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**2700-PLUS SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS (U-TOPICS)**  
**Compiled and Arranged Topically by Duane V. Maxey**

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## UNBELIEF -- OF RELIGIOUS MEN

2502 -- FLIGHT IS RESERVED FOR ANGELS!

An Eastern bishop was accustomed to paying an annual visit to a small religious college. On one such visit, the bishop engaged in an after-dinner conversation with the college president. The religious leader offered the opinion that the millennium could not be long in coming since everything about nature had been discovered, and all possible inventions had been made. The college president disagreed, stating that he felt the next fifty years would bring amazing discoveries and inventions. In his opinion, human beings would be flying through the skies like birds within a relatively short time. "Nonsense!" shouted the bishop. "Flight is reserved for angels!"

The bishop's name was Wright. He had two sons -- Orville and Wilbur. Fortunately for American aviation, the bishop's two sons were willing to join the college president in "standing up" for their beliefs and convictions.

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## UNBELIEVERS

2503 -- AN INDIFFERENT RICH MAN CONCERNED TO LATE!

Some years ago in a town in New York, a minister said to me, "Do you see that large white mansion yonder?" "Yes, sir." Mr. -- lived there a long time, and one day I undertook to speak to him about his soul. "Oh, elder," said he, "you needn't talk to me. I am not afraid to die. I don't believe in your hell. I had just as lief meet God now as at any time." This minister was a very kind, loving-hearted man, he did not want to oppose everybody who did not think exactly as he did. So he let him pass. About six months from that time that man lay dying; and when the doctors pronounced fatally on his disease, he said to his friends, "Will you call in the elder?" Then sent for him and as he entered the room the man rolled his dying eyes up toward him and said: "Now,

elder, I wish you would do the best you can,:" And who doesn't know that the record of this world is just such a record as that. Many a boasting sinner, cursing ministers and churches when in health, has been glad to call for prayer and help in the last hour of life. -- Albert P. Graves

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## UNCERTAINTIES

### 2504 -- LIVING IN THE FOG

"Is it always foggy here?" inquired a lady passenger of a Cunard steamer's captain when they were groping their way across the Banks of Newfoundland, "How should I know?" replied the captain gruffly, "I do not live here." But there are some of Christ's professed followers who do manage to live in the chilling regions of spiritual fog for a great part of their unhappy lives. -- T L Cuyler

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## UNCHANGING -- CHRIST

### 2505 -- HIS ANSWER WAS GOD'S ANSWER

A Hindu, who had become a Christian, on his way to church one Sabbath, passed some British soldiers who thought they would joke with him. "Hello, Sammy," they called. "How's Jesus this morning?" The Hindu stopped and looked at them. "You Sahibs come from a great country that has known Jesus a long time. It is your country that has given us this Book to teach us of Him," and he held up his Bible. "You ask how Jesus is this morning. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Two of the soldiers could not sleep that night. The next day they went to the Hindu. They said, "We could not rest until we gave ourselves to Jesus. You brought us to him." -- The Presbyterian

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## UNFRUITFULNESS

### 2506 -- A CASE OF BACKWARD ADVANCEMENT

Here's a quote from Owen Hanson, "After thousands of years, western civilization has advanced to where we bolt our doors and windows at night while jungle natives sleep in open huts." -- Associated Press

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## UNION -- WITH CHRIST

### 2507 -- 'TAIN'T COUPLED ONTO ANYTHING!

Two travelers, who fancied they were abundantly able to take care of themselves, entered a railroad passenger car when the train was being made up and found comfortable seats. They had dropped into conversation when a porter looked in and told them to go forward. "What is the matter with this coach?" they asked. "Nothing," he grinned, "only 'tain't coupled onto anything that'll take you anywhere."

That is the trouble with many beautiful creeds and theories. They sound good, but they do not take you anywhere. The soul that would journey heavenward must make sure of the coupling. That is it: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." -- Heart And Life

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UNION -- WITH CHRIST

2508 -- SELF DESTROYED BY UNION WITH CHRIST

A father and his small son strolled down the street in Chicago past the place where a skyscraper was being constructed. Glancing up, they saw men at work on a high story of the building. "Father," said the little boy, "What are those little boys doing up there?" "Those are not little boys, son. They're grown men." "But why do they look so small?" "Because they're so high," his father answered. After a pause the boy asked, "Then, Father, when they get to heaven there won't be anything left of them, will there?" It's so true. The nearer we come to Christ the less others see of us and the more they see of Christ.

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UNION -- WITH CHRIST

2509 -- THE DOUBLE WOUNDING OF GRAFTING

Speaking of the use of the word "engrafted" in the Bible, some one says: "When a graft is to be made, the first thing is to make a cut or gash. Nobody ever received the word of God into his heart, to be engrafted there, without being cut and wounded by the truth. It needs two wounds to make a graft. You wound the one tree, and you wound that better tree into which part of the former tree is to be grafted. Is it not a blessed grafting when a bleeding Saviour comes in contact with a bleeding heart?" -- Topical Illustrations

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UNION -- WITH CHRIST

2510 -- THE FIRST REMOVED TO ESTABLISH THE SECOND

"O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." Heb 10:9 When we place our faith in Jesus as our Savior, He comes to live within us. Then He works to transform us,

replacing our selfishness with Christlikeness. As we grow in grace and in our knowledge of God, our thoughts, words, and actions become more and more like our Lord's.

