

Kingdom Perspectives – Part 10

Welcome to Kingdom Perspectives, Part 10, November 12, 2008. Well this brings us to the last session, not only of this series on Kingdom Perspectives, but also in the overall series. The goal of all spiritual pursuit is love because apart from love you have no profit. And this is not love as the world defines love; it's love as explained in the Bible. We discussed love in the series on Abiding in Christ when we spoke of the abiding love of God. I'll not review all of that, of course, but I'm going to draw enough from that particular session in order to set the stage for our conclusion today.

Next poster. God is love. The Bible tells us that God is, and that God is love. Love is relational. Relational requires choice. If one choice is God, then any other choice is, by definition, ungod, or ungodly in our terminology. God gave us choice that it may be of love and not of mechanical robotic slavery. That explains why we have choice, but it doesn't fully explain what love is. Many people define love as a desire for the greater good for someone. The problem with such definitions is that they do not tell you what the greater good is; so they substitute one ambiguity with another ambiguity.

Next poster. I've required progressive revelation to understand love. I began, more or less, equating it with caring. Then I regarded it as caring enough to require effort on my part directed toward the object of my caring. Then I regarded it as requiring service to the other to the point of sacrifice. Now I regard love as a passion for oneness. Colossians 3:14 – And beyond all these things put on love which is the perfect bond of unity. In John 17:20-23 Jesus is praying that His disciples may be one just as Jesus is one with the Father. He is praying that we may be perfected in unity. And that's not just any old unity. That's the unity that is in the Godhead and the Trinity. It is unity as Jesus is one with the Father and the Father is one with Jesus. From such Scriptures I drew my understanding of love as a passion for oneness. It is a desire for the greater good; but it simultaneously defines what that greater good is, and thus removes the ambiguity. When the Bible says that God loves me, it means that God has a passion to be one with me. God has a passion that no part of myself remain outside of Himself. What could God desire for me that would be of greater good than for me to come into complete oneness with Him? When I love God, it means that I have a passion to be one with God. What greater good could I desire to render unto God than to fulfill His love which is His passion to be one with me? When I love someone else, it means that I have a passion that they become one with God through Jesus Christ. What greater good could I desire for someone than that they become one with God through Jesus Christ? When I love myself, it means that I have a passion that I become one with God. What greater good could I desire for myself than that I become one with God through Jesus Christ?

With that introduction we're going to begin to look at how this plays out among us as individual Christians, then relationally as Christians, and then congregationally in our churches. God is depicted at the top of this poster. Notice that that which is of God is depicted in red. Also notice that on this poster God does not change. Malachi 3:6 – for I the Lord do not change. Nor should He. God is perfect. Thus if we are to progressively come into oneness with God, then we are the ones who must change and we must change into the image of God. After all, that is the purpose for which we were created. This poster graphically depicts how we're to grow progressively into

oneness with God. Notice the key at the bottom. I've depicted that which is apart from God by using the color black. I have depicted that which has come into oneness with God by the color red. Now follow me as we move through the progression. At the extreme left, we begin with unsaved man. I've depicted man in four parts so that nothing escapes our attention as we make this progression. Man is shown as spirit, mind, sin nature, and body. The body is our physical self. The spirit, mind, and sin nature represent our non-physical or immaterial self. Recall from our earlier discussions that I define the sin nature as self determination putting self on the throne rather than God on the throne. In the unsaved condition all of man is separate from God, thus drawn in black to depict this. Man is lost, separated from God and depraved, thus destined for Hell. Ephesians 2:4-5 – But God, in spite of our depravity, in spite of our being children of wrath, being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. God saved us because He has a passion to be one with us which is love. That love could never have been fulfilled except He save us; because we could not, in our depravity, save ourselves. Therefore, if the love of God directed toward us and set upon us is to be fulfilled, He must fulfill His love and He must fulfill it by grace because we cannot earn it. But all of man does not come into oneness at once. At the core level, man is spirit. The spirit is what gets saved and becomes one with God initially. Furthermore when it gets saved, it is totally saved. This is the new creation. This is the new self. This is your new identity. This is the new man. This new creation self, the spirit self, is totally perfected. Ephesians 4:24 – And put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Your spirit will not be perfected from that moment of salvation on as it is indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit of God. The spirit of man goes from totally black to totally red at the moment of salvation. The spirit is one with Christ as Christ is one with God. Thus, we are hid in Christ as Christ is hid in God; so we are one with God from the moment of salvation on in that sense. I Corinthians 6:17 – But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

