

Within Our Reach

#0355

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—June 15, 1976

John 17:11, may I remind you that the Spirit of Prophecy tells us that this chapter, the 17th of John, comprehends more than any other chapter in the New Testament. It's a wonderful, wonderful chapter.

Before I go to reading, I want to ask you something. I've been thinking about it. Suppose that I would come in here tonight and tell you that this property had cost a large sum of money. We'll suppose a million dollars. I guess it's worth a million dollars now, but suppose I'd tell you that we had contracted to pay that for it when we came here. And that we'd been making payments on it through the years. And we now had it down to where there was only \$500 left to pay and we could get the deed. Would you be interested in trying to raise it here tonight? Wouldn't that be an interesting thing, to be able to take care of the last payment?

Well, what I want to study with you tonight, dear friends, is within our reach. And it's so wonderful, and we're so close to it, that I would just love to get the last \$500.

Then, I was thinking of another thing. Suppose we were picking some fruit and there was an apple way up there in the tree, and we had no ladder. And the only way we could get it would be for somebody to get up on somebody else's shoulder and reach way up there. And there's a beautiful apple up there.

Would you be willing to have somebody get on your shoulder so they could get up there and get that? Would you? Yes. And would you be willing to be the other one and stand on somebody's shoulder and reach your hand up there and get it? That's another picture I want you to have.

You know, *Ministry of Healing* 503 says:

"High and holy attainments are within our reach"
Ministry of Healing, page 503.

But that doesn't mean they drop in our mouths. No. They're within our reach. The language is so significant and so precise—they're within our reach. But if something's within your reach, if you don't reach, then what? You don't get it, you don't get it.

And so, tonight there's something within our reach, my dear brothers and sisters, that oh, I would rather have than all the money in this world. I say it thoughtfully, something I would rather have. So, let's see what it is.

John 17, verse 11:

“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are” John 17:11.

What did Jesus pray for His disciples? They should be what? One, as Jesus and the Father are one.

Now, notice how He comes back to it in the 20th verse:

“Neither pray I for these alone...” John 17:20.

The eleven that were with Him there that night.

“...but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me...” John 17:20–23.

So, what is the evidence to the world that God has sent His Son? The unity of His church, the unity of His church. God wants the love between the Father and the Son to be revealed in us. And dear ones, there’s much that goes on on this campus, of course, that I don’t know. There’s much that goes on that *you* don’t know. Even if the campus were half as big as it is, no one person could know all that’s going on. But I know enough of what’s going on to know that this is within our reach. God is doing some wonderful things in teaching us lessons of love and unity and fellowship. And it makes my heart glad, and I praise His name.

And I know that when we get all that God wants us to have in this line, it’s going to open the way for the Latter Rain and the Loud Cry. It’s going to open the way for the mighty miracles that come in the second Pentecost, the healing of the sick, all that the early church experienced.

And friends, tonight that beautiful big red apple that I want to reach for, or let somebody stand on my shoulders so they can reach for it, is not so much the mighty miracles of the Loud Cry. It is this preliminary and wonderful miracle of loving unity.

The more I look at it, the more I think this is the most wonderful thing, I was going to say, this side of heaven. *In* heaven. Anywhere in the universe. Take this out, and I couldn’t enjoy the golden streets and the pearly gates. And give me this, friends, and we can sing together in the dungeon, like Paul and Silas sang at Philippi. Oh, I want—I want all that God has intended in this. What do you say?

You know, when I was just a young fellow starting out in the work before I was married, my father and mother kept house for me, or I stayed with them, any way

you want to put it. And my mother took care of a little girl, just a little baby girl. She was learning to talk, and she enjoyed talking, and she enjoyed eating.

And when there was something especially nice, she would sometimes turn to my mother and say, “Auntie, can we have more and more and more”?

And I’m so glad that what we’re studying about tonight, dear friends, we can have more and more and more—love and unity. You know, as I say, this is what is going to make heaven a happy place.

As the prophet puts it in that last chapter in *Great Controversy*, speaking of the reward of heaven:

“The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul shall there find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages... these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed” *Great Controversy*, page 676.

Won’t it be wonderful to go down the streets of the New Jerusalem and *know* that there’s not a single suspicion?

We won’t be thinking, “I wonder what they think of me anyway? I wonder what they think of me anyway.”

Well, *Ministry of Healing*, page 360, says:

“The warmth of true friendship, the love that binds heart to heart, is a foretaste of the joys of heaven” *Ministry of Healing*, page 360.

We can’t have the golden streets here, but we can have that which is far more wonderful than golden streets. We can have this love and unity. And as I say, I know that we’re having a great measure of it. And friends, I want to reach up and get that big beautiful apple right there at the top of the tree. What do you say? I want all that God has for us.

