



The Liberty OF *Diversity*

HOW FREEDOM
IN CHRIST
EMPOWERS US
TO APPRECIATE
AND CELEBRATE
DIVERSITY

SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST
WEEK OF PRAYER

JANUARY 2 - 8, 2022

Seventh Day Baptist Week of Prayer

January 2-8, 2022

Sponsored by the

Seventh Day Baptist World Federation • www.sdbwf.org

During the first full week of January since 1967, Seventh Day Baptists around the world have united in prayer by sharing in meditations centered on a theme chosen by the author of the SDB Week of Prayer booklet. This year, for the first time, there is a general author, who has coordinated the writings of seven other authors from seven regions of the world, to complete the booklet. This new format has been employed as one of the practical ways to demonstrate the emphasis of diversity as articulated in this year's theme. The theme is, "The Liberty Of Diversity," with a sub-theme of, "How Freedom In Christ Empowers Us To Appreciate and Celebrate Diversity," and the book of Galatians is being used to provide the biblical basis for the week's meditations. The general author is Andrew Samuels, General Secretary of the SDB World Federation. The other authors will be introduced with each day's meditation.

We are encouraging prayers each day of the week for all countries of the world where Seventh Day Baptists exist; not just the countries which are members of the World Federation. For the first time this year as well, the participants are being referred to the World Federation website (www.sdbwf.org) where some basic information is provided about the churches in each country.

Purposes of the SDB World Federation include:

1. **To provide increased communication** among Seventh Day Baptist groups around the world.
2. **To promote projects of mutual interest** which will benefit from international cooperation.
3. **To stimulate fellowship** among Seventh Day Baptist Christians through periodic meetings of representatives between Conferences or groups and programs of mutual aid.
4. **To receive and evaluate statements of need** as may come to the Federation and to share such expression of need with its members, inviting their response as the Lord may lead.
5. **To provide leadership training** for Conference leaders, pastors and lay leaders appropriate to each individual conference, as determined through consultation.

Contributions:

The SDB World Federation encourages all member Conferences to designate an offering from their churches at least once a year in support of the purposes of the SDB World Federation. Other contributions and designations from Conferences, churches, and/or individuals are also welcome. Please make all checks or money orders out to SDBWF. Contributions may be mailed to: Treasurer, SDB World Federation, P.O. Box 1311, West Palm Beach, FL 33402 or you may also donate via PayPal at treasurer@sdbwf.org

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Sessions:

The last General Session was held in Brazil (Curitiba, Parana) on January 22-28, 2017 with the theme, "The Kingdom of God is Like...". The next General Session is planned to occur in the United States, July 17-24, 2022. **However, those Sessions have been postponed to July 2023, because of the global pandemic brought on by the COVID-19 virus.**

Officers for the World Federation include General Secretary Andrew Samuels (general.secretary@sdbwf.org); President Luciano Baretto Nogueira de Moura; First Vice President & Vice President for Caribbean Claudia Ferguson; Treasurer Garfield Miller (treasurer@sdbwf.org); Assistant General Secretary Michael Spearl; Recording Secretary Karen Umana; Regional Vice Presidents: Canaan Phiri (Africa), Douglas Machado (South America), and John Pethtel (North America). Luis Lovelace serves as Editor of Publications.

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Introduction

Pastor Luciano Barreto Nogueira de Moura, from Brazil, representing South America.

The Apostle Paul was born and educated in an ancient, traditional and very closed culture. The Jewish worldview was that the chosen people could not mingle with other peoples, nor could they create family ties. Moreover, the prospect that the Messiah would come from the people of Israel, and exclusively to the people of Israel, created a separatist and prejudiced mentality toward the gentiles. Even though they were under the yoke of a gentile empire, the Jews' point of view was that the people of Israel were spiritually and culturally superior. In summary, this was the culture and "bubble" in which the Apostle Paul was educated.

People are educated in different family and social cultures. Each culture, including one's religious beliefs, has its concepts and worldview. Likewise, there are also prejudices. People are subject to these prejudices, many times learned from childhood. Religious, ethnic (racial) and gender prejudices are the most common and those that promote greater problems of discrimination.

