

Inspire

Teamwork & Unity

"Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand." Matthew 12:25

Every kingdom
Every City
Every household
Every church
Every organisation
Every marriage
Every group

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divided against itself will not stand and if it will not stand it will not have precedence within its sphere of influence and fulfil the purposes of God.

I've just recently learned this the hard way by experience. So let me share with you the easy way—listening and learning.

It's not as if I was a novice in this area. I have run a number of successful teams for over twenty years. I do believe things are becoming more complex in our western consumer society. I did ignore some simple and basic principles.

Teamwork is one of the key elements to success in any organization. I think of the times when things have been running well and success, growth and prosperity are being achieved. It has been when team has been functioning well. The enemy knows this and will do anything to destroy it. That's why 2Corinthians 2:11 says we should be aware of the enemy's schemes. One of his major keys in any kingdom whether it be a church or marriage is to divide the relationship and conquer the group. This is how Hitler nearly conquered Europe. Interestingly enough, in that passage in Corinthians it was over forgiveness. So if teamwork is a key principle, we need to learn to be good team players and good team leaders.

Let me share some principles on teamwork.

1. Understand the value of team.

If doing things as individuals were more effective, then that is what we would do. But in any sporting event individuals might be able to win medals, but it is teams that win games.

We all know about how geese fly in V formation. They have worked out that it is 71 percent more effective for them to fly this way. (God only knows who calculated that formula!) I suppose if it was only two or three percent more effective they might have a meeting and encourage everyone to head south in their own time as the effort of organization isn't worth the result.



Team multiplies the result it—doesn't just add.

That confirms the verse: one will put a thousand to flight but two will put ten thousand to flight.

When I learn the power of team I can:

*Lighten my load
Multiply my effort and
Increase my effectiveness.*

Let's get excited about team. Let's lose our desire to be a hero and solo achiever. Let's learn to be a good team player or leader.

2. Your attitude is vital to team.

That is probably why that was the first thing Jesus taught the disciples in Matthew 5:1-16—the Beatitudes, attitudes that are to be in us. You see, He had a bunch of selfish, ambitious guys like Peter, John and James, like Judas with his own agenda, like Thomas who doubted even after seeing all the miracles.

Jesus knew He had to change the way they thought, felt and believed that if they were ever going to bring heaven to earth and set the kingdom of God in place.

Attitude is a way of thinking and feeling. That is why we all need to have a change of heart and mind (Colossians 3:10) or as I like to say: *"a check up from the neck up and get rid of all that stinking thinking."*

We need to get the attitude of God in us so we can see and feel about things the way He does in Isaiah 55:8-9.

We need an attitude that is big, generous, positive, forgiving, embracing and one that believes in others, like the attitude that Paul mentions in Philippians 2:1-5: *"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus".*

This is the kind of attitude that creates an atmosphere that will cause people and groups to see and do amazing things. This is the kind of atmosphere that God works in. Psalm 133.

To be a good team player and leader we need to adjust and rebuild a great godly attitude, one that speaks well of one another, believes in one another, supports one another and believes in the leader they have been given.

It means not speaking behind one another's back, devouring one another and pulling them down but lifting one another up. Calab had this right kind of attitude. The Bible says that that is why he took possession of his God—given destiny and brought others in there with him. Numbers 13:26-33 and Numbers 14:20-25

Your attitude determines your language (Matthew 12:34). Your language determines your actions (Proverbs 18:20-21), (James 3:5). Your actions determine your lifestyle and your lifestyle determines your destiny.

3. Know that it is a God thing to be on this team.

There is probably a little too much movement across the body of Christ today. No doubt some people come and go because of work, housing, or the natural changes of life, but I believe too many people are flippant in their changing of churches and are doing damage to their children, themselves and the kingdom.

We need a little more character, attitude and spirituality about our lives. When I was at school some kids would chew their felt lead pencils and get sick. I find today so many believers with the same disease—*"felt lead poisoning."* They feel led to go here and then there and now here, all in a matter of a few years. If I didn't realise it was their own decision I would start to think that God was a little confused. When we know God has truly called us to a place and we are in His will, things don't move us as easily. That is what caused Paul to remain true to his calling as an apostle and, let me say, back then it was no easy calling (1Corinthians 4:8-13). In particular, Paul's calling was no easy road. It wasn't one that would have been easy to feel led to leave (2Corinthians 11:21-29). Certainly those that were part of his team did now and then, as sometimes he mentioned being left alone and deserted. (2Timothy 4:16-18). They must have felt led to move on, but not for Paul. For him it was a matter of God's will. Note how he starts all of his letters: *Paul an apostle by the will of God*" (Ephesians 1:1, Galatians 1:1, Colossians 1:1). He knew his calling, and come what may, he stuck to it.