Notice that the rest of man, I leave depicted in black. It is not one with God at the moment of salvation. Our future eternity in Heaven is secured because it is based on our spirit which is now one with God, indwelt by God in the Person of the Holy Spirit. It is true that at the moment of salvation a small portion of the mind would possibly be renewed. But as babes in Christ, a much greater portion of the mind remains unrenewed; thus, I continue to show the mind as essentially black. I'll return to the role of our will in a few minutes; but for now follow me through the rest of the stages. Romans 12:2 – And do not be conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of the mind. From the moment of salvation on, the Christian is to begin the process of maturing by the renewing of the mind. That is the process by which the Christian progressively becomes one with God during the remainder of his life on Earth, after salvation, and until the time of physical death. As the Christian does so, more and more his mind becomes renewed according to the mind of Christ. Thus I have depicted in our maturation more of the mind that's becoming red, hence renewed, hence one with God. That progressively leaves less and less of the mind, which remains unrenewed, functioning according to the sin nature with self on the throne. Notice that the sin nature and the body remain black during the time span after salvation and to the point of physical death.

II Corinthians 4:16 – Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying; yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. In this verse, the outer man is the physical body. It

has been corrupted by sin; it continues to age, it continues to decay. The inner man is the mind which has not yet been renewed but is in the process of being renewed day by day according to Romans 12:2. Dramatic changes then occur at the time of death. The corrupted body goes into the grave. The mind becomes totally renewed by seeing Jesus face to face rather than through a glass dimly. I Corinthians 13:12 – for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. I John 3:2 – We know that when He appears (speaking of Jesus) we shall be like Him. Why shall we be like Him? Through effort? No. We shall be like Him because we shall see Him just as He is. At the time of death, I show the sin nature as being annihilated by God. That's why the X over the sin nature is shown as red. The sin nature is immaterial, nonphysical; thus, does not go into the grave with the body. The sin nature cannot go into Heaven. I say this because we're now like Jesus, seeing Him face to face. Self on the throne is not going to exist once we see Jesus as He truly is rather than as we previously thought Him to be as we saw through a glass dimly. No one in Heaven, after physical death, will be double minded. That's why I choose to depict the sin nature as annihilated.

The next stage is that of the rapture depicted in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. At the rapture all of those who were saved and experienced death on Earth will come out of the grave to join those who are still alive at that time; and both will meet the Lord in the air and the body will be a glorified body which is perfected and incorruptible. The corruptible has now put on the incorruptible. That glorified body joins the spirit and the totally renewed mind so that all of man at the point of the rapture is now perfectly one with God as the Bible speaks of spirit, soul, and body being sanctified. At the moment of the rapture, the glorified body has joined the fully renewed mind and the spirit to become one with God.

Now return back to the time of our Christian life on Earth after salvation, but before physical death. Recall that God does not confiscate our wills and make us robots at the moment of salvation. Before salvation the will was totally enslaved to sin and apart from God. It functioned by the sin nature of self on the throne, functioning in self determination. It really had no freedom because it could not choose God in its depravity. It could only choose ungod. After salvation the will now has some freedom of choice for the first time. It can now choose moment by moment between God and ungod. If we had no choice, God would not bother giving us commands such as the following. Hebrews 12:2 – Fixing our eyes on Jesus. I Peter 1:13 – Gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 4:18 – While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

The Christian matures by using his will to look at eternal spiritual things. For us as Christians, that translates into fixing our gaze upon Jesus Christ. That includes the cross of Christ because the cross of Christ is the means by which Jesus purchased for us every spiritual blessing. That every spiritual blessing includes the opportunity to come into progressive oneness with God beginning at salvation and then the process of being transformed by the renewing of the mind and continuing all the way through to ultimate total completion of oneness with God when we receive the glorified body at the time of the rapture. All of this is depicted by the arrow from the will looking up toward God. This is what the Bible says in one word is the spirit. Alternatively, we can use the will to choose to look downward depicted by the downward arrow. By that I