Well now, this reading that my wife shared with me this morning at worship. This is in the little book *That I May Know Him*, page 172, the reading for June 15th:

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are”
John 17:11.

“The unity, the harmony, that should exist among the disciples of Christ is described in these words: ‘that they may be one, as we are.’ But how many there are who draw off and seem to think that they have learned all they need to learn... Those who choose to stand on the outskirts of

the camp cannot know what is going on in the inner circle. They must come right into the inner courts, for as a people we must be united in faith and purpose...It is through this unity that we are to convince the world of the mission of Christ, and bear our divine credentials to the world"
That I May Know Him, page 172.

Now, the figure here is an interesting one, standing on the outskirts of the camp.

I wonder, could there be anybody here that says, "Well, I'm afraid that's where I am."

Well, dear ones, Jesus invites us to come on in.

"Well," somebody says, "if they'd let me if they'd tell me all that's in the inner circle, I'd just be glad."

Let me tell you something, friends. The matter of whether you're on the inner circle or not is not a matter of how much you know of what's going on. Do you know, there was once a being that knew more about what was going on in God's government than any other creature in the universe? But he still became envious and jealous because he thought there were some things being hidden from him. What was his name? Lucifer. And remember, he knew more about the purposes of God and the counsels of God and the knowledge of God and the plans of God than any other creature in the universe. But he chose to think about what he *didn't* have, instead of what he *did* have.

Some of you have heard me tell a little story about a dog that was trotting home one evening. He'd been fortunate enough to find a bone. Now, a bone wouldn't attract me, but it does a dog, you understand. And so, this dog was trotting home happily with his bone in his mouth.

But he went over a little bridge, a little foot log across a stream, and as he did, he chanced to look in the water. And there in the mirror reflection of the water he saw, what do you suppose? Another dog with a bone. And he grabbed for it, but of course, in grabbing for it, you know what he did. He lost the real bone. He lost the one he had.

And that's what Lucifer did, dear friends. He *thought* he saw something that he was missing. He really wasn't missing anything. God was giving him every day all he could hold. But he *thought* he saw something that Christ was getting that if *he* could only get it, then that would be wonderful. And so, he dropped what he had to try to grab what somebody else had that he couldn't have. There was no way. Christ was infinite; Lucifer was finite.

Oh my dear friends, what a shame to miss what we could have in the vain endeavor to get what we can't have. What do you say? And you know, even if we could get what we *think* we might like, if it doesn't have our name on it, if it isn't something that heaven has planned, it wouldn't make us happy anyway. No. There

is no way to satisfy the selfish heart, the envious heart, the jealous heart, the critical heart, the faultfinding heart. There's no way to satisfy it. The only remedy is to come and learn of Jesus.

He says, "Come and learn of Me," and you'll find what? Rest [a paraphrase of Matthew 11:28–29]. We studied that some classes ago when I was with you.

And so, this evening, dear friends, I invite you with all my heart, let's come up higher and get all that God has for us in this matter of love and unity. What do you say? Let's not be on the outskirts. Let's press our way right into the inner circle.

And remember, as we've read here, *this* is what will convince the world that Jesus is the Son of God and that we have His truth. And it's doing it, thank God. Wasn't your heart cheered with some of the testimonies last Friday night from visitors and from patients?

Oh, I said in my soul, "If all I can do is just run a few errands to keep this machinery running, it's worth it, it's worth it."

Isn't it? Yes. God is being glorified as people come and learn the way of love, the way of truth. All right.

Now, what can we do about it in a practical way to get closer, closer to Jesus, and closer to one another?

Let's turn to Matthew the 18th chapter, verses 19 and 20, and we're going to read a wonderful promise that tells us how to do this.

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" Matthew 18:19–20.

Now, here we have some mathematics. What are the numbers? Two or three. And Christ's promise here is to two or three. You remember in the illustration I was using about standing on somebody's shoulders to get that apple?

Steve, come here. Now, there's no apple up there, but just suppose there's an apple there. Now, which one of us can get the apple? Way up there at the top of the tree. It'll take how many of us? Two. Yes, two. So, either I'll have to stand on his shoulders and reach for it, or else I'll have to be willing to let him stand on *my* shoulders. But the point is neither one of us can get it alone, neither one. Let's get it! All right. Thank you.

Now, what is it? If two of you shall do what? Agree on earth. He and I would have to agree. We sure would, to go through that operation, wouldn't we, to get that apple? We'd have to agree where to stand, we'd have to agree which one was going to climb on the other, and we'd really have to get into unity, wouldn't we, on that operation? All right.

But now, this is talking about doing what? Agreeing about anything we what? What does it say? I want you to look at the text. Anything they shall what? Maybe it'll help if we'll read the text together. All together:

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven” Matthew 18:19.