It was no different for the Apostle and the culture in which he lived. However, the apostle was changed radically. Paul experienced this and recounts it in his letters. How can behaviors learned and lived since childhood, be changed in such a radical way? What can change the way you think, feel and see others? The change bringing redemption and union with Christ freed the

apostle Paul from prejudice and gave him the purpose, and mission, of bringing the liberating message to people he once considered unclean and unworthy.

Everyone who is part of the Church today, is also immersed in a society where diversity is the hallmark. There is religious, ethnic, ideological diversity, etc. In such a context, the challenges in spreading the Gospel are great and many. In many ways, we try to create barriers to coexistence and dialogue.

One of the barriers is prejudice, which occurs both in the sense of the Christian for the non-Christian and in the opposite direction. Another obstacle is the fact that the concept of tolerance of diversity harbors ideologies and concepts that directly confront Christian principles and values, such as: defense of abortion, sexual libertinism, gender ideology, defense of euthanasia, racial supremacy, etc.

Like the Apostle Paul, we must spread the Gospel with love, acceptance, understanding, empathy, and without prejudice. However, we should not agree with concepts, behaviors, and thoughts that are contrary to the Word of God. Redemption and union with Christ are liberating while being sanctifying. Let us pray that we will be delivered from all kinds of prejudice and sanctified by intimacy with our Lord.



Pastor Luciano Barreto Nogueira de Moura is the Pastor of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Brasilia in Brazil, and the President of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation. He is a son, husband, father, and grandfather.

Freedom To Confront Personal Prejudices

Rev. Dr. Carl Greene, from USA, representing North America

Text - Galatians 1:14-17

First things first. What was the first thing you thought of when you awoke this morning? Think of what first grabbed your attention and reminded you of what you needed to do today. In Galatians 1, Paul makes it clear that the first thing every day is Someone, Jesus Christ, and that brings the blessing of liberty. We know freedom because of Who has been revealed to us. This freedom is not for us to hoard. As exemplified by Paul, we are called to share this freedom in Christ with all people, leveraging the diversity with which God has blessed us.

God's plan of gospel witness requires biblical diversity. Paul's call to bring the gospel message to the Gentiles (1:16) highlights diversity. The fact that Paul, the most ardent of Jews (1:14), would preach among the very culturally different Gentiles can only be explained as a work of God (1:16). Rather than focusing on skill sets or simply determined human effort, the interaction of diverse people points clearly to the hand of God at work. The only way that Paul would end preaching among the Gentiles is through the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:16). Notice that this is not God's backup plan—God's plan for reaching all people with the gospel message is through diversity. For Paul to be God's instrument, though, he needed to confront personal prejudices.

Gospel witness brings freedom from personal prejudices of you. Paul was called by God with the specific purpose to bring God glory through gospel witness to people very different from himself. In order to do that, Paul needed to leave behind the prejudices that he had learned about the

Gentiles. He needed to hold traditions more loosely than God's grace (1:14-15). He needed to focus on God's Word rather than the voices of people who were most like himself (1:17). Paul did not just spend time with the people who were most culturally like himself to learn from God's Word—in fact, he even separated himself for a time to make sure that he was not entangled with his own traditions ahead of God's Word (1:17)

Gospel witness brings freedom from personal prejudices of me. Notice that Paul did not disown his heritage. In fact, he continued to highlight the positives of his background and the blessings that God had brought through his personal background. Paul was not looking for everyone to assimilate into being the exact same mold. Paul was called to live out his own heritage in a way that honored God, brought the gospel message to all people, and grew unity through diversity.

Our call to confront personal prejudices. Personal prejudices do not end with the Jewish/Gentile divide. Each one of us harbors personal prejudices because of our own traditions and cultural backgrounds. The question is, will you and I separate ourselves from traditions that separate us, while continuing to embrace and celebrate the elements of diversity that bless our gospel unity?

Pray for Seventh Day Baptists in Angola, Australia*, Bangladesh, Brazil*, Burundi*, Cameroon, and Canary Islands.

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Carl Greene is the Executive Director of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference of USA and Canada. Carl and his wife Cindy consider it a tremendous blessing from God that they are experiencing life together alongside their four children. Rev. Dr. Greene holds a BA in Political Science and History (Houghton College, New York, USA), an MDiv with a concentration in transformational leadership (Bethel University, Minnesota, USA), and a PhD in Inter-cultural Studies (Trinity International University, Illinois, USA).

