the Lord, God will help us on to victory every time in battling for our promised land.

God's next choice is Joshua the son of Nun, "Jehovah our Savior," whom Moses chose as representative leader of the tribe of Ephraim, but God chose as the commander-in-chief of the whole nation of Israel (Num. 27:15-23). Eleazar as high priest, Joshua as the leader of the nation, and Moses as lawgiver stand in representation of Jesus who is now our High Priest, Commander-in-chief, and King. The Lord spoke to Moses saying that Eleazar and Joshua shall apportion the promised land to each tribe for inheritance; now, Jesus Christ is our High Priest and Commander-in-chief giving gifts as promised unto men. The Lord also said to Moses to "**take one leader of every tribe to apportion the [promised] land for inheritance**" to that tribe (Num. 34:17-18 NAS). From this we may be able to see a picture of the grace of God flowing from Christ, to leaders chosen of God, and then to the people.

Then the first leader chosen by God of the twelve tribes was again Caleb, of the tribe of Judah, the son of Jephunneh. After forty years, he was doubly "prepared," and his "faithfulness" and "boldness" in following the Lord fully was fully rewarded.

Then God chose a leader for the tribe of Simeon, Samuel the son of Ammihud. Samuel means "name of God"; and this is the only name we can go forward in, to obtain victory. So many try to go in their own name or one they have made up, and end up defeated. Ammihud is from "Ammi" meaning "my people" or "kinsman," plus "glory" or "majesty" or "praiseworthiness." Compounded it tells us that we must be a people that are praiseworthy if we want to enter our "promised land." Individually we must be born of a people that are praiseworthy. That is, we must be a part of a church fellowship of trusted, faithful saints that are upholding us in prayer, if we are to go forward in victory. And we are to do all, from and to the glory of God.

For the tribe of Benjamin, God chose Elidad the son of Chislon as leader. Elidad means "God has loved," and Chislon means "hope." Jesus tells us that those who have God's commandments and keep them are the ones He loves and will manifest Himself to in victory — and these certainly are the only ones born of hope. Hallelujah!

And for the tribe of Dan, God chose a leader, Bukki the son of Jogli. Bukki means possibly "tested," and Jogli means "led captive" or "exiled." We must be reminded that only those who have been tested and proven faithful will enter the promised land, others will be led captive to Babylon.

God chose a leader for the tribe of Manasseh, Hannel the son of Ephod. Hannel means "favor or grace of God"; and Ephod means "a covering," and it was the name of the holy garment that the priests wore. Without question we need the grace of God, the unmerited favor of our God. There is no victory except by the grace of God! And as we grow in grace we will come to realize that we must be covered. As priests of God, we must worship before Him **"in holy attire"**; we must be dressed in a holy manner according to His word (I Chr. 16:29; Psa. 96:9; 110:3). God has clothed Himself in **"splendor and majesty,"** and He covers Himself **"with light as with a cloak"** (Psa. 104:1-2). He has promised that **"His glory shall be seen upon thee [us]"** as we take Him seriously and clothe ourselves in both positional and practical righteousness and holiness (Isa. 60:1-2 KJV).

God chose a leader for the tribe of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shiphthan. Kemuel means "assembly of God," and Shiphthan means "judging." Here we have a very significant revelation, because if we are to go forward in victory, we must go forward as a true assembly of God which is born of judgment. This is a big lack in the church today. Leadership for the most part does not teach the necessity of judging ourselves so as to be pure, holy vessels; and it does not judge sin in the congregation so as to keep it pure and holy. We must judge sin, and (when not repented of) purge out the old leaven, and have no fellowship with the works of darkness. We must remove those from the assembly of God who are living in gross sins, or we will be defeated as a people! (Josh. 7, I Cor. 5 & 6).

God chose a leader for the tribe of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach. Elizaphan means "God has concealed," and the meaning of Parnach is uncertain to many scholars, but one I discovered believes it means "very nimble." God has concealed

many things from us, and that is why we must not only seek His face earnestly and persistently, but we must continue until we come to **“one mind, and one accord.”** Often our timing for some action is not yet right, and by withholding unanimity He stops us from proceeding before He is ready. How many wrong decisions have been hastily made by majority vote, only to be found out later that if they had only waited a little longer — God had wonderful results for them. God has concealed even the meaning of Elizaphan’s father’s name to some to underscore the importance of this most valuable principle of God’s methods for success under His headship! However, to those who are nimble, quick in apprehension, His will and wisdom will be revealed.

