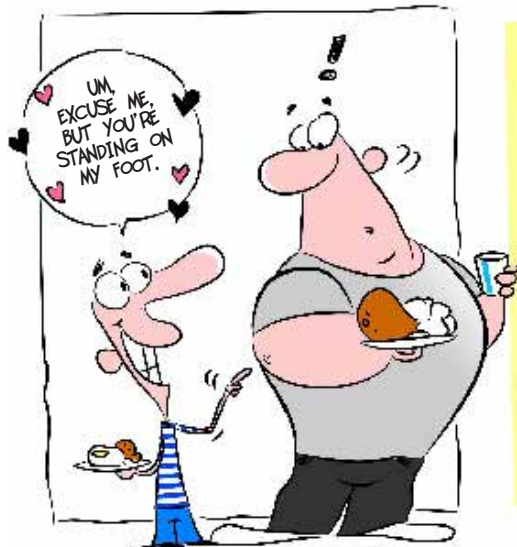
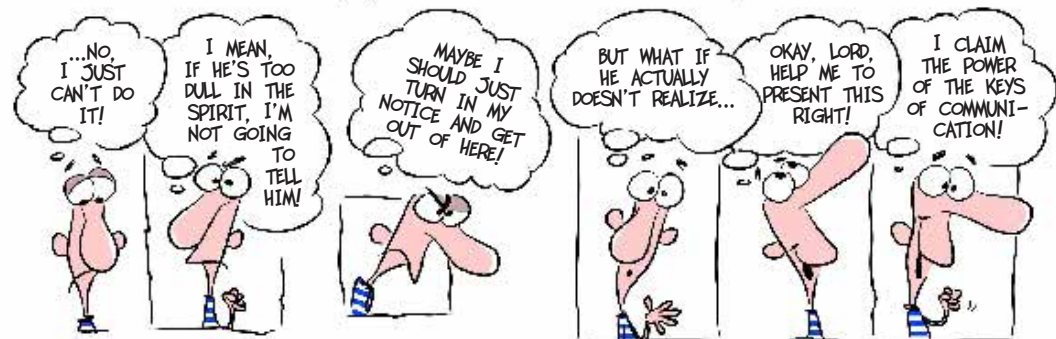
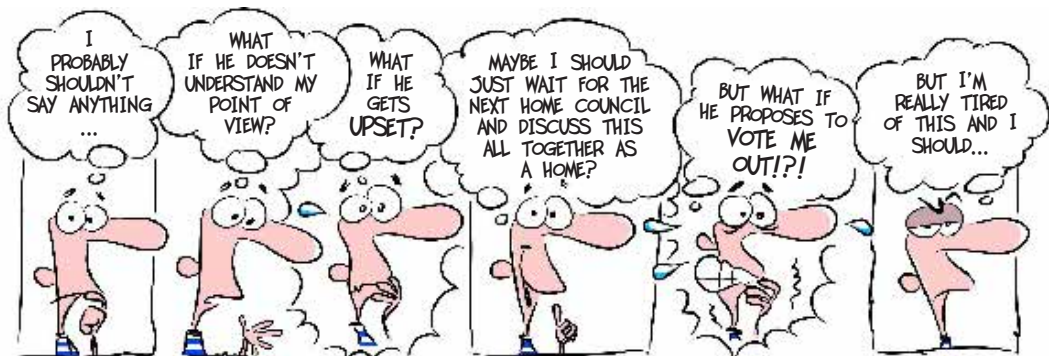


TRAINING WINNING TEAMS PART 3



TRAINING WINNING TEAMS PART 3

This GN should be read
unitedly as a Home.

Communication, Openness, and Problem Solving!

By Maria

FD/MM/FM 3553 6/05

Dear Family,

As you know, there's a lot that goes into making a Home a winning team. It's not all fun and games, and in order to make the unit of your Home functional, effective, and successful, you've got to do the hard and sometimes unpleasant work of being honest and open with one another, communicating, and solving problems as they come up.

2. Most of us are not naturally honest and open; it hurts our pride and is difficult. We're not born as trained loving communicators, nor are most of us adept at problem solving. These are areas that are difficult for most of us. But if you want your Home to be a winning team, then there needs to be a free flow of communication, Home members must be honest and open, and tackling the problems that come up in the course of life is how you find solutions.

These are very important keys to progress.

3. Unity is the essence of the life we live, so we can't neglect these tedious yet vital things that help to bring about the bond of true friendship, love, and oneness as a Home. Yes, it costs; but it's worth the price paid. Making the effort to communicate, to be honest and open with one another, and to work out disagreements and problems that come up—all of this is doing the humble thing,

the blessings of which are greater success and unity as a Home.

4. Our Husband's love has the power to right all wrongs, smooth out any discord, give you a new outlook on a situation or person (or even many situations and people), help you to understand others' points of view, aid you in communicating openly and honestly, strengthen your bonds of love one for another, and make you into an easier-to-live-with disciple and a better vessel for His Kingdom.

5. As we strive to improve our bonds of love through open and honest communication, as well as our skills in problem solving, our ties of unity and brotherhood will be strengthened.

We'll be stronger disciples because we'll be helping each other to be better followers of Jesus. There will be more unity in our Homes. There will be more

problem solving, and thus more solutions.

6. Honest communication is a must for the Family of today; we can't do without it. And this GN contains helpful counsel and tips that, if implemented, will make a world of difference in your Home! Happy reading and studying and applying!

With love in our Giver of Love and Communication Specialist,
Mama

Honest communication, coupled with love, bridges the gaps caused by misunderstanding and hurt.

COMMUNICATION AND OPENNESS

The Brief

7. Those in winning teams are communicative, open and honest. They realize that they simply cannot function as a Home if they are not open and honest with one another, and if there is not a free flow of loving communication.

8. In today's Family, honesty and good communication are vital elements in building strong, winning teams. Winning Homes know that without good, open communication, they'll get left behind in yesterday's problems and blunders.

Pointers for Winning Teams

Communication and openness keep a Home together

9. Just as in a marriage, Home members need good communication and openness one with another. And just as good communication and openness keep marriages together, these tools will do the same for the marriage of your Home. Communication and honesty are very important to having a happy Home, just as they are essential to maintaining a happy marriage.

10. (Jesus:) Look at your Home as a marriage, because that's what it is. You're married to Me and you're married to each other. You're "One Wife." And, as you well know, marriages don't work out well—and in fact, usually end up in divorce—if the husband and wife don't communicate with each other and aren't honest. When there's no free flow of communication, when there's a lack of honesty or openness, the things that are left unsaid build up; the molehills become mountains. The husband and wife don't even get to know each other deeply because they have too many walls erected between them, too

much they're holding back from one another, and the marriage dissolves.

11. It's the same with your Home. You can't be melded together as one and truly bonded as a marriage in Me if you're holding things back from one another, if you're not being open, and if you don't take one another into your confidence. The marriage of your Home will crumble, because you can't maintain it without good communication and openness. But with good communication and openness, the marriage of your Home will be a happy, long-lasting one.

12. Communication and openness aren't things that would be nice to have if you can afford them. They're a must, requirements in order to become and remain the winning Homes that are needed in this new era, and for the future of My Family.

A big part of communication is getting to know one another

13. (Mama:) Often when we hear the words "communication and openness," many of us automatically think of working out problems, fixing things that have gone wrong, and being open about the deep battles we're going through. Of course, the problem solving and more sober side of communication and openness is an important part, but it's not the only part. Communication and openness are a whole lot more than that.

14. (Jesus:) Communication and openness encompass so much. It's not just about solving problems. It's not just about telling your fellow Home members about the way they have offended you or hurt you. It's not just about working out miscommunications. It's not just about presenting your personal battles and problems before the Home for united prayer.

Openness, like a prickly pear, may seem uninviting at first glance. But once you get past the “prickles,” you’ll discover a sweet, satisfying “fruit.”

15. When I say that I want winning Homes to communicate and be honest and open with one another, I mean a whole lot more than all of the above. I mean that I want you to open your lives to one another. Talk about the things you enjoy, the things that make you tick, the things that make you happy, the things you like to do for fun. Talk about your history. Be honest and open about yourself—not just your NWOs and problems, but everything.

16. Tell your Home members more about yourself. Talk about your past and the things that I have brought you through. Talk about your likes and dislikes. Talk about things that happen in everyday life that inspire you, that motivate you, that enhance your service to Me. Talk about your children, your friends, and everything that’s important to you. Open your hearts and lives to one another—not just on the heavy and serious topics, but on the happy, fun, everyday-life topics.

17. Get to know one another and learn to trust one another. Try to see each Home member as a part of your personal family, and aim to know and understand them as well as you do your son or your daughter or your husband or your wife or your boyfriend or your girlfriend. Open up. Be honest. Communicate. Get deep with one another. Get close. Communicating and being honest isn’t all hard work, so have fun doing it!

Communication and openness take time

18. (Mama:) Everything worth something costs something, and the cost of a lot of things is in the form of time. Communication and openness take time, and your Home needs to know that it’s important enough to take that time. You need to plan activities and other avenues of fellowship as a Home so that you can get to know one another better, and so that you have platforms for sharing your hearts on a deeper level.

19. And, on an individual level, it’s important that you personally make the time to communicate with other Home members and get to know them intimately. Reach out. Show love. Take an interest in those in your Home. Don’t save communication for when “issues” come up. To have a united Home—a warm, loving, close Home—you have to be a whole lot more proactive than that.