To be a good team player you need to know it is God's will to be on that team. That will sort out all the tough things you will have to deal with in the future, like loud music, uncomfortable chairs, tough senior leaders, smelly homeless people, programs that cater to lost people and annoying church members. That is why Paul said to the Corinthian church who were going through difficulties (and I also say to us):

"Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1Corinthians 15:58

4. A team looks out for one another

I love what John Maxwell says about the four people in a boat. Two were at either end and there is a leak at one end. They're bailing out water like crazy and

the two at the other end say: *"Thank goodness it's not at our end of the boat."* If there is a problem in your church or organisation it's all our problem and we should support one another. If there is not enough Kid's Church workers, it is all our problem. What are the men's ministry, women's ministry and young adult's ministry going to do to help, or are you just going to sit back and make a judgement as to why the leak is happening. *"There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers."* Proverbs 6:16-19

5. The team sees the bigger picture

I have worked on many building sites, mainly as a brickies labourer, where I mixed the mud and tossed the bricks. I loved it. After pastoring churches for years it was therapeutic for me. But if anyone asked what people were doing on the worksite some would say: *"I'm doing the plumbing,"* or some would say: *"I wire up the electrics."* My boss would say: *"I'm bricklaying."* But if anyone asked me I would say: *"I'm building a house."* *"Oh yeah,"* you might say: *"He's just a brickies' labourer,"* but not me. I always saw the bigger picture of what we were doing. You might be the cleaner, the Kid's Church worker, a muso, or a Connect Group leader but the truth is, we are all building the church with Jesus and extending the kingdom of God.

6. Loyalty to the Senior Leader

This is often a very low point in the church today, and the problem is increasing in our western, democratic culture. We often treat the church and its leadership from a worldly and humanistic perspective instead of a kingdom and spiritual one. If you look at Jesus, He was doing miracles everywhere until He came to His home town. Mark 6:1-6. They began to judge Him concerning His humanity. They knew He was a carpenter and that He had brothers and sisters in that town. It said they took offence. Isn't that amazing? They took offence at His humanity and His humanness! They wanted their prophet and preacher more spiritual, mystical with more mystique. That is what I've seen and experienced over the years congregations judging the humanity of their minister, taking offence at him because he might own a nice car or likes a red wine or a beer, enjoys sport, might get cranky at the kids from time to time or that he might dress down too much or dress up too much. Because of these things the offence is in their hearts, and before you know it, the power and

blessing that was in that church starts to reduce very quickly. *"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."* Hebrews 13:17

7. Everyone knows their part and helps carry the load

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" Romans 12:4-5

It's our job to discover our God-given destiny and to find out where it can best flow in the body. Don't you hate it when you're helping to move house for someone and you're carrying the fridge with four others and thinking to yourself: *"Has anyone else been carrying their load?"* I hope everyone is carrying their load. We are moving the body of Christ and the house of God. To move forward we need to make sure we are carrying our load and doing our part.

8. Everyone on the team understands the other team players

This is where most teams come undone. We want everyone to be like us, think like us, and act like us, instead of being able to celebrate one another's diversity. Let's learn to enjoy one another's gifts, perspectives, and personality without having to change each other. This is what makes church colourful and different. It's what makes us a team, accepting one another's different contribution. That is what makes us effective.

Come on church let's:

Build Team; be a team; enjoy each other; and let the Kingdom advance!

Love,
Kevin



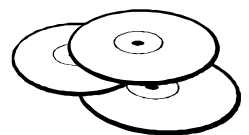
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Tracey,

I have been meaning to email you for a while now. A couple of months ago you shared some things in the Inspire in the article "Marriage & Ministry. I really appreciated your honesty, openness and courage for sharing what you did. It has helped in building hope in me.

Thanks.

The CD of **Teamwork & Unity** message can be purchased from Life Church by emailing info@lifechurch.org.au for a cost of \$10.00 which includes postage and handling or by phoning the church office on 4961 0211.





Ministering to the Muslims

A guide to reaching out to your Muslim neighbours.

Are you wondering what Islam is all about? Do you want to reach out to your Muslim neighbours? Here is a guide to getting started.

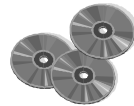
Fast Facts on Muslims

- ◆ Nearly 1.3 billion people follow the Islamic faith
- ◆ Muslims are concentrated in Asia and Africa, but have a presence in nearly every country of the world. Muslims are serious about and devoted to their religion
- ◆ Muslims zealously guard their version of family. In many traditional Muslim cultures, women are kept isolated from potential contact with other men and children; wives are kept from outside influence or contacts.
- ◆ Muslims will be most open to Christianity the first few years they are in a new country. Look for students or businessmen you can befriend.

Truths About Christianity and Islam

Jesus said, "They will know you are Christians by your love." How can you love someone who seems to hate you and your religion? Be like Christ Himself. He loved the very people who took His life.

Start by agreeing with a Muslim on basic concepts: Yes, Allah is the god of Islam, just not the Lord God of the Bible. Sure Mohammed is Allah's prophet, but not a prophet of the Christian faith. And the Koran contains the scriptures of Islam, but Christians believe that the Bible is the Word of God.



Afeef Hasalah

Email: afeef@arabs4hearabs.org
A CD on "Understanding God's heart for the middle east" that Afeef spoke about is available from Life Church Ph 4961 0211 or email: info@lifechurch.org.au

I recently had the privilege to hear a true apostle Afeef Hasalah of the Middle East speak at Life Church in Newcastle. If you want to understand what's going on in our world right now and how God plans to move on this earth, get a copy of Afeef's message from Life Church.

