



**Christian Coffee House Ministry, Inc.**  
512 Public Avenue  
Beloit, Wisconsin 53511  
Phone (608) 365-0365

SEPTEMBER, 1977

THE OVERFLOW

Ring-a-ling-a-ling! Praise the Lord! This is The Overflowing Cup, Dave speaking. Have you noticed the sign on our door which said we were closed for R & R? It has been interesting to hear the various comments that have been made about this. Many assumed that the R & R stood for rest and relaxation. Even though rest and relaxation are important for everyone including Christians, that was not the real purpose of R & R in this case. Some thought that it stood for renovation and refurbishing of the four story building in which we are located. But, I choose to think of it in different ways, one way being renewal and re-evaluation. Renewal of our minds, our spirits and our entire purpose in life is important from time to time, not only for the leadership at The Cup, but for all Christians in all walks of life. I challenge each one of you to evaluate your own Christian walk. Are you on the move for God, growing closer to Him everyday? Or, have you gotten into a rut? It is so easy to fall into a rut and once you are there, it's hard to get out. Perhaps that's because we don't always realize that we are even in one. I hope that each of you will seek God's will for your life and ask Him to get you out of the rut you might be in. God cares enough for all of His children that He will allow circumstances to enter our lives to help us get out of our spiritual ruts. These circumstances are not usually pleasant. For some, it may be financial disaster; for others, it may be death, divorce or something just as devastating. After God gets us out of our ruts, the only way to go is the path of letting Christ be Lord and not just Saviour. Please, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" in your everyday life and not just on Sundays or whenever God manages to get your attention.

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We believe that prayer is the key to unlock the doors to God's promises. It has been and always will be the heart beat of this ministry. For that reason, we will continue to meet on Tuesday nights at 7:00 p.m. throughout the month of September for prayer. Your presence at these prayer meetings will indicate your concern for the effective continuation of The Overflowing Cup ministry and/or your desire to serve in whatever capacity the Lord would require. There are so many jobs to be done and not enough people to do them. Nevertheless, by faith, we plan to re-open on Saturday, October 1st. We will operate on a mini-schedule which will be announced in the October newsletter-calendar, which brings us to another part of R & R, re-grouping and re-organization. This phase is relevant because there seem to be less and less people willing to "serve" the Lord in this ministry, and yet the needs are there so we can't just hang it up. So until the Lord shows us who the people are who are willing to help carry the load, we will use what we have with regard to willing workers, trusting God to increase the effectiveness of His work by providing more laborers with servant's hearts and a desire to serve in this Greater Beloit Mission field. Hold on a minute! My wife is on the extension and wants to put in her two cents.

HEY! It's good to be back! We spent a week in northern Wisconsin and there's nothing like some time in a cottage on a lake in the north woods to clear your head and give you a new outlook on things. The first morning we were there, I watched three fishermen get into a boat and row away from the shore and I couldn't help but think how funny it would be to see these three guys get in the boat, each having his own set of oars and start rowing in different directions. They wouldn't really get very far and after awhile, it wouldn't be

very funny because they would probably waste a whole bunch of time going round and round in the same place. I thought about what would happen if the guy in the back of the boat decided he didn't like the way the guy in front was rowing, stood up and started to wrestle the oars away from him. They can keep wrestling until one eventually over-powers the other unless the boat tips over in the process. Or, one guy can throw down his oars and say, "O.K. if you don't like the way I'm rowing, do it yourself!" and stomp off across the lake which wouldn't be too cool unless he could walk on water. For sure, it wouldn't be too wise to get into the boat if you weren't sure where it was headed or didn't want to go to the same place. At any rate, it wouldn't be much help to pick up a pair of oars and offer to help row the boat if you weren't going in the same direction. One person can get pretty tired doing all of the rowing especially if he has to fight with the others to keep the boat headed in the direction he's been advised to go for the best fishing.

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are basic to the ways that people see each other, very human, very natural and tragically wrong for Christian, for several reasons. One reason is that when we meet another person, classify him, become aware of our differences and erect our barriers, we build walls that God did not intend to be there. We even build walls within the church. We have "good" Christians, "poor" Christians, denominational Christians and non-denominational Christians. You've been involved in scenes like seeing someone with a Christian bumper sticker and saying, "Praise the Lord, brother. Are you a Christian, too?" Then you start talking and everybody's excited and nice until somebody mentions what church they belong to and start talking about what they believe and then you get the idea that because you have some doctrinal differences that you are in trouble with the Lord! As soon as we discover our differences, we lose our desire to get to know each other or listen to each other as persons. Now, then if there were ever two groups of people who were different, it was the Jews and Gentiles of New Testament days. But, something happened. Jesus died on a cross for Jew and Gentile alike and the Holy Spirit touched a bunch of Jesus' disciples and people found new relationships with each other because His sacrifice removed the hostilities and made utterly irrelevant the antagonisms between us. Eph. 2:13-16. The differences, the barriers, have been swallowed up in a new identity: Christian. That's the way it should be today. The barriers we erect are to be broken down by the realization that in His cross Christ has reconciled both us and our brothers and sisters to God. If another person knows Christ, I need to see him as "inside the circle of God's love in Jesus" with me. Gal. 3:26 tells us that "Through your faith in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God." This is our essential identity as Christians. Not "of such-and-such-a church" but God's sons, God's children, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

