

United We Stand, Divided We Fall

United We Stand, Divided We Fall is a catch-phrase that encourages individuals to work together to accomplish a common goal. We are limited by what we can do our selves but there is strength in numbers and even more power if we work together in unity. Unions have often focused on this phrase as they encouraged workers to join together for better working conditions. World Wars and our country's sentiment the day after 9/11 are times when we acted as a nation in unity. Even our country's name implies unity – the United States of America. During the early years of our country's existence Patrick Henry used the phrase about a unified nation. In his last public speech (March, 1799) he clasped his hands together and said, "Let us trust God, and our better judgment to set us right hereafter. United we stand, divided we fall." Henry went on to explain: "Let us not split into factions which must destroy that union upon which our existence hangs." Those words ring true for us today, as well.

The Bible warns us about the importance of unity. *If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand (Mark 3:25).*

One of the key indicators of us becoming a divided people is how we have become judgmental of others who think differently than we do. As Christians we must guard against division and a lack of respect for others. Here is a great example. The picture of Clemson Head Football Coach Dabo Sweeney (below) was originally a Facebook link (not activated for this devotion). If you are a Clemson football fan you will eagerly listen to what he has to say, while others will ignore it. Our reaction has nothing to do with the man and his message, but everything to do with the logo on his shirt. We have allowed people to become polarized in so many aspects of life that it often defines who we are. Our culture seems to overlook the concept of respecting other people who have different opinions. Our criteria for animosities are based on politics, religion, skin color, nationality and even the sports team they have chosen to embrace. If we determine a person has a different perspective than us we tend to ignore or even scoff at anything they say.

So, what was Dabo Sweeney talking about in this clip? Dabo Sweeney was talking about love, not football. He reminded people that God created **all** the people on the face of this earth – not just those who look or think like us. Sweeney said, "God loves them all, and so should we. We should love those of different backgrounds, different races, different religions and different favorite sports teams." Sweeney quoted God's two greatest commandments



word for word. *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (Matthew 22:37) and to 'Love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:38).*

It is that simple: Love all people. Don't let differences divide us but, instead, let diversity make us stronger because each person brings unique skills to the table. Let us accept people for "who and whose" they are.

They are a creation of God. If we would unite towards a common goal we would be a much stronger nation. The same is true in our community, our church, our workplace and our family. As Patrick Henry said, let us trust God and not split into factions that would destroy our unity with God, on which our existence hangs.

Let us unite together for a cause worth our full attention -- sharing God's love with all people. Love is a choice. Choose love as it helps create a sense of unity. *Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing (1 Peter 3:8-9)*

Question: What areas of your life do you need to work on to better accept others and show God's love for them?

Prayer: Lord. You made every one of us. Let us respect the opinions of others because of our love for all people. Let us seek to find a common purpose that we can work together to achieve. Amen.

