

**Devotional Thoughts :: Unity Through Keeping Christ's Interests in View - Sparks****Unity Through Keeping Christ's Interests in View - Sparks - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2011/9/13 10:58**

"Open Windows" for Sept. 13 by T. Austin Sparks

Strive earnestly to guard and keep the harmony and oneness of the Spirit in the binding power of peace. (Ephesians 4:3 AMP)

Oneness in Christ as a Body fitly framed together is what is portrayed. How is this perfect unity reached? By all that is individual and personal being left, by the Lord being the focal center, and by our giving diligence to maintain the unity in that way; keeping all personal things out, and keeping Christ and His interests always in view.... This is not visionary, imaginative, or merely idealistic, it is very practical. You and I will discover that there are working elements of divisiveness, things creeping in amongst us to set us apart. The enemy is always seeking to do that, and the things that rise up to get in between the Lord's people and put up a barrier are countless; a sense of strain and of distance, for example, of discord and of unrelatedness. Sometimes they are more of an abstract character; that is, you can never lay your hand upon them and explain them, and say what they are; it is just a sense of something. Sometimes it is more positive, a distinct and definite misunderstanding, a misinterpretation of something said or done, something laid hold of; and of course, it is always exaggerated by the enemy.

How is that kind of thing to be dealt with in order to keep the unity of the Spirit? Rightly, adequately on this basis alone, by our saying: "This is not to the Lord's interests; this can never be of value to the Lord; this can never be to His glory and satisfaction; this can only mean injury to the Lord." What I may feel in the matter is not the vital consideration. I may even be the wronged party, but am I going to feel wronged and hurt? Am I going to stand on my dignity? Am I going to shut myself up and go away, because I have been wronged? That is how nature would have it, but I must take this attitude: "The Lord stands to lose, the Lord's Name stands to suffer, the Lord's interests are involved in this; I must get on top of this; I must get the better of this; I must shake this thing off and not allow it to affect my attitude, my conduct, my feelings toward this brother or sister!" There must be the putting aside of that which we feel, and even of our rights for the Lord's sake, and a getting on top of this enemy effort to injure the Lord's testimony. That is giving diligence to keep the unity.... Life is by unity, and unity can only adequately be found in Christ being in His place as the One for whom we let go everything that is personal. We might not do it for the sake of anyone else. We might never do it for the sake of the person in view. We do it for His sake, and the enemy is defeated.

By T. Austin-Sparks from: All Things in Christ - Chapter 8