God chose a leader for the tribe of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan. Paltiel means “deliverance of God,” and Azzan means “strong.” Here we have the revelation that we will have our deliverance of God, and that it will be born out of His strength. Formerly, the unbelieving spy’s name was “Palti” meaning simply “deliverance,” as his eyes were not on the Lord; and his father’s name was Raphu, meaning “healed,” which tells us we need to be healed from this untrusting attitude which always leads to disaster.

God chose a leader for the tribe of Asher, Ahihud the son of Shelomi. Ahihud means “brother of renown or majesty,” and Shelomi means “peaceful.” It is absolutely necessary that we see first, Jesus, our brother of glorious majesty and renown; and then that we see also all of our brothers and sisters in Christ as children of the Most High God, fellow heirs of the grace of life and the majestic future Our Majesty has for us all. This will be born out of our striving, not with one another, but to be “peaceful” with one another. This is a result of finding our contentment, our happiness, in Him and Him alone; which is why God chose this faithful one from the tribe of Asher, meaning “happy.”

God chose a leader for the tribe of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud. Pedahel means “God saves,” and Ammihud as before means “my people of glory” or “majesty” or “praiseworthiness.” As these faithful leaders will be led by Joshua, meaning “Jehovah our Savior,” so also the last man is emphasizing to us this essential truth, that “God saves.” We do not need to fear our enemies no matter how big and strong they appear to be. Jesus saves! God saves! This truth is birthed in our hearts and becomes a steadfast practical truth when we are part of a “praiseworthy, glorious, majestic people.” This is the second father to be named Ammihud, and thus we close this explanation of names by re-emphasizing

the absolute necessity of being knit together in love with a people worthy of God's praises; for He instructs us not to forsake assembling ourselves together as the habit of those who will be defeated, but to assemble in order to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, and to encourage one another all the more as we see the end of this age drawing near (Heb. 10:24-25).

Having examined the meaning of the names of the ten rebellious leaders (who "**restrained the hearts**" of an "**entire generation**" of God's people so that they all did "**evil in the sight of the Lord,**" and thus were "**destroyed**"), and the meaning of the names of the faithful leaders who forty years later successfully led their children into the promised land, we see the extreme importance of listening to God and following Him fully, and not operating by a majority vote to determine the mind and will of God! (Num. 32:7-13).

Now, let us look at the second major time that the children of Israel rebelled against God and demanded the will of the majority. Instead of listening to His voice through His chosen vessel and following Him fully, they followed the vast majority and the entire nation suffered for centuries.

Israel at the time had been ruled for approximately four hundred years by God through judges. It was the time when Samuel, the prophet of God, was coming to the end of his life, and he appointed his sons to help in judging Israel. However, they did not walk in his ways. They perverted justice by taking bribes, and the elders of Israel came to Samuel to solve the problem. However, instead of coming to him to inquire of God as to what to do, they came with their minds made up: they had their own solution. They asked that Samuel would give them a king to rule over them like all the other nations. Now these were heathen, ungodly nations that they wanted to imitate; and it displeased Samuel very much, so he sought God. God told him what I believe is one of the most tragic testimonies in all of the Word of God. God said that the people had not rejected Samuel, but they had actually rejected Him! They had rejected God as their king, and were asking instead that a mere man be appointed king to rule over them like all of the other nations (which of course did not have God as their king). Can you imagine anything so foolhardy? So stupid?

Yet we are doing it today in the church by the millions. We are refusing to allow our wonderful Lord Jesus Christ to rule us and act as our head; instead we are appointing fallible, feeble men

to act as our head in His place. We do this by rejecting the principle of unanimity, **“one mind, and one accord”**; and we have chosen to follow the world’s system of democratic vote to determine the will of God! How tragic! How stupid! How ignorant we are of God’s ways and desires to bless us with Christ Jesus as our head and King. Most congregations miss God in this because they have never been taught the way of God; and having not sought Him in this, they just follow the multitudes that are following each other instead of following the Lord. We are not to follow the multitude in doing evil (Ex. 23:2) — and that is what God calls this. He called it evil when the ten spies refused to follow His word and encouraged the nation to follow the majority report. He called it evil for the nation to do so. He calls it evil today!

What is significant here is several things. The people were rejecting God as their King. For us this means Christ as Lord and Head, King of kings and Lord of lords. He is head of His body, which is the church, and no man must ever take or presume this place. But it is being done constantly. Secondly, they rejected God’s rulership over them because they wanted to be like the world. Thirdly, all the people of God were wrong except one man of God! All of the leaders had persuaded all of the people, and this amounted to millions of people; but one man had the mind and heart of God, Samuel! This was not just a simple majority, this was all against one; the one just so happened to be standing with God Almighty. God told Samuel to warn them of what the king they would get would do, and it came to pass.