20. (Jesus:) Show that your Home knows that communication is important by making the time for it. Schedule it. Plan ahead for it. Have times together as a Home that are geared toward getting to know one another. Plan fun activities around the theme of getting to know each other, such as games that involve a lot of talking and discussion, or talk-time questions over a dinner. Have lesson-sharing times. Have prayer meetings when everyone can bring a personal prayer request to the body. Take time to sit around and chat sometimes. Enjoy loving Me intimately together in such a way that each person is able to communicate their love to Me publicly.

21. Also, as a Home, encourage times of communication aside from the united settings. Take time one-on-one with one another for more intimate and personal communication. Go for a walk with someone in the Home. Get together with a small group of people on your free day and do something that will bond you together. Have a date with someone, or get together to chat over a drink some evening. And when you do this, be sure to include those you don’t normally fellowship with, so that you can get to know those in the Home that you don’t know as well, and not only those whom you are already close to.

Be wise and trustworthy

22. (Mama:) In order for people to be honest, open and willing to communicate with you about their personal feelings and thoughts, or even things they’re going through, they have to be able to trust you. They have to know that you’re not going to go volunteering the personal details of their life in your next conversation with “Mary” or “John” at the area get-together. They have to know that you’re trustworthy, that you’re

not going to gossip about them behind their back or misrepresent them.

23. If you don't exhibit wisdom and refrain from gossip, then those you live with won't want to confide in you—and I don't blame them. So an important key to having good communication within a Home is to ensure that each person is prayerful with the information others share with them. You each need to look at your own heart and life and determine how trustworthy you are. Would you tell you something? Are you handling the details of others' lives with care, prayerfulness, and wisdom?

24. (Jesus:) A point in communication, and one of extreme importance, is not gossiping. Many people have built walls about themselves and shied away from openness and communication because of wagging tongues and gossip, people unwisely sharing information with those who don't need to know. It's very sad to see how this has whittled away at the trust in communicating with others. It's made honest and open communication, which is already difficult for many people, an even harder bridge to traverse. This is very sad!

25. I'm not going to expound on this subject too much, as there is so much in the Word already about being wise in your speech, not gossiping, and guarding your tongue. But if you're looking for avenues to strengthen your communications, then start by checking your own heart. Ask yourself whether you're prayerful with the personal things people share with you. Do you respect others' feelings and take care to not breach their trust?

26. This doesn't have anything to do with covering up for someone else or compromising. That's another subject. People should be open and honest with their shepherds, and if someone shares

something with you that they should be communicating with their shepherds about, then as your brother's keeper, you're responsible to encourage them to communicate with the right people about it—their shepherds. What I'm talking about here is zipping your lip when the things you would say would only tear down someone else, cause someone to no longer trust you, breed contempt for another person, or sow division. Gossip hinders and destroys good communication and openness, so don't go there!

Be willing to work hard for good communications

27. (Mama:) Building strong bonds of communication with those you live with takes not only time but hard work. You have to break out of your ruts. You have to forsake your old ways of doing things. You have to overcome whatever it is that holds you back—whether it's pride, shyness, sensitivity, bad habits, or whatever. You have to study the Word so that you know the right way to communicate, and also hear from the Lord about what He wants you to do—and then you need to do what He tells you. All of this is hard work.

28. So thank you in advance for being willing to do your part. I know it won't always be easy. In fact, there may be times that you will find that making the effort to communicate and be more open takes more from you than you would have hoped. But with each step toward greater communication and openness, you will be making one more step toward progress, toward victory, and toward your Home becoming the winning team that our Husband has ordained for you to be.

29. (Jesus:) Having good communication and a healthy level of openness with everyone in your Home will take work. It will take effort. It's not going to come so easily. The keys and the weapon of brotherhood will definitely help you and give you that extra oomph and determination that you need, but you will also need to fight for it. It will not come by you waiting around for others to start having open communication with you; you must also be an instigator, a motivator, and help to lead others in that direction by showing yourself willing to open your life up to them.

Honest and open communication may seem like sour lemon juice, but stir in a little love "sugar," add the "water" of encouragement, and you'll have delicious, refreshing lemonade.

30. There will certainly be different levels of openness and communication with the different ones in your Home. The goal is not to try to get everyone to know your heart and mind inside out; rather, the goal is to strive for the open communication that I want you to have with someone—and for each person it might be a little different. If you are close to Me and checking in with Me often, I will show you who you need to communicate with more, and how I want you to get close to each person. Everyone’s needs are different and vary with times and seasons, so a lot of “getting it right” will come through your dependence on Me and asking Me everything.

31. In My Word I have given many practical tips and steps to take to ensure good communication and openness between one another. (See “Loving Interaction,” ML #3234, GN 837; “Communication Keys,” ML #3323, GN 927–28; “Leadership Lessons, Part 3,” ML #3386, GN 986.) And in addition to that, I have tailor-made steps for you to take in your own personal situation. You simply need to sit down, find out what they are from Me, and then put them into action.

32. It will take gumption, humility, and a sincere belief that communication and openness are desperately needed in order to bring each of you closer together and ensure that you are strengthening your bond of unity as a Home. It will take each of you thinking more of others rather than yourself. It will take more love, trust, selflessness, and unity. So claim the keys of brotherhood, honesty, good communication, yieldedness and willingness, and you will have greater success in your communications one with another.

33. It will be a work in progress. I’m not saying that as soon as you step out to communicate more, voilà, you will have received this incredible skill of communication and be able to tactfully share your heart with everyone. In the times when it is desperately needed, the keys can deliver this miracle, but in most cases you need to do your part. If it came to you easily, then you’d get lazy. It has to be something you need to be willing to fight for. You will not regret it, however. You will be thrilled with the results.

Your destinations are always best reached when you travel in the well-maintained vehicle of good communication. Regardless of road conditions, with the right, up-to-par vehicle, you’ll reach your destination with relative ease.

34. Be thankful for the opportunities I bring your way. See each situation you go through where you will need to use communication and openness as a positive thing. See every opportunity as another chance to further the tightness and unity that I’m bringing into the Family as a whole.

Overcome hindrances to openness and communication

35. (Mama:) When something is difficult for us, it’s usually because the Enemy is fighting us in that area of our life, or there’s something hindering us. There are a lot of things that can hold us back from communicating and being open. So it’s important to take some time to think and pray about anything that might be holding you back. Be honest with yourself and determine what is in the way of you having open communication with those in your Home, and then ask the Lord how you can go on the attack to overcome anything that is hindering you.

36. I believe that if we are willing, our Husband will give us the desire to meld with one another as we use the weapon of brotherhood He has given us. As we fight for unity, good communication, and openness within our Homes, we will begin to feel a stronger desire to humble ourselves, to show love, and to sacrifice our pride for the greater good of the Home and in order to strengthen our bonds of love. Because we need to have good communication, openness and honesty within our Homes, and it’s not optional, as we do our part, the Lord will meet us halfway.

37. (*Jesus:*) Let's look at some reasons why honest and open communication have been difficult for many of you.

38. —There hasn't been the measure of trust between you that is needed. You often feel more comfortable trusting your shepherds or even those from other Homes than those who you live up close and personal with. You're afraid of entrusting your heart and life into their hands.

39. —Pride and sensitivity get in the way. The spirits of pride and sensitivity are often sent to your Homes in order to intercept any willingness or desire to grow close to your brothers and sisters in the way of opening your life and heart to them.

40. —You battle with busy lives. There is a lot happening in your Home, and sometimes it's difficult to find the time to slow down and get to know each other, to share what you're going through, to ask for prayer, and to let others know how you feel about different things.

41. —Many of you are afraid of confrontations. You have experienced some unpleasant confrontations in the past, and you feel that one way to keep the peace and harmony in your Homes is to keep your thoughts and feelings to yourself.

42. —Maybe you're shy, and it's difficult for you to share your heart. You have a hard time expressing yourself, and it's very humbling for you.

43. —You feel like you're not a "communicator" or a "people person" by nature, so you'll leave the communicating to others.

44. —Perhaps by nature you're a very private person, and find it hard to talk about anything personal to others. You feel that things in your life are personal, and that others shouldn't expect to be privy to them.

45. There are a variety of reasons why it is difficult to be honest and open with others, and these are just a few. But what you need to realize is that anything that holds you back from communicating and bonding as a Home is not My will.

46. There is no excuse for not overcoming the things that hold you back. You have My full power at your disposal. You have the keys of the Kingdom that can change your nature and the way you've done things for years. You have spirit

helpers that you can call on to assist you. Everything that you need to overcome the hindrances to good communication and openness is at your disposal. You lack for nothing, so go on the attack!

To communicate you need humility

47. (*Mama:*) Good communication is enhanced by humility, whereas pride only gets in the way. Pride makes you hold things in; humility keeps you open. Pride makes you fear and worry about your reputation; humility doesn't care. Pride makes you act rashly and sharply; humility helps you to be loving in everything you do and say.

48. Humility is a vital ingredient in good communication, but I realize that humility can be somewhat of a vague topic. In essence we all know that humility is good and pride is bad, and that the right course of action in any situation is to choose to do the humble thing, but sometimes it's easier said than done. So here are some practical ideas the Lord gave of ways you can use humility and other needed virtues to aid you in your communications with others.

49. (*Jesus:*) Let Me give you a few tips on how to be humble in your communications:

50. ▶ Pray before you speak, so you get My go-ahead on whether it's the appropriate time to bring up your comment, issue, or suggestion. If I say to speak, then do so; if I tell you not to, don't.