Can you get the apple? Yes, you can, if you what? If you reach for it. And it takes how many? Two. The next verse, sometimes it takes three, two or three. All right. But at least two to claim this promise, two. And agreeing about what? What they ask, what they ask.

Notice in Matthew the 21st chapter and the 22nd verse, what a wonderful promise on this it is.

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” Matthew 21:22.

What are we to mix with our prayers? Belief. But you can't mix yeast in making bread unless you've got flour. And the mixing of the believing is with the praying and with the united praying. All right.

Now, let's apply this practically to the thing we're studying tonight. If I want more love, more unity, then I'm to do what about it? Pray. I can pray alone; I should. But I'm to pray with what? One or two others, a little prayer band.

In *Volume 7*, pages 21 and 22, we're given instruction regarding carrying this verse out, and we are told to focus our prayers upon special souls. Apply this verse to praying both for those in the church and those outside the church.

We're to have a great love for our brothers and sisters in the church, in the family of God, and we're to pray for them as we see them in need of special help. But our sympathies are to reach out to others who do not know the Lord, and we're to take their names upon our lips.

Now dear friends, this is something that is so simple, but it's hard to get people to do it and keep at it. You know, if I thought it might not embarrass somebody, I'd like to ask you a question tonight. I'm not going to ask you to raise your hands because, as I say I, don't want to embarrass anybody. But I would like to ask you this question. How many of you—remember, don't raise your hands—how many of you are having a little prayer band with somebody? How many of you are praying again and again with some one person about one or two other souls that need the saving grace of God? Are you doing that?

Well, if you are, you know the blessing of this verse. If you're not, then this meeting tonight is going to be for you, I trust, a decision hour, a decision hour. That you're going to find somebody that will be willing to agree with you to get that apple up there, somebody on whose shoulders you can climb, or somebody that will climb

on your shoulders. The two of you together are going to work to get that apple, that soul that needs the help that only Jesus can give and that He's promised to give in answer to prayer.

I'd like to apply it, in another area. Suppose I see things on this campus that I think ought to be different. Do you suppose there is anything on this campus that ought to be different? Well, I could think of three or four things, and if somebody would give me a dollar for each suggestion, I think I could come up with at least 50.

But listen, most of them are things that I can't do anything about except pray. Now, you notice I didn't say "All of them." But most of them, most of them are things that the only thing I can do, or at least the main thing I can, do is pray.

Question: shall I *fail* to do that one thing I *can* do, wishing that there were other things I could do? Oh friends, anything on this campus that needs attention, that needs changing for the better, thank God I can have a part in it if I'll do what? Pray. What did we read here in Matthew 21?

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" Matthew 21:22.

Look at that picture in *Early Writings* 269 and 270 about the shaking.

"...Some, with strong faith and agonizing cries..."
Early Writings, page 269.

Doing what?

"...pleading with God" *Ibid*.

And finally, as they keep praying, praying their way through the darkness, the light breaks, the Latter Rain is poured out, the Loud Cry is given. Thousands are converted and brought into the church. We're not in that loud-cry experience. We're right on the verge of it, and we've been for a long time. God is waiting for souls that will learn to pray, pray earnestly, pray alone, pray together in little groups, urging their way through the darkness, pleading for souls, pleading for the church, pleading for the baptism of the Spirit of God.

Oh, I say, the reason I'm studying all this with you tonight is that I know we're within reach of it. I thank God for what's going on as I see that this one and that one is getting problems solved, learning to pray, learning to get their difficulties between them and their brethren out of the way. Let's keep at it until there isn't one problem of that kind left on these grounds. What do you say, friends? Yes.

You know I read something interesting the other day. I read that smallpox had almost been eradicated from this planet. The report that I read was that there was only one country left at the present time that had any reported cases of smallpox. Isn't that something? Now, I'm sure they'll try to keep at it until they can say there isn't one single case of smallpox left on this planet.

Is there coming a time when there won't be one case left of the smallpox of selfishness and disagreement and criticizing and fault finding and misunderstanding? Not one of those left? Is there coming a time? Not when Jesus comes, not when probation closes, but before. Right here in this present evil world, God is going to have a group of people like that, for Early Writings 269, 270 and 271 picturing the remnant church as they pray their way through these problems and difficulties and the Latter Rain is poured out, it says:

“They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers”
Early Writings, page 270.

Isn't that beautiful? Oh, it's coming. We're within reach of it. Let's press our way through. What do you say? This is what Jesus tried to get His disciples to do for three years and more, but they were slow. But finally, through the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary and the forty days that followed, they were humbled and longed to please Jesus.

And so, when He went back to heaven to the sanctuary, they did just what He told them. They went to the upper room, and they prayed, and they sought the Lord and one another until when the day of Pentecost came they were what?

