

The glory of our Lord Jesus is more important than the glory of any individual or organization. God wants us to remember in our individual lives, this matter of the unity of the church of Christ. The unity of all Christian believers.

There may be some we cannot work with but that does not mean that if they are true to Christ we have to oppose them. It does not mean we should do anything to try to injure them in any way. We may find it necessary to break fellowship. Paul and Barnabas had a great difficulty, a difference. Barnabas said Mark is a valuable man, Let's take him with us. Paul said, Mark deserted us on that missionary journey. He turned around and came back and dropped the work. He said, I won't take Mark. And the Bible says, they strove. Barnabas took Mark and went off this way; Paul went off that way.

But I don't think either of them cursed the other. I don't think either of them went about trying to turn people against the other. Later in his life, Paul wrote bring Mark with you for he is profitable for the ministry. In that particular difference between the two, I believe Paul was wrong, as far as his judgment of Mark was concerned. But as far as the activity was concerned there certainly was nothing wrong in his taking Silas instead of Mark. But I'm glad that they joined together later.

In the church, the Christian Church the body of all believers would accomplish twice as much in the world as it does today if it were not for petty little differences that come between individuals. Differences which we magnify out of all proportion.

There may be differences which are vital, differences in viewpoint. There may be reasons why we can't work with certain individuals but we can in friendly competition, we can strive to see which can serve the Lord most effectively.

I was talking to a minister of a large Baptist church in one of the great cities in Texas and he said, My church is unique among Baptist churches; there has never been a time when it's been divided into two groups that were violently fighting one another. Well, that is sad that in so many churches -- independent churches, churches of various denominations, people get into violent conflict often over very minor matters.

If unbelief comes in, if real heresy comes in, then of course it is vital that a person speak up. But it is a human tendency to let unbelief begin, begin, and begin, and we're tolerant, tolerant, tolerant of it. Then it gets so great it is almost impossible to get rid of it. But on the thousand other points we can differ and we should learn to differ in Christian love.

I remember one of the early times when I was a kid, early in my career, I remember two fellows in seminary who each of them were constantly knocking the other. They felt they had differences that were very vital; important differences, of viewpoint.