51. ▶ Be willing to back down. Present your side, but be willing to concede to the other person's views. Don't become dogmatic about your opinion; people will resent you for being pushy and overbearing.

52. ▶ Be sweet, kind, loving, and well-mannered in your communications. You can be open and share your heart without blowing

Good communication, like a shower, helps to remove any dirt that has accumulated after a day's work.

the other person away, without being hurtful, and without lashing out at him or her.

53. ▶ Be approachable. If you snap at people and regularly have wrong reactions when they want to communicate with you, this is throwing a bucket of cold water on openness and good communications.

54. ▶ Be careful not to enter a discussion or time of communication with someone with your own agenda that you intend to bulldoze through.

55. ▶ Hear out everyone involved. You may have your opinion, and you may think it's what will rectify the problem, but others may not see eye to eye on it with you. So hear others out; let everyone who has a view present their point.

56. ▶ Be careful about interrupting others when they're presenting their point, especially if you have a differing opinion. If there's anything that you need clarified in order to better understand what the other person is saying, then wait for a good break in the conversation to ask. Rudely interrupting someone else while they're in the middle of expressing themselves often causes frustration, a feeling that you're not listening, or that you're trying to push your point.

57. ▶ Listen. Many people listen while at the same time formulating their response. That isn't really listening; that is partially listening, while the rest of your mind is ticking away to come up with a response. When you don't listen properly, you miss key points the person is trying to bring up, or you misinterpret them, and you're likely to jump to wrong conclusions.

58. ▶ Don't jump to conclusions. If you don't understand something, or the point being made is not clear, ask for further explanations rather than jumping to conclusions.

59. ▶ Present your side in a non-emotional manner. Using a high-pitched or raised voice only makes the atmosphere tense and puts people on the defensive, and can cause a retaliatory reaction. Getting angry, losing your temper, and raising your voice are all proud reactions.

There's nothing like the soap of openness to keep your spirits clean and fresh.

60. ▶ Be willing to say nothing. This shouldn't be an excuse for people who rarely say anything in meetings or discussions, but is a good point for opinionated and vocal people. If you always have something to say, people can resent you for it, especially if you're often pushy and arrogant in your presentations.

61. ▶ Don't be afraid to show yourself vulnerable. Be humble enough to show that you don't know everything, that you don't have your act together, and that you're sincerely open to the opinions of the one you're communicating with. This will not make them think less of you, but more.

62. ▶ Be sure to bring out the positive, not just the negative. When you feel like you've been wronged in a situation, it's very difficult to bring out the person's good qualities. However, if you do this, you're doing the humble thing, and it will put you in the position of being able to solve the problem with less personal conflict.

63. ▶ Don't talk about the views people bring up at Home meetings or discussion with others in the Home if it's only going to demean or criticize the other person. People often have a difficult time expressing themselves as is, so it doesn't help if you criticize or talk about their comment or suggestion after the meeting or discussion is over.

64. ▶ Take things to Me in prayer for My confirmation, and trust what I give. Some people get concerned that when a decision is given to someone to confirm with Me, that that person's opinion—especially if it's an opposite opinion—will taint the prophecy. This attitude breeds a lack of trust, because you doubt the person's connection with Me, and you're also not trusting My leading and guidance.

To communicate you need love

65. (Mama:) As we all know so well, love is the most important thing! You can have all the "rules" for good communication and openness down pat, but if you don't have love, your efforts will fall flat or will even end in disaster. It takes love

to communicate. The Lord's love is the antidote to criticism, strife, misperceptions, and any rift dividing you. A well-measured helping of this antidote will give you more wisdom, understanding, and good communications one with another.

66. (Jesus:) Good communication is about love—love enough to hear someone else out, to choose that which is best for everyone as a whole, and to love enough to take the humble seat yourself. So if you want to improve your communication, learn to love more—not with superficial love, but love from the heart. Your love for others is what will give you the heart to communicate in a loving manner, to be honest and open with each other. If you love each other so much, you will want to help everyone do their best for Me.

67. Love is humility. And as David used to say, love, humility, prayer—and good communication and honesty—solve all problems. So if you want your communication to solve problems—or better yet, preempt problems—then be loving, be humble, be prayerful, and be honest.

True honesty and openness

68. (Mama:) Some people have misconceptions about honesty and feel that they're not being completely honest and open unless they spill everything that's on their heart—even if it's unloving or hurtful. But this is not the kind of honesty and openness the Lord is after. This kind of honesty hurts people, and instead of building unity, it tears it down and destroys it.

69. We've got to fight in spirit to develop the right spirit of honesty, allowing the Lord's loving Spirit to envelop us. We must call on the Holy Spirit to give us the love we need to see beyond the faults of our loved ones, and to have faith and hope in them. We need to present what we say to others in a loving manner, without personal irritations spearheading our honesty. Carelessly spilling the beans of honesty isn't the solution.

70. True and loving honesty builds up. Rash, harsh, angry, and unprayerful honesty does nothing but hurt and destroy. Please don't be guilty of this.

**Truthfulness supplies what is required.
Openness shares beyond the call of duty.**

71. (Jesus:) Above all, honesty is love. Love isn't hurtful, nor is it critical or degrading. Honesty should be graded by love. Love is the cornerstone to communicating honestly. Without real love, honesty is as steam, transforming the once refreshing water into a scorching hot steam that can burn and scar. Depending on how close you get to the hot steam or how powerful and intense it is, it either leaves you with an uncomfortable hot and sweaty feeling, or it can have more serious consequences, burning and injuring. The same can be said of honesty and openness: When you are carelessly blunt, it wounds and often leaves a scar, or at least a memory of pain and discomfort.

72. It is My desire for the Family to learn the balance in honesty. Your honesty and openness should always be tempered by love, understanding, mercy, and humility. Are those your motives behind honest communication? Or are you frustrated, annoyed, or condescending, all of which spoil your "honest" communication? Honesty should be a means of aiding someone. It should be loving and helpful.

73. Loving, honest communication is not a volley of fire, harsh words, insinuations, or assumptions. It is, in fact, the complete opposite! There should be a great deal of prayer involved in honesty and openness. Out of concern for your loved one's welfare, before mentioning anything you should take it to Me in prayer. It is given to Me to see inside the heart of each man, woman, and child, to understand their innermost thoughts, and to sense their needs. I can convey portions of that to you as well, if you beseech Me for it, so that you can take on My mind in that instance and comprehend the greatest need of your loved one at that time.

74. The spiritual weapons I've given you are also a key in learning the right balance in honesty and openness. If you'll use the wondrous weapon of prayer, you'll take the concerns to Me

in prayer, so that because of your prayers I can begin the work behind the scenes in the life of your brother or sister, and also in your own heart. When you raise high the keys, you can send forth their power to settle any ruffled nerves, silence any lying attack of the Enemy, and infuse your spirit with faith and trust.

75. Take hold of the undefeatable weapon of praise. Deftly cut asunder any attacks of the Enemy on your unity and love. Fill your mind with thanksgiving to Me for your loved one, and let that spirit of praise enrapture you and give you heavenly thoughts of Me and My love. Then stop and listen to My whispers; let My words bring you the answers you need. I always have guidance to give you, if you'll simply open your channel to receive it.

76. Gird on the rest of your spiritual weaponry as well—the effective weapon of brotherhood, and the demon-demolishing armament of yieldedness, humility, and meekness. Stand guard with the mighty sword of the Word to slice through any attacks of the Enemy, and see how the use of these spiritual weapons will aid you in learning to convey words of honesty to your loved one in the right spirit, using the most effective methods for them individually.

77. You might think it a little much to gird yourself with so many weapons for something like honesty and openness. But openness in My eyes is an essential element to the proper functioning of your winning teams. It has the power to bind you closely together in love. Or, if used incorrectly, to sever your ties of unity.

78. The Enemy has many nasty tactics that he uses to try to defeat openness, ranging from pride to sensitivity, because he knows how powerful a tool openness is when used in love and wisdom. He has many a demon working to destroy the positive effects of openness, whether it's through hesitation to communicate out of fear, or through unloving presentation, or refusal to accept the instruction given. He'll throw everything at you in the hope that you'll

Honesty is the open door that connects one life's room to another.

shy away from openness and receptivity. It's important to quash those attacks before they have a chance to develop. If you don't, they'll prevent you from being your brother's keeper, and it will take a toll on your Home's spiritual standard.

79. Openness can be a burden or a blessing, depending on how you use it. It is your responsibility to use it wisely and lovingly, to seek Me for guidance as to whether you should say anything, what you should say, and when you should say it. Honesty and openness will fortify you as a team. They're key tools in developing a solid foundation to help one another to be the disciples I need you to be. Loving honesty and openness are part of being your brother's keeper; it's a requirement of a disciple.

Communicate regularly

80. (Mama:) One secret to having smoother and easier communications is to communicate regularly. Make it a habit. The more you do it, the easier it gets—like most things in life.

81. (Jesus:) Communicating is something that comes easier with time. If you get in the groove of communicating and being open with those you live with, I guarantee that you'll get hooked. Your lives together will completely change for the better, and you won't ever want to go back to the way things were before. Communicating will become more natural for you, and it'll be easier. So aim to communicate regularly, so that you don't get out of the habit.

82. Also, aim to communicate about things right away. Don't let them build up. It's usually easier to communicate with someone about things right away rather than hoping it will be easier if you wait a bit. The longer you let issues sit, the more difficult they are to communicate about. So make it your goal to communicate about things with those you live with regularly. Don't let issues pile up. Build the communicating habit.