Freedom To Confront Prejudices In Others

Pastor Gabriel Alegre, from Australia, representing Australasia

Text - Galatians 2:11-16

Are we 'free' to point out the failings, faults, and hypocrisy in others? Well, at first, we may be hesitant to say, 'yes we are', perhaps fearing that if we do confront others - then we open ourselves up to be confronted. But what if the situation harms or hinders the Gospel and/or puts the Gospel in a negative light; leading people away from God, rather than toward Him?

In our passage of Scripture, Paul confronts Peter, Barnabas, and some of the Jews for displaying certain prejudices and a duality in behaviour that jeopardised the Gospel. But before we delve any further and extract practical applications for us today - let's make one point clear: if we are to confront others, then we must ensure that we ourselves are above reproach, so as not to enter the same hypocritical state as those whom we are trying to rescue. Scripture reminds us to 'firstly remove the log in our own eyes, before attempting to remove the speck in my brother's eye' (Matthew 7:3-5).

In Galatians 2, we see Paul pulling up Peter, Barnabas, and the rest of the Jews for displaying a level of hypocrisy and duality which had a far-reaching implication upon the Gentiles and the Gospel they preached. The hypocritical actions of eating with the Gentiles when no Jewish folks were present, and then separating themselves from the brethren when the Jews arrived, coupled with the imposition of 'Jewish practices' upon Gentiles - was too much for Paul to bear. Peter's actions not only impacted him on a personal level, but his behaviour had an impact upon Barnabas and the 'rest of the Jews' who (also) began to demonstrate

prejudice and bias against the Gentile brethren. This type of behaviour is divisive, non-Scriptural and damaging to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We read that they 'were carried away with their hypocrisy' - and if left unchecked, the only logical outcome would be to have a divided Body of Christ.

Now, let's readjust our own lenses and widen this picture even further: the efficacy of the Gospel was in danger of being negatively impacted by the prejudices of many. We too, may inadvertently hinder the progress of the Gospel by (either) displaying hurtful and/or unproductive prejudices or by choosing to remain silent when we identify prejudices in others - particularly, those of the Household of God.

Being zealous for the Gospel and for the Gentiles; Paul confronts the situation and those involved. So, what is our take-away? As Children of the Living God, we too have a responsibility to care for, support and love each other; this may include being empowered to confront others who are in danger of being led astray. We do this in Love! In fact, everything we do - including correcting others - must be done in love and in the proper Spirit - as this is how the world will know that we are His disciples (Colossians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 16:14). Now, let us consider how we may spur one another in the encouragement of love and good works (Hebrews 10:24).

Pray for Seventh Day Baptists in Canada*, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, and Egypt.

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Pastor Gabriel Alegre is the current Pastor of the Sydney, Australia Seventh Day Baptist Church and Caretaker Pastor of the Melbourne, Australia SDB Church. He was born into a Christian family and has served the Lord from his youth. His vision is to share the Word of God with as many that are willing to listen, and to inspire people to have vibrant, meaningful and satisfying lives with our Lord Christ Jesus.

Freedom To Be One (united) In Jesus Christ

Dr. Rosemarie Wilson, from Jamaica, representing the Caribbean

Text - Galatians 3:28-29

A clarion call is heard across society today, consistently inviting people to unite...to **"Be One,"** for some ***stated cause*** or ***mission***, as **"Together Each Achieves More"**....and, **"Teamwork Makes The Dream Work"**. Oh, what success stories can be shared, when these truths are put to the test, and great teams accomplish their best!

There is a sad reality though: so many organizations do not experience the joy of celebrating ***"mission accomplished,"*** as the 'oneness' of the team is not realized, due to the interference of multiple relational barriers. Unfortunately, many individuals in these teams fall victim to the self-and team-defeating belief that they: ***'do not belong', 'are not accepted', 'are not good enough'.*** Our focus text today brings great news to every member of the Church of Jesus Christ, the team brought together by His sanctifying Blood. **"We have freedom to be One in Christ!"**

