

The Bulwark

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TALK ABOUT SURREAL...

Noted football commentator, Frank Gifford in his book, "The Whole Ten Yards" touches on a most unique pairing. In 1976, during a broadcast of a Monday Night Football game, both John Lennon and Ronald Reagan were both inadvertently invited to appear at halftime in the broadcast booth. After being interviewed, both stayed in the booth as the game resumed. In the book, Gifford describes how he looked over and saw Reagan's arm over Lennon's shoulder as he explained each play in detail. Lennon on his part sat enthralled and seemed to appreciate the attention and information being provided. An interesting combination to say the least.



"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body -whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many." (1Corinthians 12:13-14)

"For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for one are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:27-29)

Try to imagine the scene. Two men, seemingly polar opposite from one another, culturally and ideologically; arguably two men furthest apart from one another on the planet. Yet, they were able to come together and for a brief moment in time were able to act almost, dare we say it, like father and son. Amazing that something as simple as a football game could bring people together from such diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Using this unusual occurrence as a backdrop, think about how those who have put on Christ have been brought from diverse backgrounds and share an exceptional closeness. In the example of Lennon and Reagan, the equalizer was a football game and would seemingly last only as long as the game itself. But the bond that brings one together with others in Christ is not caught up in a moment of time, but ideally grows day by day.

Drink in what Peter writes in his first epistle, chapter one, verses eighteen and nineteen, *"knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver and gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."* Notice closely the word "precious", as it conveys the meaning of highly esteemed or cherished. Because of the preciousness of Christ's shed blood, it draws together those who obey the gospel, into a most precious relationship that none should take lightly.

Only in Christ can we find the great "equalizer". Regardless of our background, ethnicity, gender or whatever, once Christ is put on, we become one with those of like precious faith. There is a sharing of a common unity. *"No longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God"* (Ephesians 2:19) The commonality we share is Christ and thereby enjoy a blessed unity with one another.

The key to that relationship is to keep focused on Christ. Once that focus is diverted the bond that holds us together is lost. The operative for each and everyone who are in the body of Christ is to maintain an inseparable kinship with Deity. *"If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things that are on earth."* (Colossians 3:1-2)

In due consideration of the closeness that is found in Christ, is it any wonder then why Paul wrote the following as seen in Romans, chapter fifteen, verse seven. *"Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of the Father."* Amazing isn't it what can bring people together from such a diversity of backgrounds. In Him the barriers are indeed broken down. (wbe)