Practical tips

83. (Mama:) If you haven't been communicating with others enough, here is some more practical advice from our Husband. These are just some ideas to get you started. You can ask Him for more personalized advice and tips, which He'll be happy to give you.

84. (Jesus:) Any type of change starts in your own heart. You have to be willing to take some steps of obedience. It's not up to others to obey; it's up to you to obey.

85. Don't be the one to wait for others to want to communicate and be open with you. Take the first step and ask Me how you can strive toward better communication and openness with others.

86. Ask Me whether there is anyone in your Home that you need to communicate with and become more open with. If you are listening to My voice, I will have already shown you where more communication and openness are needed, and with whom. The next step will be for you to ask Me for a wise and gentle way to reach out to this person.

87. Realize that not all attempts at open and honest communication will go well. There is guaranteed success, but you may need to fight for it a little harder and even a little longer. Giving up after one or two tries is not good enough. If one approach doesn't work, then seek Me, and I will give you another.

88. You must believe with all of your heart that communication and openness are two vital and important things to have in your Home in order to ensure a winning team, greater unity, and overall fruitfulness in your life.

89. When you are up against a situation where you need to communicate or be open, ask yourself: What is more important to me?—That I preserve my feelings and avoid possible further complications and misunderstanding due to communication?—Or that I take the risk, following the counsel the Lord has given me, and fight for greater unity and closeness with my fellow warrior?

90. Show others that you are weak and need their help in order to communicate with them and be open. You don't have the answers. You know you aren't right and don't possess a greater understanding of the situation, so you are in need of their help.

91. Be open and show others that you are willing to be open by sharing your heart regularly with the Home, admitting what you're going through, and asking for prayer.

Communicate with the Lord most of all

92. (Mama:) In all your communicating, don't forget to communicate with the Lord most of all. He wants to be included in your communications. He longs to give His counsel and advice. He's the most skilled Communicator, and the One Who can help you to be lovingly open with others, without the negative side effects. So include Him. Hear from Him. He will help all your efforts to bear good fruit.

93. (Jesus:) All of your efforts to communicate will come to naught if you don't include Me, if you don't seek Me, and if you aren't going about things in the right spirit. Communication is very practical, but in order for it to bear fruit, you need the power of My Spirit. You need the anointing of My love. You need the assistance of My spirit helpers who are skilled in communications. You need My humility and an infilling of prayerfulness. You need Me. You need all that I have to offer you. Otherwise your attempts will fall flat.

94. I want to be a part of your communications. I'm your communications instructor, and I'm also the most important part of your Home's marriage. So seek Me. Employ My help.

Being bluntly honest is the newsboy tossing the newspaper toward the front door, when it's raining. Loving honesty is carrying the newspaper to the door and delivering it by hand, so it doesn't get wet.

Talking is dialing someone's number; communication is the other person picking up the phone.

Ask for My advice. This is how you'll become a skilled and loving communicator—by doing things the way I would, by taking on My mind, by allowing Me to fully possess you, by partaking of My wisdom, by letting Me show you the ropes, by letting Me impart to you the secrets of success.

Talk About It

Optional discussion questions

- Discuss some of the mindsets or hesitations that prevent you from honestly communicating with one another. Explain what limits you personally in this regard as well as what would help you to overcome such concerns or fears.
- Talk about the positive attributes of openness and communication, and the subsequent benefits you gain through it.
- Often many people's initial reaction to honest and open communication can be defensive, and they may mentally refute the admonition or counter it with a verbal rebuttal. However, having a positive, open reaction is often the first step on the road of acceptance. So discuss ways to be praiseful and accepting of honest and open communication, especially when you don't fully understand the person's point, or if the points brought up are not exactly accurate.
- When you're talking with someone, what are some nonverbal cues that you appreciate them giving, which reassure you that they're listening? For example, "I appreciate it when the person I'm talking to makes eye contact with me, because then I feel more confident that they're hearing me out." What are other cues you like people to give?

- Talk about different communication preferences, such as: When having a talk time walk or fellowship with a shepherd or a friend, what works for you to break the ice so that the communication can go deeper? Do you like to ease into heavier topics by starting out on light ones? Do you prefer to jump right in? Do specific questions help you to open up on a specific topic, which you plan or hope to discuss, rather than hoping the conversation strays in that direction?

Praise Ideas

Optional praise ideas

- *Honesty praise:* Have everyone in the room turn to the person on their right and privately tell them (and the Lord) how thankful they are for something specific about them—preferably something that they haven't told them before, to exercise their "honesty muscles."
- *Personal victory praises:* Go around the circle, and one by one, each person stands up and praises the Lord for a personal problem, trial, or difficulty they've experienced recently, which the Lord helped them to resolve or get the victory over, or is helping them make progress in.
- *Openness and communication benefits praise:* Divide into two teams, with an equal number of people on each team. Give each team a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Set a timer or a watch for two minutes (or longer if you feel you need more time). Each team then thinks of and writes down any benefits of openness and communication that they can think of. Then, once the two minutes are up, the teams will read out their lists, and each team will gain a point for every benefit listed that the other team didn't have. The team with the most points at the end of the game will then select a few benefits from both lists combined, and act out a brief skit on openness and communication using those benefits, as the other team praises for them.

“Do” the Word

Optimal practical ways to be “doers of the Word”

- Read some of the marriage GNs, and apply the counsel on the importance of openness and communication to the “marriage” of your Home. (See “Communication in Marriage and Other Relationships,” ML #3196, GN 800; “The Beauties, Promises, and Rewards of Married Love,” ML #3194, GN 799.)
- It’s always helpful to ask the Lord how you are faring personally in your openness and communication, so a good starting place is to ask Him about one step you can take to improve in this area of your life. Then in a meeting or devotions, everyone can share that one point with the rest of the Home, so that you can all be aware of the way the Lord is asking you to progress. Here’s a sample question you can ask: “Jesus, what is one practical step that I can take today that will help me in my honest and open communication, whether in learning to be more open and communicative with others, or in learning to be more accepting of others’ communications with me?”
- Ask the Lord what is holding you back from communicating openly and honestly with others. (See the section on “Overcome hindrances to openness and communication” for examples.)
- A good first step in communication is also getting to know each person in the Home better, since when you know people better, it’s easier to communicate. Here are some get-to-know-you ideas:
 - ▶ Plan an evening activity as a Home (over a special snack/meal), with a list of compiled discussion questions. These should be questions that each person would answer about themselves. For example, “What is your favorite spiritual weapon, and why?” “What would you consider your most life-changing experiences?” “What’s a quality you appreciate most in a friend?” “Have you

ever had a spiritual experience or happening that gave you a better understanding of the spirit world? Explain.” “Which gift or talent that the Lord has given you are you most thankful for?” Put these questions in a bowl or hat, and have everyone in the Home answer one.

- ▶ Draw names from a bowl, and go for a walk or do something else that is conducive to talking with that person sometime during the week. Take that time to get to know each other better, find out more about their life story, likes, dislikes, personal testimony, family, etc.

- ▶ Every evening at dinnertime—for as long as it takes to get through the Home—have five or more minutes of “spotlight on…” time. During those minutes everyone gets to ask lighthearted, getting-to-know-you type questions of that person. There could be a few set questions, such as the following, or you could come up with your own. The kids would probably enjoy being in the spotlight too. (Example questions: What are your top two favorite colors/foods/animals, etc.? What is the first thing you’re planning on doing when you get to Heaven? What’s the best advice anyone ever gave you? What are words or phrases that you use too much? If you had three wishes, what would they be? If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do? If you could be any *Heaven’s Library* character, who would you choose, and why?)

Annihilate

The Sen-si: Legion of demons that attack us with sensitivity.

Activate

Amahl: Heavenly communications instructor.

K.O.T. fighters: Legion of specially trained spirit beings who assist us in warding off attacks of the Sen-si (demons of sensitivity).

Anecdote

A band of Indians were paddling down a river in their canoes. One brave noticed that his canoe had a leak, but was too proud to call the others for help. He didn't want to be seen as the cause of delay by rowing to shore and repairing it, so he said nothing and continued paddling.

Other Indians in canoes near him noticed that he was taking on water and beginning to lag behind them even as he rowed more furiously to try to keep pace. Yet they too were afraid of bringing attention to his misfortune and thus shaming him, so they also just kept rowing.

The Indian began to lag farther and farther behind, until the critical moment came when the level of the water grew too high and his canoe sank, along with the provisions, tools, and weapons that he was transporting. Only then did he call loudly for help, and the other canoes had to turn around and row upstream to rescue him.

"How foolish you all have been," said the chief upon hearing that the leak had been discovered early enough to fix it, and that others too had noticed but did nothing. "The small repair and the shame of delay would have been nothing compared to the loss of the canoe, the supplies, and the delay we will now suffer."

It is better to sacrifice your pride, or the pride of another, to save yourself or others from disaster, than it is to save your pride but lose everything else in the process.

Hot Key: Open heart

95. (Jesus:) Claim the key of an open heart, and I will open the doors of your heart to invite others in, to love, care, share, and communicate

You might as well be open and honest; people can usually see through you anyway. If you're dishonest, you risk making a fool out of yourself.

deeply. This key will help to break down any walls or barricades which hinder the free flow of communication and honesty, and give you the faith to trust your heart to others and bare it before them, thus leaving it exposed to soak up the love and strength of unity, the strength that comes from your brotherly love.

