

Christian Unity Ministries:

...exists to assist and equip Christian organizations to experience Biblical unity.

...accomplishes its mission through training events, conflict intervention, and publications to churches and Christian organizations across all evangelical denominational lines, with the objective of moving brothers and sisters in Christ toward Biblical interpersonal relationships with one another.

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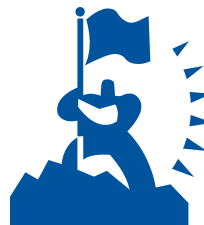
Christian Unity Ministries' Spiritual Markers for 2005

by
Blake Coffee



Part of the "strategic planning" process God teaches us through scripture is the value of looking back at the things we know with certainty about Him and His involvement in our lives. Abraham, Moses and Joshua all erected monuments as a way of saying, "Thus far hath the Lord brought us...". It was like driving a spiritual stake in the ground to clearly mark the territory the Lord had covered with them up to that point. And it was helpful to distinguish between what was God's plan and what was man's, choosing to rely only on God's activity for direction. The lesson is that man's accomplishments, while perhaps noteworthy for the moment, are not a foundation upon which to build—not if we want to be a part of God's impact in eternity.

What we must take forward with us from the past are the contributions God made to the process—the activity which can only be attributable to Him. This is what we "mark" and memorialize as the foundation upon which the days ahead will be built.



The weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas each year have become the time when this ministry stops and looks back, just to be sure we understand what God is doing and what that means for the year ahead. Even as you read this, we are still in that process, but this issue gives some early insights into those Spiritual markers, at least as we understand them at this point.

This ministry is truly blessed with the prayers of a faithful prayer team, the wisdom of a diverse Executive Board and Advisory Board, and the talents of a truly gifted network of facilitators and peacemakers. For the contributions and accomplishments of all these friends we are truly grateful. I cannot describe how much I enjoy my time with them! In remembering those times over the past year, what we must take forward with us are the contributions God made to the process—the activity which can only be attributable to Him. This is what we "mark" and memorialize as the foundation upon which the days ahead will be built.

My desire for this issue is that you can celebrate with us what God has done this year and that, as you feel led, you can join in what God has in store for us in 2006. Merry Christmas, everyone, and God bless you all!



Watchman Network of Peacemakers Launched

From its very beginning, Christian Unity Ministries has felt a calling to equip peacemakers across the Body of Christ globally. We always had a sense that this would include more than just doing conferences and training events in local churches. We knew that the real development of a spiritual gift of peacemaking in a believer would require more than just education.

In 2005, we launched the Watchman Network, a community of individuals from various walks of life who have one thing in common: a spiritual gift of peacemaking. To be a part of this network is to be intentional about developing that gift and to strive to be the peacemaker God has wired (and gifted) me to be. It is to subject myself to the accountability of this community of peacemakers, to allow myself to be molded by others in the network and to help mold them at the same time.

In this network, we learn together what being a peacemaker in the Body of Christ looks like and, at the same time, we celebrate the differences God creates in each of us as to how that gift of peacemaking will manifest itself. We use on-line communication to inform and to encourage each other and we meet together from time to time for face to face growth experiences.

Currently, this network consists of a couple dozen peacemakers. We have left the size of the network completely up to the Lord. *We stay open to His desire to bring others into this fold and He has taught us to welcome any believer who has eyes to see the broken relationships in the church and who feels drawn to the Biblical message of unity He has given us.*

For more information on the Watchman Network, see our website:

www.christianunityministries.org



Trusting God's People ...Again

Helping People Hurt by the Church

It was only a matter of time before Christian Unity Ministries would be compelled to find a way to minister to people hurt by the church. Every church conflict brings the possibility that the church may respond poorly to it and thereby cause pain in the life of some members.

The *Trusting God's People Again* material was actually begun last year, but was "birthed" early in 2005 with a small support group of individuals who had each been hurt by a church of one kind or another. This support group was a part of FBC San Antonio's **Heart 2 Heart** ministry, a ministry designed to bring healing to hurting people.

Trusting God's People Again is a Bible study designed for people who have felt betrayed by God's own people. God has used this material to bring participants through a scripture-based process of reconciliation, recommitment and re-engaging in ministry. The healing we have seen could only have come from God—true transformations in the lives of Christians who thought they would never again connect with church.