And what happens to us today? We are oppressed as a people! in church and out. We are as salt without saltiness, as far as our society is concerned. We see God’s laws being removed from the books, schools, and government because it has been removed from “The Church.” Leadership will not come together to pray and seek the mind of God for their nation, cities, congregations, individuals, or even themselves, for the most part. We are too busy building our own little kingdoms, or else, just too self-indulgent to pray and fast for God’s help. “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,” Jesus told His chosen apostles; and the same is true with us all today! Therefore we must gather and pray as He said. If we continue to refuse and rebel, only God knows what He will do. Let us cry out for mercy and grace to help us in this desperate time of need!

Another significant thing that the Lord told Samuel was that the people had forsaken Him and were serving other gods. We are

servicing the gods of materialism, mammon, ease and luxury, sex, and every conceivable idol there is; and we are in Babylonish bondage. We are servicing the gods of Babylon, and following the Babylonish ways of life! Instead of the Almighty God, it is the almighty dollar! We hoard it, pull down our “barns” to build bigger, and use the money from the purse as if it was our own, like Judas. Oh, we need God! The kings we have set up, use us, just like those prophesied by Samuel, by taking the tithe that is both Holy and the Lord’s, for their own kingdoms! We either set up a king over us, or rule by majority; but we do not allow Christ, who is our head, to rule over us. But He does; and so we reap the sad consequences, both for the present and at the judgment seat of Christ someday — if we make it there! **“Many that are first shall be last,”** and that is for changing only the least of His commandments and so teaching others; thus many shall be left out completely!

The whole history of Israel after this event, the history of human kings ruling God’s people, is a reminder of the consequences of rejecting the Lordship and headship of Jesus Christ. The church fathers not only persecuted the prophets, but they killed those who preached about the coming of Jesus (Acts 7:52). One king tried to kill the baby Jesus Himself, and the leaders finally did succeed in killing Him! But our God reigns, and turned it into a blessing for the world; but what of those who were guilty?

Today, I have been witness to many groups, congregations, and men who have rejected the headship of Jesus Christ by rejecting unanimity, **“one mind, and one accord”**; and I have seen the tragic results. Also, because God calls us to unity in His word, we must realize that there is a unity which we can accomplish our way, but then there is a unity which God accomplishes His way, and they are quite different.

When I first came to Columbus, I was invited to speak in the largest church moving in the flow of the Holy Spirit. The Lord told me to give the message on “Unanimity,” which I did. No one said anything to me, but the leadership failed to heed the Word. Within just a few years, the congregation was torn apart by strife and selfish ambition, and the people scattered; it is now a showcase for the glory that once was. If they had listened to God’s Word, man could not have had his way and destroyed the beautiful work that God was doing. Sin became rampant and the House of God became a house of wickedness. King “Saul” ruled, and the Lord moved on.

Another experience was when a congregation I was very familiar with ceased to operate by unanimity when serious differences arose. Instead of calling on an apostle to settle differences, they called on carnal leadership for advice; and the congregation was totally destroyed.

I have seen God raise men up in ministry and instruct them in plurality of leadership; only to see them go, when difficulty arose, for advice from a leader in "one-man-ministry" (such as "the pastor is head" type) rather than to their God appointed oversight. Consequently, when they chose to practice a "one-man-ministry," God judged; and after removing most of the people and they still did not repent, He removed them from that ministry. God will tolerate a "one-man-ministry" for a time when that is all the people know and have been taught, but when a congregation begins with enlightenment and true apostolic teaching and leadership, He will not allow rebellion to go on forever. He will come and remove the candlestick out of its place!

I have seen many small home groups raised up and flourishing, until some man or men rise up against the leadership that God has ordained, and then the ministry dissolves. It literally dries up and is quietly disbanded.

I was asked to be a part of an organization which operated (among the trustees) on the principle of this teaching from the very beginning, and it was very successful. But when the chosen leader rebelled and afterward rejected the "Headship of Christ," everyone resigned but him. He then chose new leaders that had money and worldly position, like organizations that he had been in before, and began operating by the world's democratic method like them. But of course God judged him and he failed, and a very important ministry failed with him. What is tragic is that it had been originally operating with apostles and prophets and elders who fasted and prayed weekly; and this was exchanged for "the way other church organizations do it," with "monied" and "distinguished" people voting on the will of God by majority vote. It went from continual success, until rebellion came in, to the inevitable win and loss record like Israel of old, and then destruction. When Israel followed their prophets they never failed! When they sinned and rebelled, they were in and out of bondages continually; and when they did not repent, the nation was destroyed. What a shame that the church is not mature enough to practice and teach the truth, and prevent such sad circumstances.