Prayer Boost

96. (Prayer:) Dearest Love, we call on Your love and humility and power to aid us in being better communicators and more open in our interactions with others. It's not in our nature, but You promised that You can change the way we naturally are through the power of the keys.

97. Please help us to be open and honest with one another. Help us to get to know one another as well, and not to only use the tools of communication and openness when we run into problems. Help us to use them often and regularly, so that our Home can benefit from the good fruits of sharing our hearts one with another.

98. We call on Amahl, the heavenly communications instructor. We also call on the K.O.T. fighters, and our personal K.O.T. instructors to help us as we open up to others, and to specifically defend us against the Sen-si, the demons of sensitivity.

99. We rebuke sensitivity and pride and anything else that would get in the way of us being open and honest with one another. We call on the key of an open heart, which You promised would open the door of our hearts so that we can invite others into our lives. We activate the keys of love, good communication, honesty, humility, trust, and brotherhood.

100. We make a commitment today, as a Home, to communicate more, to each do our part to be more open with each other. We know that You have put us together as a team for Your glory, so help us to do our part to ensure that we're bonded together as closely as we can be, so that You can continue to use us.

101. We need You, Jesus! We praise You for the victories You are going to help us to win!

PROBLEM SOLVING

The Brief

102. (Mama:) Members of a winning Home feel responsible to work out any glitches, problems, and disagreements that come up in the Home. They realize that when you're living communally among people with different personalities and backgrounds, there are going to be misunderstandings, miscommunications, and problems that will arise. But winning teams don't just live with these challenges; they solve them.

103. In the past, many Family members have tended to gloss over such problems, simply live with them, or even run away from them by moving to another Home, instead of doing the often hard work of resolving the conflicts or problems. But now the Lord is expecting members of our winning teams to work things out between themselves, to fix problems as they arise rather than ignoring them and pretending they don't exist, so that love and unity and the spirit of brotherhood can thrive. Winning teams will rise to the occasion!

Pointers for Winning Teams

Realize that problem solving is a part of life

104. When forming—or enhancing—a winning team, it's important to realize right from the start that problems are a part of life, plain and simple. Even if you're living with "Lily Loving," "Obadiah Obedient," "Chris Communicator," and "Kezia Kind," you're still going to have problems in your Home. Nobody is perfect. Everybody makes mistakes. Everybody has problems. So if you're prepared for the fact that you will have problems in your Home, then it's easier to take care of them once they arise.

105. Knowing that there are always going to be problems, no matter where you go, helps

you to fight to work through them rather than running away from them or haphazardly deciding to move Homes. Moving from place to place will not make problems go away, so we all need to learn how to problem solve, because problems will always be a part of our lives.

106. If you think you're going to end up with a team that doesn't ever have any problems, conflicts, or differences, then you're living in a dream world. Problems come with the territory of living, even in our lives for the Lord—especially in our lives for the Lord, since the Enemy is always trying to use problems and difficulties to destroy our work for Jesus and to keep us from bearing fruit.

107. But if the Lord were to take every conflict and clash away, so that our working relationships with others were problem-free, we wouldn't grow. We wouldn't progress in the spirit like we need to. We wouldn't learn to understand each other. We wouldn't bond. So He uses the difficulties we sometimes face to draw us closer together. When we work through problems we get stronger—stronger personally and stronger as a team.

108. (Jesus:) Misunderstandings, miscommunications, and problems in your relations with others are all part of life and part of human nature. I knew full well when I created mankind that you wouldn't always see eye to eye, and that there would be glitches in your relations with one another. It comes with the territory of being human. It may surprise some of you that I made it that way. But I knew it would be good for you for many reasons—one being that it provides opportunities for learning and growth.

109. You've got to face the fact that you will always have problems, as will everyone else you'll ever live with. Problems are something that you have to deal with all the time, like dirty dishes. Nobody likes to deal with problems or work them out, just as most people don't like to wash dishes.

But what's gotta be done has gotta be done. If you want to eat off of clean plates at mealtimes and have an inspiring kitchen, you've got to do the dishes. And if you want to have a happy Home, you've got to clean up the problems.

110. I'm sorry that problems aren't fun. But you don't have to live with them. You can take care of them with love, prayerfulness, humility, and wisdom. Problems don't have to derail your Home. They can, in fact, be steppingstones to greater unity, because by working out problems you can actually draw closer to each other and learn to trust one another more. So don't look at problems as a drag that you just have to live with. Look at them as opportunities to improve your Home for the better, to strengthen your ties of love with one another, and to build your character.

111. Remember, problems, like mistakes, do not automatically equal bad. When problems arise, when you have misunderstandings, miscommunications, and conflicts with others and you don't do anything about them, then yes, this is bad and the results can turn out very sad, even tragic in some cases. But if you will address the problems, and if you will allow them to be steppingstones to progress and learning important lessons on life, then problems equal good, because then there is advancement, there is growth, and you are all the better for it in the end.

Know how important it is to solve problems that arise

112. (Mama:) When you're faced with doing something difficult, it helps to have a reason and to be personally convinced of why you need to do it. So when it comes to problem solving, working out glitches, problems, or resolving conflicts with those in your Home, which is

Clear up problems as they arise. Don't make the mistake of waiting too long to iron out little problems and differences before the wrinkles set as creases.

not most people's idea of fun, it helps to know why it's important.

113. The main reason it's so important is that the Enemy uses friction, problems, and difficulties within a Home in an attempt to defeat your work for the Lord. So when you're solving problems and working things out between yourselves, you're literally defeating the Enemy in a powerful way.

114. (Jesus:) Let Me ask you this: How important is it to treat an infection on your body? A disagreement is like an injury in your unity, an abrasion, or an open wound. People can create these wounds by misunderstandings caused by their sharp or insensitive personalities, but generally—and this is by far the greater percentage—these things are caused by the Enemy.

115. He sneaks into your midst, and when he sees an opening to blame the problem on someone else, he quickly cuts you, then points out how it was the other person's fault. "They're in the wrong; they did this to you." In fact, it was Satan's own emissaries that did it to you. Satan often hides in the shadows and is quick to accuse others of the deeds for which he himself is responsible.

116. For example, say you've had a clash with someone in your Home. The Enemy sees that as an opportunity to get your eyes on the other person and blame the problem on them. He'll say something like, "The reason you're having this problem is because so-and-so is unloving and hurtful." Then the problem will start to grow as you begin to feel more and more in the right and see the other person more and more in the wrong. He gets you to believe that the other person is responsible for the problem, for the disunity, when he's the one who's created those bad feelings.

117. It's easy to take the Enemy's viewpoint and say, "Yes, look what so-and-so did to me! How could they be so mean and unloving as to cut me like that?" And the outlook of the Enemy begins to set in and infect the wound with bitterness and disunity. It might have started out as a personal problem with someone in the Home that you could have easily worked out through love and prayer and humility and good communication, but

instead the Enemy blows it out of proportion and makes you blame the disunity or problem on the other person, instead of on the real culprit—the Enemy, the one who is trying to use the problem to decapitate your unity.

118. The Enemy then covers the wound with his hand so that every time you look down at it you don't see the infection growing, spreading, and getting worse. He covers it and tells you, “Oh, it's not that bad; it's fine. You're right to feel the way you do. There's no reason to take care of this sore; it's so-and-so's fault anyway. They're the ones who should be doing something about it; you have no responsibility for it.” It seems silly when I lay it out plainly like this for you, doesn't it? But that's what often happens in times of disunity or attacks on your unity.

119. The problem is that while you're ignoring your part in the situation and your responsibility to take care of the problem, the Enemy is able to pump more infectious germs into the sore. Then it becomes a chink in your armor through which he can get in and begin to poison your spiritual “bloodstream,” and problems begin to crop up in other areas of your life too. Other “sores” you have from other abrasions begin to become infected as well, as you slap My hand away when I try to treat them.

120. If you allow the “sore” of disunity and bitterness to grow, it ends up spreading to other areas of your life. Maybe you start with just being in disunity with one person, but if that grows, then pretty soon the Enemy starts infecting other areas of your life. Maybe you had difficulties with someone else in the past, so you start to remember that and get bitter against that person as well, and it grows and grows until you end up bitter and in disunity with nearly everyone.

121. It comes down to your choice to either do something about the problem or gloss it over and pretend it's not there. If you don't do something about it, the infection grows and gets worse till it can make you very, very sick in spirit. If you do something about it immediately, you'll be able to see who the attacker really is, and take action against the Devil, who was the one who sliced away at you and caused the hurt.

Remember the real enemy

122. (Mama:) I'd like to reiterate the important point the Lord made in the preceding message. When you're having difficulty with someone in your Home—a disagreement, or you're having a hard time getting along, or there's been a misunderstanding, or something that threatens your unity in a big way—it's easy to look at that person as the “enemy,” the one in the wrong. It's easy to feel upset, angry, and plain annoyed by this person who is causing you so much trouble. And all the while that person is often feeling exactly the same way toward you.

123. The truth is that regardless of who is involved in a conflict, disagreement, or problematic situation, the Devil and his Selvegian underlings are the enemies. The Enemy is the one who's trying to get in and destroy your unity. So fight him and all of his nasty demons, not the brother or sister you're feeling at odds with. Work hard to rebuild your unity and send the Enemy and his hordes packing!