mean looking, as a Christian, after salvation, at earthly temporal things, fulfilling self on the throne. That's what the Bible calls the flesh. If we look up, we are transformed by the renewing of the mind. If we look down, we will fulfill I Corinthians 3:13-15. We will produce works; but they will all be unfruitful works of wood, hay, and stubble which shall be consumed as we are saved, yet so as by fire. In other words, we can waste our whole time on Earth in fleshly Christian endeavor and never grow into progressive oneness with God. But if we look up at eternal things, fixing our gaze upon Jesus, then we fulfill II Corinthians 3:18 – But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. We become progressively one with God by being transformed into the image of Christ through the process of the renewing of the mind. But we don't do that through self effort; we do that by beholding the glory of the Lord as revealed in Jesus Christ. We do that by knowing nothing, teaching nothing, and boasting of nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. That's the pathway of the individual Christian progressively becoming one with God through the transformation by the renewing of the mind according to how God views reality, not how fallen man views reality. That's the pathway that fulfills the love of God in our time on planet Earth.

Well that's an individual depiction in graphic form. How does this relate to two Christians becoming one with each other relationally after both have been saved? Even unsaved people can function in unity for a while to accomplish specific tasks. The Tower of Babel is a Biblical example. The Islamic terrorists who brought down the World Trade Center are an earthly example. But that kind of unity is not the unity spoken of in the Bible.

The next poster depicts unity in Christ. We always need to speak, not of unity, but of unity in Christ. Christian unity occurs as a byproduct when two Christians (you and I) are individually pursuing oneness with God by the pathway that I've just described. If I am becoming one with God through Jesus Christ by being transformed from glory to glory into the image of Jesus Christ with my gaze fixed upon Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and you are doing the same, becoming progressively one with God through Jesus Christ, then obligatorily as you become more like Jesus and I become more like Jesus, the gap between us narrows. So we are coming into progressive unity in Christ. There is no other mechanism by which Christian unity occurs.

When unity is set as a goal and pursued in itself, disunity will occur over the longer term because no one can agree on how unity is to occur. True unity must occur through love, not as a goal of man working in the flesh. I love Jesus. Why do I love Him? Oh, we love because He first loved us. How do we know He loves us? Well, He delivered Himself up for us. Our gaze is fixed on Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Our goal is not fixed on trying to conjure up love in order to grow in unity. As I grow in loving Jesus, I have a passion to be with Jesus—totally, including transformation by the renewing of my mind to think His thoughts, as I capture every thought in obedience to Jesus Christ. I grow not only to love Jesus more by beholding Him; but I grow to love more like He loves, which means loving what He loves, which means my fellow Christians. I love what Jesus loves. Jesus loves you. I love you. I have a passion, not only that I become like Jesus, but I have a passion that you become like Jesus by the process of transformation through the renewing of your mind. We're both doing the same thing on the same pathway. You have that same passion that I become one with God through Jesus Christ. As we're changed into the image of Jesus Christ from glory to glory, we obligatorily grow into oneness with each other

and the gap obligatorily between us must narrow. Our unity is in Christ and through Christ, because apart from Christ, we can do nothing, including accomplish unity as a self-contained goal. Any other unity is simply a work of the flesh and is counterfeit unity.

So we've examined the pathway of progressive oneness with God individually and relationally with a fellow Christian. This entire process can be facilitated or inhibited depending on the type local church that I attend. So how does this play out congregationally? Next poster. I've drawn a simple poster to give examples to demonstrate the principle. The first type is the Biblical model of church. This is the church that knows only, teaches only, and boasts only of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This church teaches the Bible. And according to the Bible, our gaze is to be fixed upon Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit functions in humility. He positions Himself under Jesus to bear witness of Jesus and bring glory to Jesus. The Holy Spirit does nothing of His own initiative. He did not come to draw attention to Himself. He did not come to bring glory to Himself. For these reasons, I've drawn Him as standing behind Jesus and depicted Him as being smaller than Jesus. He is not a lesser God. What I'm describing by drawing Him that way is His choice to humble Himself to bring glory to Jesus, not to Himself. He wants us, frankly, to fix our gaze upon Jesus, not fix our gaze upon the Holy Spirit. When we keep our gaze fixed upon Jesus to bear witness of Jesus and bring glory to Jesus, then we have joined in the missions of the Holy Spirit. And that is communion with the Holy Spirit. How do we claim to have communion with the Holy Spirit when our mission is not His mission?