A. J. Gordon, the 19th-century American minister, educator, and author, gave us an example of this process from nature. He wrote, "Two little saplings grew up side by side. Through the action of the wind they crossed each other. By and by each became wounded by the friction. The sap began to mingle until one calm day they became attached. Then the stronger tree began to absorb the weaker. It became larger and larger, while the other withered and declined till it finally dropped away and disappeared. And now there are two trunks at the bottom and only one farther up. Death has taken away the one; life has triumphed in the other."

\* \* \*

## UNITY

### 2511 -- A PREJUDICED UNITY

The following cute saying was sent as a clipping with no indication of the name of the publication. It is entitled, "Of One Accord". "My granddaughter was telling me that she and her three playmates all attended different churches. Then she added, 'It really doesn't matter if we go to different churches, does it Grandma -- just as long as we're all Republicans?'" -- Lorene Workman

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## UNITY

### 2512 -- AT HIGH TIDE

Dr. J. H. Jowett spoke of the uniting of sundered people in these words: "At low tide there are multitudes of separated pools along the shore. At high tide they flow together, and the little distinctions are lost in a splendid union. -- Missionary Monthly

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## UNITY -- EXHORTATIONS TO

### 2513 -- JOIN HANDS!

A beautiful little girl wandered out one cold day into the countryside of Canada. The family finally realized she was lost and started a search. Then they called the people of the community together. Each went his own way. It became dark and the cold of the Canadian winter settled down. After some time someone suggested the searchers join hands and cover the grass fields. But it was too late. They found the girl curled up, frozen in the cold. Then the shout went up, "If only we had joined hands before!" The spiritual meaning of this story is clear. Christ's love demands unity among His believers.

\* \* \*

## UNITY -- IN CHRIST

### 2514 -- A WESLEY HYMN

Faith unites us, and yet we are conscious of the division of time and death. This thought is beautifully expressed by Charles Wesley:

One family we dwell in him,  
One Church above beneath,  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death;

One army of the living God,  
To His command we bow:  
Part of His host have crossed the flood,  
And part are crossing now.

\* \* \*

## UNITY -- IN CHRIST

### 2515 -- HOW THE NEW WORLD WILL BE ONE IN CHRIST

A bone-weary father dragged into his home dog tired late one evening. It had been one of those unbelievable days of pressure, deadlines, and demands. He looked forward to a time of relaxation and quietness. Exhausted, he picked up the evening paper and headed for his favorite easy chair by the fireplace. About the time he got his shoes untied, plop! into his lap dropped his five-year-old son with an excited grin on his face.

"Hi, Dad. Let's play!"

He loved his boy dearly, but his need for a little time all alone to repair and think was, for the moment, a greater need than time with Junior. But how could he maneuver it?

There had been a recent moon probe and the newspaper carried a huge picture of earth. With a flash of much-needed insight, the dad asked his boy to bring a pair of scissors and some transparent tape. Quickly, he cut the picture of earth into various shapes and sizes, then handed the pile of homemade jigsaw puzzle pieces to him.

"You'll tape it all back together, Danny, then come on back and we'll play, okay?"

Off scampered the child to his room as dad breathed a sigh of relief. But in less than ten minutes the boy bounded back with everything taped perfectly in place. Stunned, the father asked: "How'd you do it so fast, Son?"

"Aw, it was easy, Daddy. You see, there is this picture of a man on the back of the sheet. And when you put the man together, the world comes together." -- Charles Swindoll

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## UNITY -- IN CHRIST

### 2516 -- THE EXAMPLE OF ROBERT E. LEE

Shortly after the close of the Civil War, in a fashionable Richmond church, members of the congregation were invited to come to the altar rail to receive Holy Communion.

After several rows of worshipers came and left after receiving Communion side by side, a black man walked down the aisle toward the altar. A tense silence gripped everyone. No one got up to come down to receive the bread and wine, although many had not yet received Communion. The black man started to kneel alone.

Quietly, a tall, graying man with a military bearing stood up and strode down the aisle to the black man's side. Together, they knelt.

Before the officiating clergyman could continue, people recognized that the person kneeling beside the black man without showing any distinction was General Robert E. Lee. Although Lee said nothing, everyone realized he had shown his faith through his act of joining that lonely black worshiper at the altar.

Lee's example is an example for all. We must not be content with any system that divides us as fellow Christians. We must seek to demonstrate our essential unity. Only then can we say truly: "We are one in Christ."