It needs to be added that when sin enters in and repentance

is refused, a ministry of faith will find the chastening hand of the Lord quickly, usually on its finances. Then if leadership repents, God restores; but if not, the ministry will either be dissolved, destroyed, or changed drastically until it learns the ways of the Lord. Often when money dries up, men go to carnal methods of fund raising rather than to repent of the sin causing the financial drought and trust God again for His sufficiency. And thus we have so many carnal organizations, ministries, congregations, and so forth, that never will amount to much in the kingdom of God because they do not operate by kingdom principles! The sad thing is that most of the church is so carnal they do not know the difference between the ways of the flesh and the ways of the Spirit. Like Corinth of old, we reject humble apostles (like Paul, who gave everything, and never received from them any financial support whatsoever) and readily accept false ones; and the scripture is fulfilled again which was given to them, **“For you bear with anyone if he enslaves you, if he devours you, if he takes advantage of you, if he exalts himself, if he hits you in the face”** (II Cor. 11:20 NAS). How tragic, but our God reigns!

I have seen other kinds of ministries built by God; and then when important decisions have to be made, agreement is thrown out the window, as the self-willed push their agenda. God has to bring the whole thing then or eventually to a halt. As this was being written, a Christian school was dissolved because of this very thing. We often do not see the hand of God because of the way or the time frame that He works in. When unanimity is rejected and some man or men insist on having their own way, God sometimes (in fact often) lets us have our way; but we will not like the result in the long run.

I remember one beautiful house fellowship God raised up, and when the carnal stepped in and spoke up, the leader was pushed to give them a building according to their traditions and desires. As the revelation of the Lord and His Word were being rejected, the leader was given the word, **“And He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul”** (Psa. 106:15 KJV). God did just that, but it took several years of struggle and leanness in their building before that ministry was dissolved and brought to naught. Oh, what lessons we have to learn the hard way!

In fact, one long-time ministry, because of rejecting unanimity, was brought to an end the very week I received another copy of brother G. H. Lang’s book, *The Churches of God*, containing chapter XI on “Unanimity.” [Since I had lost track of my first copy

many years before, and it had gone out of print, I had been praying for years for another copy. I also continued to pray for a re-printing. While writing this teaching I not only found that the Lord had answered by raising up another to re-print the book, but also to reprint brother Lang's original booklet, *Unanimity: The Divine Method Of Church Government*, which I urge you strongly to read and consider.]

We could continue with many testimonies, as I am sure you possibly could, of how people have rejected this apostolic practice and reaped the sad consequences. Therefore, let us consider a little more of the practical consequences of doing so.

When we operate by the principle of “**one mind, and one accord**” or “unanimity,” we are practicing the headship of Jesus Christ as head of His church. We will all be naturally looking to Him for guidance, and His will in everything. However, when we use the principle of the world and fallen man of majority rule (because they do not have the Spirit of God within to bring them into godly unity) we will be constantly tempted to walk in the flesh in order to have a majority that will agree with us, as we will be aware that it is a majority of us who will decide what is the Lord's will rather than being sensitive to the necessity of everyone coming into the knowledge of His will together. There will be temptations to persuade each other by carnal means; pressures will be brought by some in order to get their way because that will work on the majority of people. But it will not work on the spiritual, and those are the ones who most often naturally have the mind of the Lord in the first place. It should not be too difficult to see that the majority of God's people are carnal, and not spiritual! Paul called all of the Corinthians carnal, and yet they had every gift and every calling available from God! Carnal methods stimulate carnality; spiritual methods stimulate spirituality!

When we look at the works of the flesh as given to us in Galatians Five, we find that right after the soul damning sins of immorality and spiritual wickedness, and right before murders, drunkenness, and such like, we have a list of sins that are not as often thought of or taken as seriously as these others. But right here in the very midst of these damning works of the flesh we find a list that is most significant to our study as they are encouraged by the carnal methods of majority voting which so much of the church has followed the world in practicing.