124. (Jesus:) The person with whom you are experiencing difficulty maintaining unity is not the “enemy”; it's the Devil or one of his demons lurking in the shadows, waiting for any chance to get at you and strike you a blow! You have to realize that in order to fight it. The person with whom you've had the disagreement or conflict isn't the enemy. Rule number one. They are not, will not be, and never are the enemy. Got that?

125. When a situation like this comes up and your unity has been affected, it is never, ever, the other person who is the enemy or the real problem. I need you to understand this, because this is the foundation of the solution I'm going to give you. Never ever, ever, ever is your brother or sister the enemy, regardless of what their personality might be like, regardless of what they may or may not have done, or regardless of how you feel you've been wronged in whatever way by them.

126. Have you got this point? They are not the enemy. The enemy is Satan himself and his messengers and agents that he sends into your midst to cause you harm. They are the real enemies.

The next enemy is your pride. Together, Satan uses the Selvegion and your pride to propagate and use this attack on your unity.

127. He blames his attack on your brother or sister to drive a wedge between you, just as a country's enemies would blame their actions on another faction in a government to get that government so busy with infighting that they fail to see the real attack coming from the outside.

128. Disunity is unacceptable in any situation. It's never an acceptable recourse to gloss over or move away from the problem. You've got to grab that dirty demon by the neck and strangle the life out of him by going on the attack to restore unity! Realize first and foremost who the enemy is, and then take action against him.

You can't afford to give the Enemy any place

129. (Mama:) Here's more from the Lord about what He expects from winning teams today. Personality problems and conflicts within a Home are the ammunition the Enemy uses to destroy our sample of unity and brotherhood to the world, so we can't let him defeat us through them.

130. (Jesus:) I expect you winning team Homes of the future to work through your problems. When misunderstandings, misconceptions, or conflicts of any kind arise, you must not let them slide, or fester inside, or try to run away from them, but you must work them out in love, unity, and in the spirit of brotherhood.

131. You cannot afford to give the Enemy room to hinder, slow down, or incapacitate you, which is the result of not resolving your problems. The new Family must be a progressing Family, on the attack when it comes to resolving your differences, going somewhere, and not wasting any time in the process!

132. Your Enemy is out to get in and cause you problems through any crack you leave open. And he knows that problems that threaten your unity, things that come up due to personality differences, personal quirks, misunderstandings, misconceptions, varied viewpoints, etc., are some

The ability to prayerfully confront problems is an important skill for every missionary, shepherd, teacher, and mate.

of the easiest ways he can get in. It's part of human nature. It comes natural to you, and he is fully aware that what comes natural is what has the highest chance of getting you to stumble.

133. Your greatest testimony is tied to your sample of brotherhood, your love, unity, trust and selflessness; therefore, this is where the Enemy will strike relentlessly, and this is precisely why you cannot afford to give him room to work in this area. You can no longer afford to coexist with problems, or to ignore them and pretend they don't exist, or to allow them to build up and grow until they reach the exploding point, or worse yet, the destruction point. Doing so makes you a weak link and leaves you vulnerable to the Enemy's attacks, and this is not acceptable.

134. Love, unity, and the spirit of brotherhood must be a thriving force in your Homes, because this is the power that will help you to weather the storms of the future. I have told you time and time again that in unity there is strength. This isn't just a slogan; it is an understatement, My loves. The strength of your unity will be your survival in the future; it will be your greatest testimony and My face to the world.

135. Your unity will be put to the ultimate test in the coming days, therefore you must do all you can to strengthen your bonds of brotherhood now. You need the power that unity brings; you can't live without it, you won't survive. I know it often takes time and hard work to resolve conflicts and problems. It takes a large measure of humility. It takes hearing from Me and putting into practice the things I show you. It takes sacrifice, yieldedness, and much more. But nothing is more worth the effort!

136. You must look at what you stand to gain and also what you stand to lose. You gain everything—strength, power, My favor and

blessings, and the satisfaction of knowing you are fulfilling your destiny. You also stand to lose everything if you don't work to resolve your problems.

137. Whether you are victors or losers is up to you. So it behooves you to search My Word regarding the particular problem you are having, and come to Me for personal instruction on how you can work out your problems in love. Each problem is different, each situation is different, people and circumstances vary, so personalized instruction is imperative.

138. Love, humility, prayer, communication, calling on the keys, seeking Me, and taking action on what I show you to do, will solve all problems. Guard your brotherhood at all costs, My loves, for by this will all men know that you are My disciples, and you will receive the strength and the power you need to make it through the Last Days.

Determine what caused the problem and solve it

139. (Mama:) Although the Enemy is definitely behind the attacks on your unity as a Home, it's usually not all spiritual. There are often things that have caused the problem, reasons why you're experiencing difficulties, or perhaps just human nature and NWOs. Maybe there was a misunderstanding, lack of communication, or something else that went wrong.

140. So when you're experiencing clashes, differences, or problems, it's important to pray and find out why. Pray and hear from the Lord officially, but also analyze the situation, as sometimes things aren't as bad as you think they are, or you're blowing things up in your own mind and making a bigger deal of a situation than is necessary.

141. (Jesus:) Here are some questions to help you determine what the problem is and how to get My mind on the problem:

- Does this attack come at an important time in our

Home? Are we moving forward and making progress that the Enemy would like to stop? What would be the best way to hinder that progress?

- Does this person love the Lord and me and are we generally on pretty good terms except for this one incident causing problems?

- What are some of the things the Enemy would love to use to try to break [the other person's] and my unity?

- Could it be that I misunderstood [the other person]?

- Is it possible that I'm reading more into this than I should?

- What do I stand to gain by this conflict? What do I stand to lose?

- Is the issue at the heart of this petty attack of the Enemy worth the disunity it's causing?

- What is more important to me—my pride or our unity?

142. Asking yourself questions along these lines will help you to shrink the problem back down to size and avoid the sensationalistic rhetoric of the Selvegion. You'll be able to see your problem clearly, and then you can come to Me and ask Me how to overcome it.

143. Understanding that it is never My will for you to be in conflict or disunity with your brethren makes any conflict wrong and necessitates that you take action to rectify the situation. If you're having a problem with someone, no matter how big or how small, it's a problem that needs to be solved.

144. How do you set about restoring unity between you? What if you feel it's their fault? What if it is their fault because of something they did or said?

145. Pray desperately for yieldedness to My will, whatever that might mean for you.

146. Ask Me how I see the problem. How do I want you to look at this?

147. Get counsel if you need it. An outside opinion can help to dispel the emotionally charged feelings that often cloud your judgment and make your actions and logic unreasonable.

Creating problems is natural; solving problems is supernatural.

148. Begin to think positively about the person involved. Start by praising Me for their good points. If you can't think of any, ask Me to give you some. Take the offensive by praising Me for the good things about your interactions with this person. Get over the first hurdle of any negative attitudes the Enemy would like to use to blind you to your love and appreciation for that person.

149. Do something nice for them. Oh, I see you groaning now! But this is one of the steps you need to take. Do something nice and even out of the ordinary for them. Drop them a note in the morning with a key promise on it for the day. Be the one who pulls out a chair for them, or saves them a plate if you know they're going to be late for a meal. Get them a little gift. Give them the preference, if there is a choice to be made. Even though your gesture may be small, it will get you started in the right direction. Sometimes this alone is enough to dissolve any barriers between you, and I have seen people in conflict break down and weep at a small act of kindness from those they are in conflict with.

150. If after these steps you still haven't seen progress, come to Me again and ask what more I want you to do. But having licked the Enemy at ground zero with a positive reworking of your attitudes about the person, then acting upon those positive feelings, will solve 90% of your conflicts.

Don't ignore problems

151. (Mama:) It's never a good sign when you feel bugged at someone or you sense there's friction in your interactions—even if it doesn't seem huge. You can be sure that this kind of feeling is always an attack of the Enemy, because he would love nothing more than to blow up any problems you're having with others, and ultimately use them to destroy your unity. He loves to get in through pride, or when you feel hurt or misjudged, or when someone has annoyed you, and these types of personality conflicts, if not taken care of, can very easily damage your Home's overall unity in time.

152. In such situations, you've got to cut the Enemy off at the pass. Even if there are small

You have to weed out the problems in the garden of your Home if you want the flowers of love to flourish.

things that have happened that have caused ill feelings, don't allow them to remain. Pray about them. Do something about them. Talk to your shepherds about what you can do to improve the situation. Determine to ensure that the Enemy doesn't gain a foothold. Nip the problems in the bud, because problems that are left unattended nearly always breed bigger problems, or grow, or morph into something worse and even uglier. Problems usually don't fix themselves; you've got to communicate, pray, or do something in order to find solutions.

153. In the long run, it's never easier to ignore problems, sweep them under the carpet, and pretend they don't exist, even though glossing them over might seem like the easiest solution at the time. Running away from problems doesn't help either, because there will be problems in every Home you go to, with every person you ever live with, so you might as well learn how to be a loving problem solver.

154. (Jesus:) People are people, and people will always have problems. One of those problems will always be understanding other people and getting along with other people. It's the way life is. I've made you all different, and have made a wide variety of personalities, preferences, desires, needs, etc. I've done this for a good reason, and it has a lot of good effects. It also has the side effect of creating personality conflicts or misunderstandings. Even that isn't entirely a bad thing, however, because if you can learn to work with those differences and issues, if you can learn to resolve them through communication, then those differences of opinion and desires can actually enrich your life. If you all thought the same and agreed about everything, it might seem nice and easy, but you would be lacking in some of the very skills which enable you to relate to

others, help them, and reach and witness to those who need you.

