

One – Part 1

Stephen Hawking (**Put up pic of Hawking**) once occupied one of the most famous and prestigious chairs of education in Great Britain. He was considered one of the greatest thinkers of this century. He inherited this modern mantle from Albert Einstein. The most unique things about Stephen Hawking were that he couldn't even tie his own shoe, brush his own teeth or even comb his hair. His body was twisted and crippled by an affliction known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

This disease caused his nerves to "disconnect" from each other so that the messages from the brain cannot pass through the nerve system to his body. There was nothing wrong with Mr. Hawking's mind. He could solve the world's most difficult mathematical equations in his mind. His mind was brilliant, but his body was crippled.

John 17: 20-23 - ²⁰ "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

- **Jesus' only unanswered prayer**
- Psalm 78: 61 – David said, "God delivered his strength into captivity"
- **Why has Jesus' prayer not been answered - The will of God is waiting on the will of man**

Example: **Genesis 11, 1 Corinthians 1: 10**

- I. The Head of the Church – **Ephesians 5:23**
 - A. **Christ is the head** of the church, and we are his body
 1. **How long has God struggled with a body that is crippled?**
 - B. A paralysis of purpose has invaded the body of Christ, yet our head is still brilliant
 1. He wants his hand to move, but it won't obey

2. He bids his feet to walk, but they will not go
3. He sends signals for his tongue to speak, but it refuses to act

II. The Explosive power of unity

A. The Tower of Babel – **Genesis 11**

1. (put up pic of Tower) The tower was a ziggurat – much like a pyramid with steps or ramps leading up the side
 - a) It was discovered to be over 300 feet tall
 - b) The top platform was a huge zodiac chart
 - c) It was the focal point of the city

B. Men were unified by their self-promoting desire to make a mark on the world

1. While their structure pointed toward heaven, it was really intended to point toward man
2. How could they accomplish such a wicked feat – the explosive power of unity (Genesis 11: 6)

C. Notice **God's reaction to negative unity is much like the enemy's reaction to Godly unity – divide them**

III. The Power of Agreement (**The Mathematics of God**) –

Matt. 18:19 (NLT) - "I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you."

A. Duet. 32: 30 – One can put a thousand to flight, two ten-thousand

1. = 1,000
2. = 10,000
3. = 100,000
4. = 1 million
5. = 10 million
6. = 100 million
7. = 1 billion

B. Unity is the catalyst for revival – **Psalm 133**

1. This is where the Lord **commanded** the blessing

Isaiah 65:8 - Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

IV. Disunity = *Spiritual abortion*

A. Solomon and the two mothers -1 Kings 3:16-28

1. One mother was willing to divide the child
2. The real mother wanted the wholeness of the child
3. Anyone who is willing to divide the body is not part of the body!

B. Exodus 21: 22 – *If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely... he shall be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine*

1. The church is pregnant – if we allow disunity to occur and the baby is aborted – the husband of the bride will hold us accountable

C. *We in the church must understand that we are not living just for ourselves, we are carrying something of Him.*

D. Causes of disunity: Philippians 2: 3-5

1. Selfish ambition – Self-advancement
2. Prestige – Need to be admired, respected, and seen
3. Self-centeredness – Concentration on the needs of oneself over the group

V. **What is crippling the body?**

- Fearsome enemies struggle unceasingly to divide and keep us divided.

- Not a bone of his body was broken

A. **Classism**

1. God is neither a capitalist nor a communist
2. Acts 10: 34 – God does not show favoritism
3. This church is not a place that caters to the rich and forgets the poor, nor are we a people who focus on the poor and forget the needs of the rich.
 - a) No big “I’s” and little “u”
 - b) ***Be as rich as you can be, but be as generous as you should be***

B. Culturalism

1. Culture wars rage in the church
 - a) Wars over worship styles
2. Personal preferences and taste quickly escalate into immovable doctrines of division
3. There are as many cultural differences in the church as there are in society, this is how it should be.

C. Heritage

1. Let me state clearly, I thank God for the heritage of this ministry – it is a strong and solid one
2. All of us have trails of history that color the way we view things. We all see through glasses darkened by our past. However, heritage can become one of the biggest barriers to unity and to the completion of our future.
3. Don't let your past stand in the way of your future

D. Racism

1. **The power of true unity is found in its diversity**
2. The call is “whosever will, let him come...”
3. White vs. Black (issues on both sides)
4. Jesus crossed racial lines (woman at the well – Samaria)
5. **First fight in the New Testament church was over racism**
6. **Religious spirits always find a home in racist hearts**

E. Tribalism

1. Tribal wars in Israel were always the most vicious:
 - a) Judges 20-21 = Entire tribe of Benjamin was almost completely destroyed by infighting
 - b) ***If the church is to be as it is in heaven then it must be every kindred, tongue, nation, and people***
2. Luke 9 – Jesus disciples sees someone doing ministry apart from Jesus. They wanted to stop him! He was not part of their denomination...
3. John, “I must decrease that he might increase...”