Let us quote the passage and then study these various

activities that destroy men's souls and carnally organized ministries of the church.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal. 5:19-21 KJV)

First we have the sin of **“hatred”** (KJV), **“enmities”** (NAS), which is from the plural form of the Greek word *εχθρα*, *echthra*, which is defined as “discord, feud, a principle or state of enmity” (The Analytical Greek Lexicon, AGL); and the state of one who is “hostile, hating and opposing another” (Thayer’s *Greek English Lexicon*). The dictionary defines “hate” as: “to dislike greatly, to have a great aversion to” (Webster’s 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*) and “to regard with a strong or passionate dislike” (*American College Dictionary*, ACD). (As we go through these sins and come to understand them more clearly, we might need to stop and do some repenting ourselves!)

The next sin is **“variance”** (KJV), **“strife”** (NAS), from the plural of the Greek word *ερισ*, *eris*, which means “contention, strife, wrangling” (Thayer’s) and “discord” (Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich Lexicon, BAG), and the verb form means “to quarrel, to wrangle, to use the harsh tone of a wrangler or brawler” (AGL). The dictionary defines “variance” as “difference that produces dispute or controversy; disagreement; dissension; discord” (Webster’s 1828).

Next we have **“emulations”** (KJV), **“jealousy”** (NAS), from the plural of *ζηλος*, *zelos*, which means “jealousy, envy, malice” (AGL) and “an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy” (Thayer’s). Webster gives us a very interesting and significant definition of the word “emulation” in regards to majority voting, and it can be especially noticed in voting for the leadership of a board of trustees, elders, or deacons, as it is defined as: “The act of attempting to equal or excel in qualities or actions; rivalry; desire of superiority, attended with effort to attain to it” and “a striving to equal or do more than others to obtain carnal favors or honors. Gal. v”; also, “contest; contention; strife; competition; rivalry

accompanied with a desire of depressing another" (Webster's 1828). Boy, does this ever picture politics, and in the church it is so grievous and tragic!

The next work of the flesh is "**wrath**" (KJV), "**outbursts of anger**" (NAS), from the Greek word *θυμοι*, *thumoi*, which means "impulses and outbursts of anger"; the singular form is *thumos* which means "passion, angry heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again" (Thayer's).

Next we have a sin that is very important to recognize and reject as it is so common and destructive, and was evident at the tower of Babel. It is *εριθεια*, *eritheia*, translated "**strife**" (KJV), and "**disputes**" (NAS), but is more properly translated "**selfish ambition**" elsewhere in the NAS (Rom. 2:8; Phil. 1:17, 2:3; Jam. 3:14, 16). One of the Thayer's lexicon definitions of this word is: "used of those who electioneer for office, courting popular applause by trickery and low arts; the verb is derived from *επιθοσ*, *erithos*: working for hire, a hireling." Thayer also defines it as, "a courting distinction, a desire to put one's self forward, a partisan and factious spirit which does not disdain low arts; partisanship, factiousness." The BAG lexicon adds "disputes or outbreaks of selfishness." Bullinger says in his lexicon, "labour for wages, canvassing, intriguing, party-spirit, faction," and "work for gain, any work for ambitious purposes." Now if this does not picture for us politics today and forever! And that is what we have introduced into the church when we have decided to operate by majority vote, a political process. Consequently we will not only arouse the carnal nature, but provide for Satan an opportunity to use all kinds of unrighteous methods and manifest all types of evil spirits.

The next work of the flesh is *διχοστασιαι*, *dichostasiai*, "**seditions**" (KJV), "**dissensions**" (NAS), and the singular form is defined as "dissension, division," from the word *διχοστατεω*, *dichostateo*, "to stand apart" (Thayer's); and we have introduced this also by majority vote. We have not only produced a division by voting, the enemy moves to stir up the carnal nature and all of his hellish activity comes forth. Anyone with any experience can tell of situations they have been involved in or know about where deep divisions occurred between men who otherwise would have been, and previously were, standing together. The root words from which we get this word is *διχαζω*, *dichazo*, meaning "to cleave, to cut asunder"; and *στασια*, *stasia*, meaning "standing, station, state"; and so we create the state where men have been cleaved into two or even more factions, where men "stand apart," and unfortunately

may never come back together.