155. A key to good communication and discussing issues that aren't easy to discuss is choosing to specifically look at those things as "issues" rather than "problems." A lot of how you approach something, and how it goes in dealing with it, is in your attitude. If you have the attitude that every time a miscommunication or misunderstanding comes up, it's a problem or a "nasty," then it will be. Instead, try looking at it as a challenge, even an opportunity. Tell yourself, or tell your Home if you're leading a meeting, "Here we have a wonderful opportunity to learn about each other, to understand each other better, and to gain the valuable experience of resolving a conflict or issue." That's how I see such situations.

156. If you look at it that way, then you'll realize that a very obvious and necessary practical step toward resolving anything is to communicate about it. You won't be so fearful that communication will be painful or ugly, because you'll understand that even if they get that way, it's part of the process. And if everyone's attitudes are changing, and if the focus is on meeting the challenge and resolving the problem rather than pinning blame or labeling anyone, then it won't be as rough or ugly, because you'll all have a better understanding of what you're doing and why.

157. This kind of issue-focused communication, and an environment where people can discuss things openly and honestly without sensitivity or personal digs, doesn't simply "happen" on its own or take place overnight. It will take prayer. It will take a conscious effort to look at things positively. It will take large measures of love, understanding and compassion—which is supernatural and needs to come from My Spirit. The fact also remains, though, that one of the keys to cultivating good communication skills and a positive, open environment for fruitful communications, is to simply do it, experience it, and get used to it.

158. You'll learn as you go. You'll probably start off with some people or most people

being a bit negative, or saying things that are hurtful, or being too sensitive and getting too easily hurt, or forgetting that your focus is on solutions and getting tripped up in the blame game. It will happen. But don't let that discourage you or stop you. You've got to keep going. You've got to keep trying. You've got to keep talking.

159. The problems that people have with labeling, with sensitivity, with negativity, with being unprayerful in what they say, etc., aren't going to go away if you are ignoring or avoiding issues and not talking about them. The issues will fester, and the individual's problems and wrong attitudes will fester as well. Then, if and when it's ever the case that things get so bad that you have no choice but to communicate, you'd be back to dealing with those same issues that you were hoping to avoid through ignoring them, and you wouldn't have escaped the situation after all. Meanwhile, people's rough edges and bad communication habits wouldn't have improved through neglect either. So all it can do is get messier.

160. You have two choices. You can live in eternal fear of the "monster" of communication, hope it stays far away, but find yourself occasionally face to face with it in the dark and let it get the better of you and mess you up good. Or, you can get a grip, face your fears, and face down the "monster." You'll get some scratches and scars and even minor injuries in the process, but you will "tame the beast" and soon you'll realize it wasn't even a monster at all. It had the heart of a nice friendly beast, even a playful pet—it simply took some training and discipline, and you needed to get used to each other and learn how to get along.

Keep your spirit young by working out problems, disagreements, and conflicts before they become weighty burdens that destroy your happiness.

Some dos and don'ts of problem solving

161. (Mama:) The Lord has given a lot of counsel and pointers in the preceding messages, so here's some of that same counsel—and a whole lot more new advice—in point form.

Dos:

162. ▶ Take positive steps toward solving problems that arise and restoring unity.

163. ▶ Communicate. This is a key element in resolution and restoration. Some problems are more complex than others, but you must communicate, talk it out, share your heart, ask questions, explain, apologize, and pray together. Communication doesn't always come in verbal form. Sometimes it's through acts of kindness. Sometimes it's verbal; sometimes it's a hug.

164. ▶ Keep communicating, even when you feel hurt.

165. ▶ When expressing the way you feel, be prayerful in what you say.

166. ▶ Be moderate and stay calm. Don't let your emotions get the best of you. Use My key power to control your emotions.

167. ▶ If you did something that hurt someone, it's your responsibility to try to make it better. If you're on the receiving end of the hurt, it's your responsibility to be as open as possible to the other person's overtures of reconciliation. Both of you have a responsibility to solve the conflict, and both should do your part.

168. ▶ Determine that you are going to be a problem solver. You are not going to coexist with problems or run away from them.

169. ▶ Confront problems and do all you can to work them out in love, humility, and a large measure of prayer. Seek Me and take action on what I show you to do.

170. ▶ Realize that anything that threatens your unity is highly dangerous and should be considered life-threatening to your spiritual, mental, and even physical health.

171. ▶ Nip misunderstandings, misconceptions and conflicts in the bud.

172. ▶ Pray and call on the keys of love, humility, selflessness, heavenly thought power,

and full possession. These keys will guide you to work things out in love and humility.

173. ▶ Go to My written Word and hear from Me personally in prophecy for instruction on how to approach each problem and find solutions.

174. ▶ Be a good listener. Be open to hearing out the other person, and in the process, be prayerful about not interrupting to give your side of the matter. You can always present any necessary points from your perspective after the other person has finished, if I so lead you. After you've listened, check in with Me for the next step I want you to take.

175. ▶ If something is particularly bothering you that involves someone else, and you feel heated about it, give it some time before addressing the issue. But don't take this as a license to let it ride; 24 hours is usually sufficient time to cool down enough to be able to approach the matter calmly and prayerfully.

176. ▶ Face your fears when it is time to speak the truth and confront a problem. You will realize that they will soon vanish as the problem is worked out and you are freed from the weights you carried.

177. ▶ Communicate in body language. When you discuss problems or sensitive issues, communicating with body language can set a loving and humble tone. For example, making eye contact, holding a hand, putting your arm around another, massaging shoulders or feet, lying down on the bed together, embracing, etc.

178. ▶ Be willing to realize and see what is right in a given situation, and not hold on so tightly to your idea, your way of seeing things, your mindset, or what you think should or shouldn't be done.

179. ▶ Ask someone to safeguard you. For example, if you tend to be too blunt and you're writing a note on a sensitive issue, you might want to ask someone else to check it before you pass it on to the person. Or if you tend to be unobservant or oblivious to things around you, ask someone to check you on things that would help others if you noticed, etc.

180. ▶ If there is a conflict between you and one other person and you don't feel you can

Keep your mental hard drive optimized and clear off the junk of unresolved problems before they corrupt your data.

work it out between the two of you, get help, ask for prayer, and seek counsel from your shepherds.

181. ▶ Seek out godly counsel, which is usually necessary if the problem is more complex. Seek the help of a third or fourth party. (Be sure you ask the right people—most likely your Home shepherds.) Get the opinion of others who are not so close to the problem.

182. ▶ Take the time for follow-up prayer after resolving a problem. Hear from Me, and come back to Me for confirmations, especially if the problem was complex. I may show you that further changes are in order, or mention things you can do to avoid similar confrontations or problems in the future.

183. ▶ Take the low seat when you're working out a problem. Make it clear that you don't know everything. Respect My anointing on the other person, the things I lay on their heart, and the ideas I give them.

184. ▶ Give others the benefit of the doubt. Don't be accusatory.

185. ▶ Be willing to hear the other sides of the story. There are many sides to every story, and chances are you only know one side, or a few sides, but not all sides.

186. ▶ Forgive and forget as often as you need to. Even if you have to forgive the same person for the same blunders over and over again, do it. That's what I would do.

187. ▶ Have a give-and-take exchange. When expressing to someone else what they're doing that's making things difficult for you, ask them what you do that makes things difficult for them, so that the conversation is a two-way street and you're both looking for solutions together.

188. ▶ Have faith in My ability to change people. Don't label people because of the way you've always known them to be. Know that they

can change, just as you can change, and act like it. Show faith.

189. ▶ Have an attitude of faith; trust that I am in control and will resolve the situation. Don't get bent out of shape before you've even given Me a chance to help you fix things.

190. ▶ Serve others by always taking the humble seat and speaking up when the truth needs to be spoken—asking Me when it's the right time and place to do so. Learn how to abound and to abase in all matters, to receive and give advice and correction, and to encourage and uplift others around you.

191. ▶ Employ the 4 R's to unity: Reconcile, restore, rebuild, recover. Reconcile by being open to the person and solving the problem. Restore by reestablishing the love and unity between you. Rebuild by reinforcing the trust and love you've built over your time of knowing each other. Then your unity will recover every time!

Don'ts

192. ▶ Don't gloss over the problems. Don't neglect to give enough attention, time, and effort to find out the root of the problems and sort things out.

193. ▶ Don't put up with the problems and simply live with them. There's almost nothing worse than living in a Home where no one is doing anything about the problems that exist—and such Homes never last long either.

194. ▶ Don't ignore problems altogether or pretend they don't exist. Sooner or later you'll feel the effects and will have to do something about them, so why not now?

195. ▶ Don't let unresolved problems and disagreements build up. To stay mentally and spiritually healthy as a Home, tackle them as they arise.

There's nothing like the oil of My Spirit in open communication to eradicate any squeaks in the machinery of your Home.

196. ▶ Don't run away from problems by moving to another Home. In your new Home, you'll encounter new problems. Running away from a problem also doesn't guarantee that it will not catch up with you, so turn around and make the decision to stand your ground and confront whatever issues you have and not let them build up until they become an overwhelming force that will engulf you.

It's always the right time to say you're sorry.

197. ▶ Don't get cold—or stay cold—toward the person you're having difficulties with. That doesn't help to solve anything.

198. ▶ Don't communicate in an angry or hurt manner. This merely adds to the messiness of the situation, and gives you more things to clean up and apologize for.

199. ▶ Don't get worked up and mad. That causes the other person to have to come further than halfway to meet you. Your anger drives them away and makes it more difficult for them to do their part. It makes them feel defensive.