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## UNMERCIFULNESS

### 2517 -- CHRIST IS NOT MERCILESS LIKE SIN-HARDENED MEN

Macaulay speaks of James II as being hard and as glorying in the opportunity of crushing another. One of the most affecting pictures in the Royal Academy depicts the king in the act of crushing the poor, defeated Duke of Monmouth. In a room hung with tapestry, the king stands erect, lank, sickly, and contemptuous. The poor duke whose rebellion had roused the hatred of the King thought to move him to pity. His arms were bound behind him with a silken cord and thus secured. He was ushered into the presence of the implacable kinsman whom he had wronged. Then Monmouth threw himself on the ground and crawled to the king's feet. The artist represents him

with face on the smooth floor, eyes swollen with weeping and watching, striving to move the king to pity. It was in vain. The king only crushed him with hardness and contempt. No wonder that the historian says strongly: "To see him and not to spare him was an outrage on humanity and decency."

How many such outrages are committed in a day, even by those of lower rank! Those who feel that they have sinned, and who come imploringly to the feet of Divine mercy, have no need to fear that they will be treated with such hardness. God "will not break the bruised reed." He is gentle toward us. He forgives, uplifts, strengthens, and saves. -- Mother's Treasury

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## UNREADINESS -- FOR DEATH AND JUDGMENT

### 2518 -- THE TITANIC

In September, 1985, the camera-equipped ARGO robot submarine of the USA-France expedition photographed and confirmed the wreckage of the luxury liner TITANIC resting 13,120 feet down on the Atlantic ocean floor.

In its day, the Titanic was the world's largest ship, weighing 46,328 tons, 882 1/2 ft long with 3 anchors weighing more than 10 tons each. It employed a crew of 400, a hotel staff of 518 and could carry 2,433 passengers. The 159 furnaces burned 650 tons of coal a day. The ship had a complete gymnasium, heated pool, squash court and the first miniature golf course -- all below deck. Its lavish appointments included opulent dining rooms with 24-hour service, orchestra on the promenade deck, palm courts and gilded Turkish baths. Several millionaires were on the passenger list. But, on April 14, 1912, the "unthinkable" happened to the "unsinkable". Near midnight, the great Titanic struck an iceberg, ripping a 300 ft hole through 5 of its 16 watertight compartments. It sank in 2 1/2 hours killing 1,513 people. Why did so many die? Reasons: the crew disregarding the danger of the weather, there were not enough lifeboats on board, and the radio operator of the nearby California was off duty. (adapted from USA Today, Sept. 4, 1985)

Question: Will the bridegroom come and the "unthinkable" happen to you and your "lamps are not lit?" What good "reasons" (excuses) will you have? (Matt. 25:1-13)

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## UNSELFISHNESS

### 2519 -- YOU CUT, AND I'LL CHOOSE

Two small boys in front of me were walking slowly, deep in conversation, when they stopped to share an apple. "You cut and I'll choose," said one to the other. A penknife appeared, the cut was made and the choice decided.



What a splendid way of ensuring an apple is equally shared! Perhaps the world could get along with fewer conferences and agreements, I reflected, if only the powers that he had the simple solution that schoolboys worked out centuries ago. -- Sunday Post, Glasgow

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## UNSELFISHNESS

### 2520 -- LOOKING OUT FOR OTHERS

"Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." Phil. 2:4 People are selfish. To prove this, we need only to review our own thoughts, ambitions, and actions. Very few of us are like Abram (later named Abraham), whose life reveals Christlike selfishness. When it became necessary for Abram and Lot to go their separate ways, Abram graciously let his nephew choose whatever land he preferred Abram said, "If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left" (Gen. 13:9 ). A young artist submitted one of his works to be hung in a prestigious art exhibit, but the selection committee rejected it. One of its members, however, the renowned landscape painter Joseph Turner, insisted that they include the young man's work. The others denied his plea, saying that there was simply no room for it. Turner said no more but quietly removed one of his own pictures, replacing it with that of the budding young artist.

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## UNSELFISHNESS

### 2521 -- NEITHER I, NOR MY, NOR ME!

You cannot say the Lord's prayer, and even once say "I".  
You cannot pray the Lord's prayer, and even once say "My".  
Nor can you pray the Lord's prayer and not pray for another.  
For when you ask for daily bread, you must include your brother!  
For others are included in each and every plea.  
From the beginning to the end of it, it does not once say "me".

\* \* \*

## UNSELFISHNESS

### 2522 -- THE LITTLE LOAF

"...let each esteem others better than himself." Philippians 2: 3 I read a story about a rich baker who sent for 20 of the poorest children in town and said to them, "In this basket is a loaf of bread for each of you. Take one and come back every day and I'll give you more. " Immediately the youngsters began quarreling about who would get the largest loaf. Snatching from the basket, they left without even thanking the baker. Gretchen, a poorly dressed little girl, did not get involved in

the struggle but patiently waited until the others had left. She then took the smallest loaf, which remained in the basket, kissed the old man's hand, and went home. The next day the scene was repeated. But this time when Gretchen's mother began to slice the loaf, she found many shiny silver pieces inside. Gretchen took the money back to the baker, but he said, "No, my child, it was not a mistake. I placed them in the smallest loaf to reward you. "

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THE END