Next we have the plural of the word *αἵρεσις*, *hairesis*, which is translated “**heresies**” (KJV), and “**factions**” (NAS), and literally means “choosing, a choice, that which is chosen, a chosen course of thought and action; hence one’s chosen opinion, tenet; according to the context, an opinion varying from the true exposition of the Christian faith (heresy) [II Pet. 2:1]”; and it can also mean “a body of men separating themselves from others and following their own tenets — a sect or party [Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5, 14; 26:5; 28:22; I Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20; a heretic, Tit. 3:10]” (Thayer’s). In actual practice, any one or group that teaches something unacceptable to others is sometimes called a heretic by those others, even though the teaching is not false (Acts 24:5, 14; 28:22). It is not difficult to see that heresies, factions, are just what is promoted by majority voting because instead of men seeing themselves as one group seeking the mind of the Lord together, they will divide into factions seeking to get the most votes for their positions. And when this sinful attitude gets a real hold on men, it is amazing how they will create little parties, and deceive, and very cleverly manipulate people and such things as “Robert’s Rules of Order” to get their own chosen positions passed. It is simply deplorable and disgusting, very grievous indeed! And since we live in a democracy where politics is such a way of life, men do the most dishonorable things thinking it is honorable, because after all, they have “the mind of the Lord” on matters, not the other “parties.” But Jesus said, “**that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God**” (Lu. 16:15 KJV); and Paul wrote in this regard, “**they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God**” (Gal. 5:21 KJV). Truly this is one of those “**evil works**” that James wrote about where their is “**envy**” and “**selfish ambition**” (Jam. 3:16 KJV/NAS).

And this brings us to the last work of the flesh in this series, “**envyings**” (KJV) from the Greek word *φθονοί*, *phthonoi*, which the NAS translates “**envying**” in the singular, and means “envy, jealousy, spite” (AGL), “ill-will”; and is “probably akin to the base of” the word *φθίω*, *phthio*, which means “to pine, waste, shrivel, wither, spoil, ruin” and morally “to deprave, corrupt, defile, [and] destroy” (Strong’s *Greek Dictionary of the New Testament*). Webster defines the verb “envy” as: “to feel uneasiness, mortification or discontent, at the sight of superior excellence, reputation or happiness enjoyed by another; to repine at another’s prosperity; to fret or grieve one’s self at the real or supposed superiority of another and to hate [greatly dislike] him on that account.” The

noun “envy” reveals in addition that it is “accompanied with some degree of hatred or malignity, and often or usually with a desire or an effort to depreciate the person, and with pleasure in seeing him depressed [also: made powerless, having no authority in a matter, voted down or out]. Envy springs from pride, ambition or love, mortified that another has obtained what one has a strong desire to possess. Emulation differs from envy, in not being accompanied with hatred and a desire to depress a more fortunate person” (Webster’s 1828). He gives an older definition of envy as: “rivalry, competition.” This was one of the sins of the religious leaders who opposed Jesus (Mt. 27:18; Mk. 15:10), and also a sin that even preachers of the gospel had who opposed Paul the apostle (Phil. 1:15). Times have not changed, as people have not changed, and we can see these works of the flesh not only prevalent but promoted by changing God’s kingdom from a theocracy (recognizing Christ as the head in our midst and uniting in “**one mind, and one accord**”) into a democracy (voting-in our opinions as the will of God)! We must repent, as God is holding us accountable for how we conduct the affairs of His kingdom, and His judgment is both now and later! Let us seek Him in the “fear of the Lord” else He come and remove our candlestick out of its place (Rev. 2:5)! Let us fall upon the rock and be broken, lest He come and grind us to powder (Mt. 21:44; Lu. 20:18)!

So we have seen why the works of the flesh as given to us in Galatians Five, “**hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings,**” become present when we operate by majority vote and produce factions, and how Satan can then come in and really do his destructive work! When men do not repent of these works of the flesh, nor start doing what God has told them to do and how He has told them to do it, then they will often and eventually have the Spirit of God taken from them like Saul; and then the other works of the flesh like immorality or fornication, impurity, sensuality, drunkenness, carousing, and even sorcery can enter into a man’s life and he will be destroyed!

Have you ever noticed how Boards or leaders are often selected? Those chosen are usually not those who will seek God for His will and stand strong for what they believe; maybe they were selected because they will vote the way the choosing man or men vote, or they can be manipulated or easily persuaded of anything, or maybe they have money or standing in the community, or maybe they have some other material or even spiritual contribution that they can make to profit the ministry. But, were

they men of God's own choosing?!!

It would be helpful to add here three other types of sin brought to our attention in the scripture that are encouraged by majority voting to determine the will of God. They are very serious sins as they will damn one's soul if not repented of and keep anyone out of the kingdom of God. These sins are found in I Corinthians Chapters Five and Six where we find a list of people with those habitual and unrepented of sins that when found in anyone professing to be a believer they are to be put out of the church and chastened, as they are unfit for the fellowship of God and His people (I Cor. 5:2, 7, 9, 11-13; 6:9-10). [The practice of putting away from among God's people those who commit serious sin is quoted here from many references in the scriptures such as Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 22, 24; 24:7].