Seeing God use this material in such a life-changing way led us to begin making it ready for what we believe will be a much broader publication. We have partnered with **Debbie Taylor Williams**, Christian author and director of Hill Country Ministries, to co-author (with Blake Coffee) a book based on this material. *We are asking God to lead us to the right publisher now for that book. Will you join us in that prayer?*

For more information on the "Trusting God's People Again" material, see the Heart 2 Heart Ministries website:

www.heart2heartsa.org



Five Principles of Unity Around the World

At the core of Christian Unity Ministries is a Biblical message about relationships within the church. This message finds its simplest form in *Five Principles of Unity*, the 6-week small group Bible study which forms the foundation of our teaching ministry.

With no man-made marketing plan at all, the English language version of this material has been through two printings so far and has found its way all over the United States and into countries around the world, including Mexico, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and the Ukraine. *Five Principles of Unity* has been translated and published in Spanish and has been translated (but not yet published) into

Japanese, Lao and Russian. God's use of this material has been so very exciting to watch!

In October of last year, Christian Unity Ministries traveled to the Ukraine to teach this material in some 20 different congregations. We left there with a clear directive that we should have the Russian translation of this material published and distributed in the Eastern Ukraine, where Russian is the primary spoken language. We are now exploring a possible second trip there in Spring, 2006.

Because *Five Principles* comes entirely from scripture, its application is universal, crossing both cultural and language boundaries. It seems that God is at work in relationships among Christians everywhere, including those in the Ukraine.

2005 has been a year of waiting on God's timing (and funding) for this project. Please join us in praying for God's direction in the Russian printing of *Five Principles*.



Partnering Churches Benefit from Unity Ministries Events

God continues to use the *One Body* unity conference in the lives of churches around the country. His use of the single unity conference is often unmistakable. Nevertheless, 2005 saw a significant increase in the number of churches taking advantage of a "partnership" with Unity Ministries and bringing our facilitators back for a second or third training event, either for the entire congregation or for a smaller group of leaders.

We have learned that, though the Biblical principles of unity are easy to teach, the practical application of them takes practice and repetition in a variety of venues and circumstances. Asking what these principles mean in the context of leadership or small groups or corporate worship is when the lessons begin to take root. The *One Body* conference teaches the principles, but the

other conferences work them into church life. The churches where God has made the deepest transformation in relationships among brothers are the ones who have continued to press the unity principles into various areas of the church by allowing Unity Ministries to come alongside the church for a season and bring the full slate of our training events.

We learn at another level altogether when we enter into relationships of accountability... Similarly, on a corporate level, a church understands these principles best through an on-going relationship with our ministry.

To those who understand God's plan for growing us up into Christ, this comes as no surprise. We learn discipleship at one level when we hear it or read it in God's Word. We learn it at another level altogether when we enter into relationships of accountability and press one another to deeper lives in Christ. Similarly, on a corporate level, a church understands these principles best through an on-going relationship with our ministry.



Christian Unity Ministries
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How Your Church Can Partner With Christian Unity Ministries

God is at work, restoring health and unity to His church. Christian Unity Ministries has joined that work, bringing His message of Biblical interpersonal relationships and Christian community to local congregations. We do this through a multi-piece training program aimed at various aspects of church life.

God has begun to call churches to partner with us in this effort—churches who not only are intentional about their own health, but who also feel a responsibility for contributing to the health of other local congregations.

Would you pray, and seek to know whether YOUR church is called to be a partnering church with Christian Unity Ministries?

For more information, contact us at:

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P.O. Box 701685
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Phone: (210)386-7895
E-mail: info@christianunityministries.org

BECOMING A PARTNERING CHURCH WITH CHRISTIAN UNITY MINISTRIES

*Our **Partnering churches** are intentional about preserving the unity of the Spirit in their own congregation and receive all of our training at significantly reduced costs. They partner with us in each of the following ways:*

- *Regular monthly financial support in any amount;*
- *Being proactive about sharing testimony with other churches' leadership about this ministry;*
- *Sending their pastor or other designated representative to the Unity Ministries Annual Conference in San Antonio.*

*Join us in equipping God's people for unity. **Be a part of what God is doing!***