The Holy Spirit then gives gifts and power and illumination to produce the fruit of the Spirit, which taken collectively depict Christlikeness. A church which fulfills the Biblical model, thus, facilitates my becoming one with God through Jesus Christ. It also (such a church) facilitates my becoming unified in Christ with other members of the same congregation. This is a church that is growing in the love of God because love is a fruit of the Spirit. That love that we have for God and for each other becomes our testimony of God to the world. They will know who I am by how you love one another. But it's not love that is conjured up by the flesh of man. It's love that is produced by the Spirit as a result of fixing our gaze upon Jesus Christ and Him crucified where the love of God is revealed to us. A church can thus facilitate or inhibit the growth of such love.

The second type of church, I've labeled as a self powered one. This one sincerely desires to glorify God. It does not shrink God; thus Jesus and the Holy Spirit are depicted as being the same size as on line number one. This one simply goes about things in the wrong way. This one fulfills Galatians 3:3 by trying to perfect in the flesh that which was begun in the spirit. This type church may take various forms. It may be oriented toward legalism. It may focus on rituals or tradition or various programs. The unifying theme is that the gaze is not fixed upon Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The gaze is fixed upon law or ritual or tradition or programs. The fruit that is produced, therefore, overshoots Jesus and the Holy Spirit and produces the fruit of self because the Holy Spirit will not respond to such a direction of the gaze. The Holy Spirit came to bear witness of Jesus and bring glory to Jesus, not to be a helper as you display the power of self by fixing the gaze of the congregation upon something other than Jesus Christ.

The third type of church is the self-focused church. The theme here is the shrinkage of God in relation to self. This may be the liberal church that rewrites the Bible in order to continue self

worship where truth becomes what that church declares it to be rather than what God declares it to be in His revealed Word. It may be the social church that tries to build community rather than building progressive oneness with God through Jesus Christ. It may be the seeker friendly church that tones down the Gospel so as to be inoffensive to all. The unifying theme is the diminution of God in relation to self. This simply continues worship of self which has been the problem since Adam declared in his self determination that he could self determine that he was self determined and not God determined.

The fourth type of church is the gift focused church. This one wants the stuff. This one disproportionately wants the gifts of the Spirit such as healing, other miracles, and prophecy. This one is not very interested in transformation into the image of God. This one is after the action. Thus, this one tends to exaggerate the Holy Spirit in relation to Jesus. This is because the Holy Spirit is seen as giving gifts; they recognize the gifts and they want those gifts. They do not grow into the image of Jesus Christ. This one shrinks Jesus and overshoots Jesus to get to the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit largely does not respond. That's because the Holy Spirit is going to truly and fully respond only when the gaze is fixed upon Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit came to bear witness of Jesus, not to bear witness of self. The Holy Spirit came to bring glory to Jesus, not to bring glory to self. The Holy Spirit came to give illumination, gifts and power to transform us through the fruit of the Spirit into the image of Christ, not to call attention to Himself. He did not come to give the gifts to produce a wow factor in the church. This type wants gifts for self enhancement, not to grow into Christlikeness, which is the image of God Himself. You can see that churches of types 2, 3, and 4 do not facilitate progressive oneness with God. They do not produce oneness with God individually nor collectively.

Now I'll phrase certain questions. How many of us are being brought into oneness with God through progressive transformation into the image of Jesus Christ by beholding the glory of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and particularly Him crucified? How many Christians do you know who are actively doing so? How many Christians are coming into unity in Christ by doing so relationally and collectively? How many churches have you experienced who are truly facilitating doing so and not inhibiting doing so? The purpose of the questions I phrase is conviction. And the purpose of conviction is not to put us down nor our churches down. The purpose of conviction is to call us up to respond to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. To call us to what?