Entry to the family of God through acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, places all humanity on the same spiritual and sociocultural footing. In Jesus Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female (verse 28); our focus as members of Christ's Church, must never be on **who we are**, but **whose we are**. Through the divinely inspired Word of God, Paul chided the Galatians who had started to move away from their earlier Christian experience of faithfully trusting the finished work of Christ, to a place where they were believing that legalism, ritualistic religious practices, other personal factors such as nationality, social status and gender, deter-

mined their position in God. Paul unreservedly seized the opportunity, as I gratefully do today, to reassure the Body of Christ, that humanity's familial blood lineage holds no special place in God's Kingdom walk and talk. No one **'in Christ'** is brought closer to Him by virtue of his or her social class, profession, role in ministry, gender and other factors which have the potential to act as relational barriers. Jesus' blood, spilled once for all, tore down the dividing wall (see Ephesians 2:14). Hallelujah! Out of many, and from all walks of life, in Jesus Christ, we are ONE! We have the same Father, who out of His unfailing love, sent His Only Begotten Son to subject His physical body to be torn to pieces to ensure that spiritually, His Body, the Church would not exist in 'pieces' but as ONE!

The Body of Christ is called to unity through diversity. From wherever we come, with our different personalities, genetic make-up, gifts, abilities, experiences and cultural norms, we form a beautiful, variegated collage, creatively crafted by the very mind that designed the wonderful diversity of this universe. In Christ, we celebrate as Abraham's seed, our glorious right to possess God's wonderful promise of citizenship in the Kingdom of God...Hallelujah! One blood, One family! Let's pray today, that the Body of Christ will live as one, so that as God's team, together we can engage in the mission of winning souls to Christ.

Let us pray for Seventh Day Baptists in England*, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Conakry, Guyana*, and Haiti.

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Rosemarie Patrecia Wilson is the third of four children born to Joslyn and Ethlin McLean, in the Parish of Manchester, Jamaica. She is happily married to Desmond Wilson for 27 years, and together they have been blessed to parent three children: Abigail, Jo-Daniel and Joshua-David. Born and raised as a Seventh Day Baptist in the Blue Mountain Seventh Day Baptist Church, Rosemarie feels particularly privileged to be serving the Lord in the Teaching and Pastoral Ministry of the Jamaica Seventh Day Baptist Conference (now fourteen years), with concentrated focus to her home church, the Blue Mountain SDB Church, as well as the Coffee Grove SDB Church, a product of the church-planting efforts of her home Church.

Freedom To Be Incarnational

Dr. Carlene Wynter, From England, Representing Europe

Text - Galatians 4:12

One of the marvels of God's creation is that no two people are exactly alike. These personal differences arise out of our unique genetic heritage and individual histories. Differences whether cultural, race, language, gender, age, etc. are significant within the ministry field. One of the Bible's central themes is that it speaks to people of all different backgrounds, culture, race, language and religion. Whiteman (2004), notes this diversity, painting a picture of its importance:

'... I looked, and there was an enormous crowd—no one could count all the people! They were from every race, tribe, nation, and language, and they stood in front of the throne and of the Lamb...' (Rev 7:9).

Since God embraces diversity, then it means we are called to minister in a diverse environment. But how we do effectively navigate or traverse this diverse mix? Should we insist on assimilation, requiring the ministered to adapt to our lifestyle (not Christ's way of living)? Paul provides the answer in Galatians 4:12. He suggests effective use of contextual cues which speak to acceptance, tolerance and understanding of differences. Yes, being **incarnational** is accepting of or tolerating the uniqueness, differences or distinctiveness of others to gain the opportunity to point them to freedom in Christ (Lingenfelter & Mayers 2003).

The background to Paul's statement was his acceptance of them as Gentiles, becoming like them, no longer living under the Jewish law. Additionally, he had a disability making him different from them. Paul's acceptance of the Galatians paved the way to gain their acceptance of both the gospel and his disability. Reciprocity of acceptance began with Paul. We accept others' differences by learning about them: their language, silent culture, attitude to timekeeping, use of technology, sharing resources, dress code, social belief systems, and division of labor etc. In other words, we must first learn and

appreciate their differences and way of life without imposing ours on them.