The first sin revealed to us in I Corinthians Five that is inspired in the Babylonian and worldly way of majority voting is covetousness, or greed. A covetous person, the word in Greek is *πλεονεκτησ*, *pleonektes*, meaning "covetous," is "one eager to have more, especially what belongs to others; one greedy of gain" (Thayer's); and "one who has or claims to have more than his share; one who defrauds for the sake of gain" (AGL). The Lord Jesus warned us to: "**Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions**" (Lu. 12:15 NAS). And this eager desire for more is not just for money or material possessions, it can be for position and power, as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram envied Moses and Aaron and coveted their positions (Num. 16).

The second sin revealed to us here is "railing" or "reviling." The Greek verb *λοιδορεω*, *loidoreo*, means "to reproach, rail at, revile, heap abuse upon" (Thayer's). The dictionaries define "rail" as: "to utter reproaches, to scoff, to use insolent and reproachful language, to reproach or censure in opprobrious terms" (Webster's 1828); and "to utter bitter complaint or vehement denunciation" (ACD). These dictionaries define "revile" as: "to reproach, to treat with opprobrious and contemptuous language" (Webster's 1828); and "to speak abusively, to regard as vile" (ACD).

The third sin revealed to us here that is encouraged by majority voting is a form of the sin of "extortion." The verb in Greek, *αρπαζω*, *harpazo*, meaning "to extort," is defined: "to seize on, to claim for one's self eagerly, to carry off by force; to snatch away" (Thayer's). It is very interesting that the *The American College Dictionary* (ACD) defines extortion as: "*Law.* The crime of obtaining

money or other things of value [such as position, authority, etc.] under cover of office [abuse of an office], when none is due or not so much is due, or before it is due." It defines the verb "extort": "*Law*. To wrest or wring (something) from a person by violence, intimidation, or abuse of authority; obtain (money, information, etc.) by force, torture, threat, or the like. To take illegally under cover of office." This word is translated in the New American Standard as "swindle," which is defined by this dictionary: "To cheat; to put forward plausible [having an appearance of truth or reason; seemingly worthy of approval or acceptance] schemes or use unscrupulous artifice [a crafty device, a clever stratagem (a stratagem is a plan, scheme, or trick for deceiving the enemy; a strategy is the skillful management in getting the better of an adversary or attaining an end)] to defraud others; anything deceptive" (ACD). I have experienced this form of extortion as deceit, clever manipulation of the "rules," and distortion of an organization's constitution have resulted in the self-willed and rebellious getting their way. The Church is grieved as the Supreme Court of this land and Federal judges distort the plain and true meaning of our Constitution and laws, and yet it does the same thing! This is a fulfillment of the "law of sowing and reaping"! (Gal. 6:7).

So we can see by the meaning of these words, "covetousness," "greed," "rail," "revile," "extortion," and "swindle," that majority voting to determine the will of God among "elders" or "Boards" can and often results in damnable sins that do not accomplish the will of God, but rather the will of our adversary, "**Satan . . . the accuser of our brethren . . . who accuses them before our God** [and through one another] **day and night**" (Rev. 12:9-10 NAS).

I have personally experienced the working of these sins in majority voting and the "demonic conspiracy" that arises when "**bitter jealousy and selfish ambition**" grip the hearts and minds of people, and together with "**arrogance**" they "**lie against the truth**" (Jam. 3:14-15 NAS). James writes that this wisdom does not come from God, but is of the earth, the way of the world, it is *ψυχικη, psuchike, soulish*, as a person is in his unregenerate state, ruled by his natural senses, and is devilish and demonic! It causes confusion, disorder, and every kind of evil work. Politics is indeed dirty when spiritual matters are at stake and people want their own way, and the carnal nature rules through immature and unspiritual people.

If we have been or are guilty of any of the sins which we

have mentioned, let us quickly call out to God as David did in all of Psalm 51, having seen what happened to Saul: **“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me”** (Psa. 51:10-11 KJV). And then after praying the entire Psalm, let us totally repent and change what we can and ask God to change what we can not.

One thing is for sure, we must repent of majority voting to determine the will of God, a carnal method which produces carnality and worse, instead of **“that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God”** (Rom. 12:2 KJV).