That's the next poster. That's our mission statement. We began this series, remember, with Genesis 1:1 to learn of the Holiness of God. We began to land here by now finally understanding our mission statement at the end of the series. If you do not begin with the Holiness of God and if you do not live in the light of the Holiness of God with fear and trembling toward the Holiness of God, you will never land here to fulfill your mission statement. So what is that mission statement? Part of it is directed toward God, part toward others, and part toward myself. It's the fulfillment of Matthew 22:37 to 39 where it speaks of: What is the great commandment? To love the Lord your God; to love others as you love yourself. So if I'm growing into oneness with God by fixing my gaze upon Jesus, fulfilling the love of God, and growing in the love of God and the love of others, I am giving God maximal glory, maximal pleasure, and minimal grief. If I am growing in the love of others, as I desire God's desire, which is to have them come into oneness with God through Jesus Christ, then I am giving them

maximal valid testimony of God as a result of that love being produced in me directed toward them. For myself I access the maximal abundant life and store up maximal eternal rewards in Heaven.

Next poster. Recall this poster from very early in our series. It depicts very basic truths about God's mathematics in simple algebraic form. God is Holy. All men are sinful. The equal sign depicts the judgment of God, Who is Holy, upon sinful men. That leads to the judgment of God being fulfilled through the reality of Hell. Hell is our revelation of the hatred that God has for one departure from His will, His purposes, His plan, and His character. Oh, but the revelation of that magnitude of God's hatred for any unrighteousness is simultaneously revelation of the love of God to maintain perfect righteousness. That's why God will never choose unrighteousness. That's the revelation of how faithful and true God is. The first equation is a problem, not for God, but for man. The second line gives us the solution to the problem and the only solution to the problem. The only solution is the cross of Jesus Christ. That's because the payment that Jesus Christ made on the cross, being the Son of God and being sinless, is the perfect infinite payment for sin. And any other payment is worthless because any other payment is contaminated by sin; thus, has no value; thus cannot pay any price. But I'm using this poster only to set the stage for our final poster.

On the final poster I've taken these two equations, but for space requirements, I've written Holy instead of of God, sin instead of men and reality of Hell and so on in short form. Next poster. This is our final poster for today and for this entire series. It's a summary of all of our sessions together. Of course I cannot depict every detail; however it does represent the major skeletal aspects of the relation between God and man. The basic point is this. It is all summed up in Jesus. Everything else is detail that adds flesh to the skeleton of our understanding. We begin where God told us to begin...In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth. That's the beginning of our understanding as how other than this God is, thus how Holy He is. It's the beginning of our understanding of the sovereign, majestic, creator King Who could just speak the Heavens and the Earth into existence. That revelation of the Holiness of God gives us the revelation of sin. Apart from the revelation of the Holiness of God, we'll continue to excuse our sin or declare our sin as holy. God is truly other than and every departure from that Holy God is sin. Man is totally depraved in his sin. This sin is fully only understood only by seeing God as Holy. The equal sign, recall, is the judgment of God upon all sin. And that reveals the second critical essence of God that we must understand and function in the light of, and that is God as the fierce but righteous Judge. Hell itself is the greatest revelation of that.

But now look at the second equation. Holiness has not changed. Sin has not changed. But the cross of Christ has been added. That is the revelation of the essence of God as the passionate lover. We know love by this, that He delivered Himself up for us. The judgment of God is now that we are sinless because we have the righteousness of Christ as Christ took our sin and became sin on our behalf. I John 3:16 – We know love by this that He delivered Himself up for us. Because we have to remember this isn't just a human being doing this; this is the Holy God of Genesis 1:1 Who spoke the Heavens and the Earth into existence, not considering equality with God a thing to be grasped; but humbled Himself and came to Earth in the form of a man to go to the cross to pay for our sin with the infinite value of His own precious blood. Heaven is now our destiny. At that point, even as babes in Christ, we understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ

enough to a degree that we can begin to give verbal testimony back up to those who are still on line one. But our character has not yet been transformed. We have not matured into the image of Christ. We are not, therefore, giving effective nonverbal testimony. Most Christians seem to get stuck to some degree on line two. That's why our nonverbal testimony is ineffective and somewhat negates the power of our verbal testimony. Most churches seem not to facilitate the process of the congregation progressively becoming one with Christ.