“...All with one accord in one place” Acts 2:1.

Listen, who do you suppose prayed together in those ten days? Watch while I ask you the question. The disciples that already felt the closest together, or do you think that there were any of the disciples that didn't feel very close that got together and prayed? Must have included the latter, don't you think? They would never have gotten to Pentecost if the only person that John prayed with was his pal, if the only person that Andrew prayed with was his brother. There must have been several that sought out John and James, or John and James sought them out.

Maybe it was John and James that sought them out and said, “Look here, men, I know you felt bad when my brother and I asked for the first place in the kingdom. And I can see now we were all out of place. And I want you to kneel down here and pray with me that God will help us never to get back into *that* kind of an experience.”

Do you see what I mean? Oh, if we seriously want to reach that apple, if we seriously want to enter into the great blessings that God has for us on this campus, let us say to the Lord. “Oh dear Lord, is there anybody that I've been a stumbling block to, or is there somebody that's been a stumbling block to me? Dear Lord, help me to seek those out, and let us pray together. Let us pray together with humbled hearts.”

Will God hear us as we do that? Yes. And we can do all this in an atmosphere, not of desperation, but of hope. Because, look at the promise we're dealing with, we're cashing checks. Cashing checks isn't a sad program. Don't you like to cash a check? Yes. Present that piece of paper, and the cashier turns over those greenbacks, five, ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred dollars, whatever the check is. And *this* is a wonderful promise:

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” Matthew 21:22.

All right, dear ones, I thank God for what He’s doing. And remember, this is the glory of the loud-cry angel, this glory of love. The whole earth is going to be lightened with this glory. And so, my dear friend, let us press in, press in, press in.

I was thinking of different ones that we naturally pray with. Do you think every husband should pray with his wife? Oh, yes. How can two be one in marriage unless they’re one in Christ and press close together? Do you think parents should pray with their children? Yes, yes, and children with parents.

But besides all this, I trust that many a heart here will be impressed with what can happen if you seek out someone, brother with a brother, sister with a sister, and the two of you get down and pray together about special needs, special problems, special souls. This is God’s prescription for bringing the fulfillment of the Savior’s prayer that His church may be one.

Volume 8, page 251:

“The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. One member working in right lines will persuade other members to unite with him in making earnest intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit” *Testimonies for the Church Volume 8, page 251.*

This is the way that Christ’s prayer is going to be answered in its fullness. It is because some are *doing* this that so many wonderful things are happening around them. If we will all enter in and *reach*, we can have more and more and more. I want it, don’t you? Praise God. Praise God for His wonderful promise.

Now, we have 11 minutes, and I’ll tell you what I’d like to do, for two or three reasons, and I’ll tell you what the reasons are. I’d like to have you come up here and stand here by me and express what God has put in your heart. One reason I want you to do it is that it’s warm tonight, and people are drowsy and sleepy, and if you come up, they’ll hear a change of voice, and some of them will wake up. And if some of you that feel a little weary will just exert yourself and reach and come up, you’ll get the blessing too. And another reason, friends, that I want to do it is, as you hear me quote often, expression deepens impression.

But most of all I want you to do it because Jesus is listening. Oh, this is what He’s set His heart on, that His followers may all be one. How glad He must be to hear us talking about it this hour this evening. How cheered His heart must be. And He and Gabriel perhaps are talking it over right now.

“Do you think this time they’ll really do it?”

Oh, let's cheer the hearts of the angels and of Jesus. What do you say?

“There are angels hovering round,
There are angels hovering round,
There are angels, angels, hovering round.

They will carry tidings home,
They will carry tidings home,
They will carry, carry tidings home.

To the New Jerusalem,
To the New Jerusalem,
To the New, the New Jerusalem.”
Author Unknown.

[Testimony service followed.]

Dear ones, how different this is from the ritualistic, regimented prayers of so many religions. Think of the Mohammedans that several times each day wherever they are at the appointed hour, kneel toward Mecca and go through their ritual. And we can think of other religions closer than that.

Let us rejoice that what we're talking about tonight is not ritual. It is the heart-felt cry of two or three people coming together because they want to see something certain, definite accomplished that God has promised. And in an informal, earnest way asking Jesus to fulfill his Word.

“Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above”
Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, #350, first stanza.

Now, between now and Friday night, be praying that we'll have a precious service, won't yo?. And we're so glad for the Vacation Bible Schools. We're so glad for the five-day plans. We're so glad for the sanitarium work, for the homes and the different departments and the Bible studies. And every one of these is an opportunity to contact souls. But quietly behind the scenes of *all* these obvious activities, the little prayer bands are meeting, two or three together claiming the promise. This is the life of the whole program.

You're dismissed. God bless you.

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