Paul exemplified the **freedom to be incarnational** when he said 'I have become all things to all men for the gospel sake.' (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). This example goes beyond strategies for evangelizing: it goes to the heart of whose we are. We are Christ's... therefore we must have his Spiritual nature (Phil 2: 5-8). As Paul became adaptable to, understanding of and tolerant of the various groups to which he ministered, to present and teach them the gospel, he really points to the larger picture of following God's example of redeeming mankind. Recall that the scripture informs us that **God became man, that is, Jesus coming into the world, to save us from sin** (1 Timothy 3: 16). God the Son, emptied himself of his heavenly splendour and privileges, taking on in their place, human attributes, so that He could experience the same physical, social and psychological needs which humans feel... empathizing with us. (see Hebrews 4: 15)

So, we are not called to project ourselves, but to speak of and exemplify Christ (Phil 2:5-11). Since Christ's example provides us with the latitude to be incarnational, let's follow Him by being tolerant, humble, accepting, empathetic and understanding of other people's uniqueness and values which opens the door to teach and introduce them to our Lord, Jesus Christ himself.

May we ever live His Gospel as how He lived His life - **Incarnational**.

Let us pray for Seventh Day Baptists in India*, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jamaica*, Kenya*, Lebanon, and Liberia.

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.

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Carlene Wynter has been following the Lord from she was a child in Jamaica and since then she has been involved in Christian ministry. She has been the president of the British Conference of Seventh Day Baptist Churches for the past five years. She is also Leader and Deaconess of the Birmingham Seventh Day Baptist Church. Prior to her sojourn to the United Kingdom, she served in the Jamaica Seventh Baptist Conference in various capacities at the national and local levels including as Leader of the Greater Portmore Seventh Day Baptist Church for ten years. Her passions include evangelism and teaching.

The Liberty of Diversity

Thursday, January 6, 2022

Freedom To Love Your Neighbor

Dr. Glenn Sales, From The Philippines, Representing Asia

Text - Galatians 5:13-15

Ji Seong-ho (born April 3, 1982) is a North Korean defector who lives in South Korea, where he works to raise awareness about the situation in North Korea and to help fellow defectors. He was badly injured by a train but managed to escape North Korea.

Ji has stated in an interview that “I think that freedom means being able to do what you want without harming others”. “Freedom isn’t something given by the government. I think it is a God-given right, and you are born with this right as a human being. (Wikipedia)

We need freedom just like Ji Seong Ho. But it is not political freedom. Freedom that

Christ gives is freedom from enslavement in sin and selfishness. It means you were transferred from the kingdom of darkness to His kingdom of light. From selfishness to selflessness and sacrifice. By God’s grace, anyone who’s in Christ was given the power to overcome selfishness and be able to love others as his own self.

Let us pray that we find and possess freedom from Christ and be able to genuinely love others..

Let us pray for Seventh Day Baptists in Malawi*, Mozambique, Netherlands*, New Zealand*, Nicaragua, and Nigeria*

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Dr. Glenn Sales was born in the Philippines on October 18, 1967, and was a Baptist Pastor up to 1993. He has been a Church Planter since 2014, and is the current President of Grace Seventh Day Baptist Bible College in the Philippines. Dr. Glenn is married to Girlie and they have two sons, one daughter, and a granddaughter.

Freedom To Do Good To All

Pastor Charles Stima, From Malawi, Representing Africa

Text - Galatians 6:1-10

Doing good is a dream and a wish of every person. The big question that comes around as we strive to do good is "to whom should I do good and when to do good?"

The Book of Galatians, particularly in chapter 6, the last chapter of the book, gives a lot of situations which demand how Christians should carry themselves. From the chapter, the following are situations that demand our attention as prayerful Christians: -

- **Doing good to someone even if one is caught in a sin** (v. 6). As we try to do good, we should deliberately do good to those caught in sin with an intention of restoring them spiritually.
- In verse 2, we are **asked to carry each others' burdens**. The way of flesh is "every man for himself". The way of the Spirit is "let's make it to heaven together". Sometimes our fellow believers fall beneath the load. When they do, we are supposed to lend them a helping hand. Some people would attempt to take advantage, but verse 5 rules that out.
- **Plant good seed.** (Verses 7- 9) Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

This truth is obvious to everyone who has ever planted a garden. Plants yield seeds which reproduce "according to their kind". Paul gives a similar "law of harvest" in 2 Cor. 9:6 which refers to giving money. This verse however, does not just refer to money. The largest emphasis is the conflict between the

flesh and spirit.