The third line is meant to summarize this process. We are still sinners after salvation. I John 1:8 – The man who says he has no sin deceives himself. The point is, how do we become less sinful and more like Christ? Most Christians seem to focus on themselves. They either think since they now have their ticket for eternity in Heaven with God through Jesus Christ that they simply relax and continue life in the flesh, apathetic and lukewarm. Alternatively, they observe Jesus Christ and then turn into the flesh to try to transform themselves into the image of Jesus Christ. They try to complete in the flesh that which was begun in the spirit. If I lust, I will lust less and I'll take all my energy and concentration to focus on lusting less. The problem with that is two-fold. One is your attention is now focused entirely on self using the power of self to try to become like God. If you could have done that, you wouldn't have needed a Savior to begin with. The second major point is God will resist you, which is what the red roadblock is here. Because the person trying to use their own power to produce Christlikeness is functioning in pride to even think they can do so; and God resists the proud. So the person who is saved, but functioning in the flesh to try to transform themselves into the image of Jesus Christ is going to be resisted by God because that's not how God views reality. It's only you that think that you can do so.

So how do we do so? Hebrews 12:2 tells us to fix our gaze upon Jesus. And that has to include the cross of Christ because the cross is the means by which that Jesus purchased for us every spiritual blessing. If we just look at Jesus, we'll see Him as just a moral man and a good teacher and a wonderful prophet. But until we see Jesus on that cross and think about the price paid by the Son of God Himself for our sin, we won't know the love of God. And if we don't know the love of God, we will not grow in love, and apart from love nothing else profits you anything. We also have to simultaneously fix our view and maintain it upon the Holiness of God; because if we are looking at Jesus and Him crucified, but not functioning in the light of the Holiness of God, we will shrink the Son of God and shrink the cross of the Son of God to manageable proportions that will allow us to continue self worship. We'll continue to think it took a little Christ on a little cross to pay for our little sin because we're so much better than the rest of these Christians. You'll have a designer god on a designer cross to allow you to stay on the throne of self worship.

We are to simultaneously view Jesus and Him crucified in the light of the Holiness of God. The Bible tells us this is how we work out our salvation in Philippians 2:12. How? With fear and trembling. Well, who's the one in fear and trembling? He's the one living in the light of the Holiness of God. Could it be any clearer? When we behold the glory of the Lord, as revealed by our revelation of the Holiness of God, and the character glory of God as revealed in Jesus and Him crucified, then we have entered the pathway of progressive transformation from glory to glory into the image of Jesus Christ. This is God willing and working within us. We have a place to fix our gaze; but it's the power of God that brings about the transformation. We never reach sinless perfection on Earth, thus I've drawn the arrow down into complete oneness with

God, manifesting complete Christlikeness, as not a solid arrow, but an arrow broken up into components, to introduce the concept that that is a hypothetical finishing pathway; but no man ever reaches sinless perfection while on planet Earth. Thus Christlikeness is our aim, not our claim. But our nonverbal testimony is effective only to the degree that we have moved along the pathway of transformation toward Christlikeness and complete oneness with God. Our nonverbal testimony flows back as a result of this transformation to those on line one, to the unsaved. And that may well provoke them to ask, would you explain to me the reason for the hope that is within you in this cursed and fallen and despicable world. It also flows back to the saved on line two, to stir up those who are caught in their lukewarmness and apathy, toward completing the process. Then we stimulate, hopefully, other Christians to join us to pursue oneness with God through Jesus Christ by beholding the glory of the Lord. We then become progressively with others who become stirred up as both of us fix our eyes upon the glory of God as revealed by Jesus Christ and Him crucified. That is unity in Christ.

The process must begin with viewing the glory of God. Then we are transformed into the glory of God from glory to glory by the power of our glorious God. Then God gets all the glory. For no flesh should ever think that it can boast before a Holy God. He is other than, and He will share His glory with no one, nor should He, for He is the only thing worthy of glory. So any other thought is simply self glory, no matter how well intended. And as Paul would commonly say, may it never be, that a Christian should function thinking that he can transform himself into the image of Jesus Christ.

So may we as Christians, as individuals, be satisfied with nothing less than progressive transformation into the glory of God, by beholding the glory of God, which we implement, based on how God views reality, by beholding Jesus Christ and Him crucified, in the light of the Holiness of God, with fear and trembling.

Psalms 17:15 (KJV) says – As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness. We are too easily satisfied. So I hope you can see why I chose to end this series with oneness with God because once you receive this illumination and begin to function within it, nothing else is as satisfying. And our gold standard for all spiritual pursuit thereafter can be easily explained. As we try to make choices about our Christian endeavors, our gold standard is, whatever brings me and others faster and closer into oneness with God. Amen and amen.

Thank you for listening.