Occasionally we find that we have a “Diotrephes” among us. He was a man **“who loveth to have the preeminence among them [us]”** (III Jn. 9 KJV). He will not receive the good and spiritual brethren God has sent; but he **“boils over against them with empty accusations”** and **“malicious words”**; and **“he forbids others to receive them”** from being a part of the fellowship, board, ministry, or meeting; and he even puts the best of God’s chosen vessels **“out”** if he can (lit. from III Jn. 9-11).

In contrast to Diotrephes, we need to be like Demetrius, a man who had a good report; not only from all men, but **“from the truth itself”** (III Jn. 12 NAS). Many men give report that the Word of God is true, but does the Word of God testify that they are true? Does the record of requirements given to us in the Word of God, which is the truth concerning what a man of God is truly to be, give testimony verifying that we are in fact an embodiment of that truth? Is our character and behavior a reflection of the true character and behavior of a man of God as required in God’s Word, God’s truth? When truth is examined, when circumstances are revealed in situations concerning us, do they bear witness that we are men of truth and integrity? Does the truth give us a good report? It should! John had said at the beginning of the letter that brethren gave testimony of the truth of Gaius, and that Gaius was walking in the truth. John concludes this letter by saying that Gaius knew that John and his associates gave true testimony, and that they and the truth gave Demetrius a good testimony. Do we have a good report among the brethren? We must!

And so we come to a close of this most important apostolic teaching and practice. We must repent of our selfishness and being self-willed (freedom from which is a qualification for being a ruling elder in the body of Christ, Titus 1:7), and we must commit ourselves to Christ as head, and determine that we are going to

operate God's way. If we do, we will have God's success. If we do not, after being enlightened, we will enter into darkness, and reap the fruit of our doing (as the rebellious spies of old), and never enter into our "promised land." Let us repent and surrender to God all of our faithless service, and be renewed in the spirit of our mind (Eph. 4:17-27). Let us go on to serve Him in holiness and godly fear each day until the soon coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, our head. And as the head of His church, He makes His mind and will known to His church through the principle of "unanimity"; which the scripture reveals to us is waiting on God in serious prayer, fasting when necessary, until we all come into **"one mind, and one accord."**

Besides the eleventh chapter of brother G. H. Lang's book, *The Churches of God*, or his booklet, *Unanimity: The Divine Method Of Church Government*, which I have recommended, I also recommend that you listen to the tape of a leading pastor and teacher, who when appointed to a very formal and traditional congregation was brought together with them into an understanding of this principle. He and the congregation functioned very well for many years under this principle, which he calls the "Headship of Christ." It is a thrilling testimony of God's grace that has been manifested, and is still working in our day. The tape is entitled "Headship and Unity," 13-118 #1, by Everett L. "Terry" Fullam. Let us in these last days grasp this truth and practice it so that we can be found faithful in Him at His soon coming! Amen, and Amen!!

Now, at a date much later than the original writing of this chapter, I am adding some summary statements that are burning in my heart after years of witnessing and experiencing this word.

Consistently attempting to determine the will of God by majority vote:

Creates division, and no longer perfects unity in love; in fact
It destroys brotherly love by inviting thoughts and manners
that put one in conflict with another, and creates groups
opposed to each other;

It is not perfected in the love of God and the love of one's
neighbor, when

It neglects to gently correct, reconcile, and restore those who
err;

It indulges the carnal mind in its hostility toward God, for it
is not able to submit to God to discern His perfect will;

It is insensitive to the continual need of all growing up
together in Christ, for it fosters neglect, animosity, and ill-
will;

It ignores the instructions of scripture and is not persuaded
to abide graciously in the kingdom of God, but rather it
allows some to become hard and disobedient, speaking
evil of the way, and they stir up others to get rid of those
who oppose their own position, opinion, or desires;

Its wisdom is not from above, but is earthly, soulish, and
demonic;

It promotes all the wicked spirits of Babylon, namely pride
rebellion, unbelief, selfish ambition, and the fear of man,
rather than humility, mutual submission to God and each
other, faith, commitment to God's will, and the fear of God;

It quenches, grieves, and hinders the Holy Spirit,
but holds to demonic spirits;

It follows Robert's rules rather than Christ's rules,
as it copies the world's ways instead of the Lord's;

It is blatantly unscriptural, and actually antichrist;

It presumes on His grace, while denying the purposes of God;
Instead of bringing in the sweet fragrance of The Rose of
Sharon,

It spreads and overcomes us in the foul odors of Hell itself;
Therefore,

It does not accomplish the will of God, and thus
it demands His sovereign judgment!

It necessitates prayerful contemplation,
and complete r e p e n t a n c e !

This is the end of The church, Chapter 4
For Chapter 5, visit www.JohnRothacker.org