AND that includes that bearded young person that goes to your church, too! The only thing that is basic is this: Does another person have a personal relationship with Jesus? If he does, I need to see him as my brother. I cannot cut myself off from someone that my Father accepts as His child. So, the human way of viewing people-classifying them, seeking to define their differences from us, and then making barriers out of the differences, is off limits for us Christians. Instead, we have to accept each other as members of a common family. So, like it or not, we are one. (Gal. 3:28). Then why don't we automatically experience this oneness? Maybe it goes back to clouded visions or that our perspective is different. For one thing, the first thing we often do in seeking to establish a unity is to look for what we have in common, i.e. liking the same foods, enjoying the same types of music and hobbies and so forth, using these little links to draw us closer together. We also look for differences from others outside our groups to tie us together. But that isn't enough to build unity. So, we push for conformity. We say if you are going to be with us, you must think and feel and act as we do! If you are going to identify yourself with us and against the outsiders, you must be like us! It's sorta ironic when you think about how the hippie generation was striving so hard to be different that they were willing to accept a conformity even more restrictive. So now we see a natural almost universal human viewpoint. If we have things in common, if we are different from some others, and if we get rid of differences within our group (conformity) we'll have unity. So, unity comes to be confused with and equated to conformity! But God makes unity out of differences! Isn't that good news? "He (God) has made a unity of the conflicting elements." Eph. 2:14-22 Phillips) He made utterly irrelevant the antagonism between differing groups and individuals. (Jew and Gentile) The Gentile didn't have to become a Jew or the Jew begin to think and feel like a Gentile. Each kept his own individuality. Unfortunately, not everyone in the Early Church understood this and when they met to consider some of the conflicts, the result was that the Church rejected the pressures of those who insisted on conformity as the price of unity and responded, "Surely the fact is that it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that we are saved by faith, just as they are!" (Acts 15) So we should realize that God doesn't insist that a person surrender his individuality in inconsequential things. He does not insist that we conform to each other as the price of unity. Instead God insists that we recognize other Christians as brothers and stop pressuring them to conform to our human standards and regulations. And this is hard because it's so easy to be human. But we have to remember that God has a purpose in making us different. It's working to overcome our differences that helps us to learn to love the way God loves. That's where unity begins - with love.

Why does God purposely fit together people who are different to make His unity? Read on.

The only way I know of to relate this to you is to turn your attention to a tuna casserole. Sound strange? Well, think about this. You can use noodles, tuna, mushroom soup, green peas, onions-dump them into a casserole and they just kinda blend together to make one delicious dish. Yet, nothing in the casserole has lost its identity. You can still tell a pea from a noodle. The ingredients don't conform, they blend. In blending together they create a flavorful meal that none could match if kept apart and served alone. That's the way it's supposed to be with the body of Christ. When believers are blending together, each retaining his individuality and outlook, something better results than if we isolate ourselves and associate only with those who are just like us. Yes, God's way is different. He says we are a unity because we have Jesus in common. He says our differences are irrelevant in this "one body" relationship and He also says our differences are intended by God to blend together enriching all of us in our oneness. For this divine kind of unity, many of our old attitudes and ideas about people are irrelevant...and wrong!

Well, dear, I guess that answers my question about how we can accomplish unity. We start by realizing who we are in Christ and what we are to each other and move on by reaching out to know one another in love...to know our brothers and sisters as Christ knows them, focusing our relationships around the Person and Will of our Lord. This unity is ours to claim because Jesus won it for us at Calvary. Let's each ask God what we can do as individuals towards bringing unity to the Body of Christ and then begin to do it. "Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." (James 1:22)

One final thought: If we would all be doers of Ephesians 4:1-3, we would have this unity we are so zealous to find. But notice that the third verse says we are to endeavor to keep the unity. That sounds like we might have to put forth some effort, doesn't it? Are you willing?

Love in Jesus' Name and Service,

DAVE AND PAT FOGDERUD

\*\*\*DON'T MISS THE HONEYTREE CONCERT AT ALDRICH HIGH SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 15, 1977-7:30 p.m.

## THE OVERFLOWING CUP

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