Sowing to the spirit reaps eternal rewards; the basic instinct of the Spirit is love. Those who seek to please the Spirit will produce the Spirit's fruit.

• **Be a good doer (v. 9-10)**

Let us not become weary in doing good. "Not become weary," means "do not get tired." Too often we quit just before we would have won.

Let us do good to all people; Instead of looking for a place to quit, look for another place to start. Doing good to all people is a symptom of the fruit of the Spirit. While the sinful nature is eager to remove names from the benevolence list, the Spirit's nature (love, kindness, goodness, etc.) is always ready to add more.

Paul says we ought to be good doers when you walk in the Spirit; the fruit of the Spirit is produced. Then you are going to do good. You will do good for all men, especially for other believers.

As we are praying today, Friday, the 7th January 2022, let's answer the following questions:

- How often do we do good things?
- To whom do we do good things?
- Why do we strive to do good things in the eyes of God?

Let us pray for Seventh Day Baptists in Pakistan, the Philippines*, Poland*, Rwanda*, Sierra Leone, South Africa*, and South Korea.

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Charles Stima was born in Malawi in 1960, and worked as a Primary School teacher until December 2013 when he retired. Later, he started serving his home church as an associate pastor, and was ordained as a pastor in 2016. Between 2012 and 2016, he served on his Conference's Board of Trustees, representing his Association. He currently serves the Central Africa Conference of Seventh Day Baptists as General Secretary. Pastor Charles is married to Lucy and they have three daughters, the youngest of which is twenty-two years of age.

Christian Freedom Is To Be Exercised In Love

Pastor Andrew Samuels

**Text - Ephesians 2:11-22;
Romans 14:5-8**

It is my prayer that throughout this week, we have truly been able to prayerfully reflect on, discuss, and apply the freedoms we have in Jesus Christ, which empower us to appreciate and celebrate our God who has created us with so much diversity. As we conclude the week, I also pray that this recognition of our freedoms in proper tension with our diversity, may be a lifelong engagement of ours as the kingdom people we have been called to be.

As valuable as our diversity is, we do not have the freedom to encourage diversity in all things. For example, there is to be no diversity in the Gospel. We do not have different Gospels. The Gospel has no adjective. We are not permitted to put a descriptive word before the Gospel in order to legitimize it. There is one Gospel. For the Gospel, there is unity, no diversity. Galatians 1:8 is unashamedly clear: "But if we or an angel from heaven should preach a Gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse."

The Apostle Paul further elucidates on the matter of unity, by outlining in Ephesians 4:4-6 that when it comes to spiritual matters, there are at least 7 unities: One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. Of course, this limited platform does not provide for the elaboration on each of those unities, but the point is hopefully clear that on those matters, diversity is prohibited. I do not believe that list is exhaustive, but it certainly covers a significant spiritual spectrum.

Where then is it acceptable to pursue diversity? Let me suggest a neat formula to apply. When it comes to spiritual and doctrinal matters, in those that are major and essential, we must have unity. However, in those that are minor and non-essential, we are free to have liberty and diversity. And in all things, we are called to demonstrate charity or love. The good news is that while the major and essential issues are few in number, the minor and non-essential issues consist of a much greater number. So, we really have a lot more freedom than we sometimes realize, thank the Lord.

And unity is not to be confused with uniformity. There are significant differences. Unity refers to harmony, while uniformity has to do with having the same form. One emphasizes principle, while the other elevates methods. Ironically, when there is unity, differences are more easily tolerated and accepted. However, uniformity implies that everyone should be alike, so there is no room for differences.

Unfortunately, sometimes we lose our spiritual perspective to the point where we permit freedoms where we should not, and we impose uniformity where we should not. That sets us up for major problems. That might be a good point of discussion among us: What are some of those places where we confuse our freedoms and our unities?

Let us pray for Seventh Day Baptists in South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda*, Ukraine, United States of America*, and Zambia*.

*Conferences which are members of the Seventh Day Baptist World Federation.



Andy Samuels: Husband to Kay; father to Tshai, Earl, and Tsafiq; grandfather to Ezaia and Tskylar. And they all allow him to serve Seventh Day Baptists as a member of the Miami Church, as Chief Executive Director of the Missionary Society and as General Secretary of the World Federation.



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