I was moved to tears by what he shared. I have a huge respect for this man, having been a part of his church for two years in Jordan, and seeing first hand the powerful work he is doing in training and releasing Arab missionaries back into that region. Such integrity too.

Afeef risks everything to follow Jesus, receiving death threats, regular

harassment by the secret police and having his church as the No. 1 target on bomb attack lists by active terrorist groups.

His heart for his Muslim people is massive. The vast majority of Arab Christians have a deep hatred and contempt for Muslims. Having allowed God to melt their hearts for their fellow-countrymen, Afeef and his wife have seen many, many come to know Jesus.

Their home is always open and their hospitality is a ministry in itself. Their call is a WORLD-CHANGING one, and it's no coincidence that God has aligned Kevin and Ozreach with it. Arabs from all over the Middle East, both from Christian and Muslim backgrounds, seek out this man's input and travel to Jordan to train under him. He needs funds to do what he's doing, as well as constant prayer support.

Let's encourage this important work and get behind him with our money, prayers and friendship.

Mindy West

Mindy served in the Middle East for 4 years and now oversees a connect group at SCCC Shellharbour.

Cambodia—Donna Byham

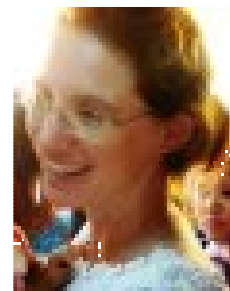
Hey Kevin,

Just wanted to let you know that quite a number of people from Young Life and our homes (both kids & staff) have said to me a number of times how much they enjoyed what you shared and how

I loved having you here, just hanging and being real together. It was good to meet Tom & Nim again and Tony for the first time.

Donna Byham

Email: donnabyham@gmail.com



Cambodia—Linda Chisholm

A potentially fatal event was handled so well by the Bluegate House staff when a depressed ex-prisoner tried to commit suicide on the premises. The staff knew exactly what to do: empty pill packets collected, man in recovery position and transport on the way. This troubled young man was treated and recovered in hospital. He was then delivered to caring relatives.

inside the prison. Staff interviewed each on the of 300 prisoners, selected the ones who were at the correct level, visited parents to get their support and went to each boy's former school to get records. From this pool 12 were chosen to start at Year 10 level.

Four Christian high school teachers were recruited and the classes began. Those in the class are highly motivated.

Many of the youth realize they have blown their education future and to get

a chance to redeem those lost opportunities was beyond their wildest dreams. Pray that they can see a brighter future when they leave prison and they continue to study hard in preparing for their release.

Please pray for PFC staff as we consolidate the incredible growth over the last 2 years.

Linda Chisholm

Prison Fellowship Cambodia

Email: chisholmlinda@gmail.com



CONNECTION 2009

We will be meeting in Melbourne from lunchtime Friday 20th March 2009 until lunchtime Saturday 21st March 2009.

We will have four sessions of someone sharing with us possibly a Melbourne minister plus our guys. We will stay at the same place so we can have maximum time together

We will meet in the city



and share two lunches, one dinner and a breakfast with one another.

Mark the dates down in your diaries and we will keep you updated on details.

We will also meet in July/August at Sunshine Coast & in November at the Hunter Valley

Profile Martyn & Elly Webb

How long have you been married?
26 years

How long have you been in ministry?
20 years

Favourite things you like to do?
Martyn: Art, coffee & movies
Elly: Beach, reading, shopping & movies

What do you like about OzReach?
The people that relate and the sense of acceptance.

What other work have you done?
Martyn: Ambulance driver, landscaper, and Ranger.
Elly: Nurse, receptionist

What's the hardest thing you find in ministry?

People's paradigms and the expectation they have of church or ministry.

When are your birthdays?

Martyn: July
Elly: August

What's your favourite food?

Martyn: Thai
Elly: Salmon



CAFÉ CHURCH Port Stephens

For how long have you pastored the church? 20 years

What things are running well in your church?

Relationships, Men's & Women's ministry.

What is your vision statement?
Strong prayer, creative living, and real love.

What things can you improve on?
Everything we do can be improved on.

What makes your church unique?
Lifestyle Christianity.

Web: www.cafechurch.com.au
Email: admin@cafechurch.com.au

Connecting in November

We are connecting together in Auburn on Monday 17th November 2008 at 10:30am. Steve Clarke oversees "The Father's House" in the Blue Mountains and ministers all over the country on "The Supernatural". A number of our churches have really enjoyed his ministry. I thought it would be a great thing for him to share with us on building the supernatural over our lives and our church.

Then at 12:00noon we will head to "Sweets on Queen" for some Middle Eastern food and culture and at the end of lunch you might enjoy going a little deeper into the Middle Eastern culture by smoking the Narghile pipe with me as we hang together. It will be a fun day of connecting together. There is no cost except buying your own lunch. We are keeping this event to Senior Ministers and their assistants.

We are holding this at City West Church, Corner of Queen St & Town Hall Lane at Auburn, next to the police station and part of the "Well Spring Café".

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