

a deeper cut

"for it is not an enemy who reproaches me; then I could bear it... but it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance. we took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng." psa 55:12-24

even as our Lord Jesus was betrayed by a trusted friend, even now many are suffering at the hands of their companions. this ought not to be so.

while we must definitely stand up for truth and sound doctrine, as the enemy has firmly established his self in some of God's churches, there are many sincere ones that make a war from the straw in another's eye while their own holds a boulder.

while God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 tim 2:4, we are all at different stages of development. we are constantly being transformed by the renewing of our minds.

regrettably, some people and some ministries make a point of tearing down others to exalt their own views; some from pride and arrogance while others from sincerity. such was the apostle paul before his conversion. he sincerely thought he was doing God's work, but he was sincerely wrong.

Jesus prayed, "that they may be one just as We are one." john 17:22 He also said, "a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." john 13:34 He

said that's how everyone would know we were His disciples. are you being a disciple or just a tare sowing discord?

yes, there are some wounds that cut deeper than others. i think we've all experienced that whether it was intentional or not. those may be the most hurtful of all and the hardest to forget. and yet, that exactly the example Jesus set for us. one cannot simply say, "i will forgive but not forgive." would you have Jesus say that about your sins or have them cast into the sea of forgetfulness?

the prophet zechariah, when writing about the coming One said, "'what are these wounds between your arms?' then He will answer, 'those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'" zech 13:6 the Creator allowed His self to be wounded by His own creation. and yet still, in a heartfelt cry from the cross He hung on cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." luke 23:34

in like manner, we must look beyond the hurt and pray that we be united as siblings in Christ; that we be as one, as They are One. we must put on the garment of love.

"love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." 1 cor 13:4-7

friends, i pray we all look beyond our wounds today and pray they serve to further God's glory. we must forgive and we must forget. when one does so, "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings." mal 4:2

forgiveness is something all of us want to receive but most of us hesitate to give. Jesus makes it clear, however, that we can't have it without giving it. "for if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." matt 6:14-15 these words allow no room for doubt or discussion. forgiveness flows two ways. we cannot separate receiving forgiveness from extending forgiveness.