200. ▶ Don't make excuses for yourself if you're on the receiving end of someone sharing the way they feel hurt by something you did. Excusing yourself isn't the answer and isn't going to cause the situation to go away or get better. All that will happen is that you'll become blind to the way you can solve the situation, which is through humility and admitting your mistake of hurting the person, even if it was unintentional. (Hurts are often caused by misunderstandings, and clearing up a misunderstanding, which is often very necessary, is different than making excuses or justifying yourself.)

201. ▶ Don't assume anything. In your mind you might think that everything is okay, that the problem has passed and is now taken care of, but it may not be so in the other person's mind. Humbly ask the other party how they are seeing things and how they feel.

202. ▶ Don't be proud. It's pride to want your own way instead of what's right.

203. ▶ Don't wait for the other person to take the humble seat and apologize. Problems always involve two or more separate parties. So

be the first to try to sort things out. Don't wait for others, assuming it's more their responsibility than yours to sort out the problems. Why do they have more of a responsibility to be humble and apologize than you do? When there is a problem, both parties are nearly always in the wrong in some way. So bite the bullet of your pride and apologize.

204. ▶ Don't let other people's negative attitudes and feelings and the way they're weathering life affect you. You can rise above. You can be positive and praiseful, even if others aren't. You can take the lower seat, even if others don't. You can stay happy and on a joyful channel, even if others aren't. The way other people are acting or feeling doesn't have to make a difference in your life. Let Me be your strength. Let Me be your joy. Let Me influence you rather than others.

205. ▶ When there are big problems, don't be too proud to ask for the help of your Home shepherds. Don't be so proud that you try to work it all out on your own, because sometimes it is helpful to have a mediator, a third party, who can help your communications/negotiations to go more smoothly.

206. ▶ At the same time, don't be dependent on your Home shepherds to do all of the problem-solving work for you. There's a balance to be had, and you need to learn to pray about problems and work them out as well, without always expecting your shepherds to walk you through them.

207. ▶ Don't ever assume you know everything. Don't embarrass yourself by being so sure.

208. ▶ Don't go into a situation thinking you've got it all figured out, because chances are you don't. There's always some factor you're not seeing in the best-case scenario, and in the worst-case scenario you may be completely wrong.

209. ▶ Don't allow Lethargy to convince you to put off the hard work of delving into fixing problem situations. Call on Styrian to destroy the demon Lethargy and his influence on you.

210. ▶ Don't ever feel that a problem is the sole fault of the other person. There's always some lesson—no matter how small—that I have to teach you in the situation.

211. ▶ Don't overreact or get sensitive when someone tells you about a problem they're having with you. Remind yourself that you're human, make mistakes, and it's a miracle that those you live with see so few of your sins and weaknesses in comparison to how many you have.

212. ▶ Don't let problems hinder your work for Me or stumble those you are trying to reach. Before you can help your sheep and church work out their problems and conflicts, you have to help yourselves work out problems in your life and Home.

213. ▶ Don't turn your back on or turn a blind eye to the thoughts, feelings, and needs of your brothers and sisters that you work with, even if there are problems. One day you will be held accountable for what you failed to do when that person was in need or when you could have helped and didn't.

214. ▶ Don't get critical or label people as a result of their problems or the difficulties you have had working with them in the past. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Anyone can be a problem solver

215. (Mama:) You don't have to be especially skilled to be a problem solver. Even if you're not good with people, you can work out difficulties and problems if you're prayerful, loving, and humble. You might need some advice and help from your Home shepherds, and of course you'll want to be desperate with the Lord and hear from Him about how to go about it. But anyone can be a problem solver, even if you don't feel like you're a "communicator" or a good "people handler" and it's not naturally your greatest skill.

216. (Jesus:) I realize that some people are naturally better at communicating than others are. Some people are more lovey-dovey

and have talents for presenting things in a padded way. Some people are more diplomatic, and others know how to express themselves better. There are all kinds of challenges you can face in the natural, but My power to aid you in communicating with others and solving problems and conflicts for the sake of unity is supernatural. I'm not limited by your natural capabilities, or lack of them.

217. It doesn't matter how incapable you feel. It doesn't matter whether or not you feel you have skills and talents in the natural. It doesn't matter whether you're experienced or inexperienced. It doesn't matter whether you're young or old. It doesn't matter whether you were born into the Family or whether you joined after living a number of years in the world. It doesn't matter whether or not you speak perfect English. It doesn't matter if you've had lots of experience over the years or none at all. I'm not limited by anything!

218. I can help you to be a good communicator. I can help you to learn how to resolve problems and conflicts with others. It boils down to these few qualities, which you can ask Me for and hone:

- Love
- Humility
- A desire to do whatever it takes to ensure that your Home is united and successful as a team
- Honesty with your shepherds and those you live with
- The willingness to hear from Me when problems arise, and take the steps I ask you to take.

219. Now that list doesn't seem impossible, does it? No, it's certainly not impossible with My help and power. I can give you the love, humility, and desire to ensure unity, honesty,

Problems, when solved, can be like helium that lifts the balloon of your Home high into the sky of progress.

and the willingness to hear from Me and obey Me. And if you do these things, then you'll be a problem solver. You'll be helping to solve the problems in your Home rather than contributing to them. This skill will make you an asset in any Home you live in.

Be inspired by the end results of problem solving

220. (Mama:) Always look toward, and be inspired by, the end results of problem solving. Don't get so stuck on the hard work of sorting problems out that you forget what the end result is—stronger unity, a more bonded team, the fact that you'll be closer than ever as a result of working out difficult situations that arise.

221. (Jesus:) Homes that work out their problems—both the personal problems between Home members and the Home-wide problems—are happy Homes. Don't you want your Home to be a happy one? Don't you want unity to abound? Don't you want to draw closer to those you live with? Don't you want to be able to feel like one big bonded Family? All of this is the end result of taking care of the problems that arise.

222. Taking care of the problems is not the victory. Unity is the victory. Being in harmony is the victory. Being a strong team for Me is the victory. Working together without the disease of continual and unresolved problems hindering you is the victory. So look toward the results and don't get bogged down by the problems. Rise above the problems. You solve the problems so that you can overcome them, so that they won't be able to hold you down or hinder your usefulness to Me as a Home.

223. The victory is not to be a Home that's free of problems. The victory is not that everyone in the Home will be bosom buddies and best friends. The goal is simply that you work through the difficulties with love, prayer, and humility. The goal is that problems don't stop you, or squelch your fire or your love one for another. The goal is that problems—when solved—will propel your Home forward, be steppingstones to

greater progress, and be factors in making you a more effective Home and team for Me.

224. Problems can either help you or cause your demise. You choose. You can let the problems thrive and eat away at your unity and trust and brotherhood, and you'll sink quickly. But if you work through problems in love, prayer, and humility, your Home will only grow stronger as a result of every problem.

Talk About It

Optional discussion questions

- What are some ideas for resolving a problem that has reached an impasse?
- What can you do if you want to resolve a problem, and are willing to humbly and prayerfully find solutions, but the other person wants to leave things as they are and ignore the problem?
- What is one unresolved problem you have in your life right now? What are your expectations with regards to it? What is the cause? What issues are involved in finding the solution?
- Take a look into the future of your Home. Taking into consideration all of the present goals that your Home is working toward, go around and have everyone say what they foresee the Home becoming. Don't limit it to the immediate future. Think about a few years in the future and what your dreams and wishes are for the Home.
- When you have a problem or conflict between you and someone in the Home, do you automatically feel you have to go to the shepherds every time to sort things out, or do you feel comfortable reaching out to the other individual in the Home and working out the difficulty between you when possible? Discuss the balance between involving the Home shepherds when necessary, but not being so dependent on them that you expect them to do all of the work and walk you through every problem.

Praise Ideas

Optional praise ideas

- *Problem praise:* Go around in a circle, with each person stating a common problem or difficulty connected with communal living/unity/working together, etc. Then the person on their right can praise the Lord for how it either challenges them personally, why they are thankful for it, how the Lord can use it to bring out the good in their life, or what new weapon they are thankful they can use in such a situation. For example, the first person says something like: “Someone making a mess when you just finished cleaning up.” The second person praises: “Thank You, Lord, that I can be a servant to others and that You can give me the grace not to get bugged by it.” The person who praised then comes up with something for the next person on their right to praise the Lord for, and it continues so that everyone gets a turn.
- *Solution praise:* Someone in the room can express a made-up problem—specifically to do with interactions with others—and then anybody in the room can respond with a possible solution that I might lead you to. Then a third person can praise Me for a benefit of problem solving. For example, person number one says, “People sometimes forgetting to replace the toilet roll in the bathroom after they use the last of the paper.” Then the second person could say, “Thank You, Jesus, that You’d help us to be more mindful and considerate of others, and make this bad habit a strong point.” The third person would say, “Thank You that problems unite us and make us eager for solutions.”

“Do” the Word

Optional practical ways to be “doers of the Word”

- Choose one current issue or glitch or problem that you are personally having, and bring it before the Lord in your private prayer time. Ask Him to give you His perspective about

it, to define the problem, and to show you the solution. Once you have His instruction on that one problem, list the steps He’s told you to take—to get help from strong peers, loved ones, or shepherds; to speak to the other person or people involved; to ask for forgiveness, or whatever the specific steps are that you must follow in order to find the solution—and then start tackling them one by one.

- Go over the list of dos and don’ts from “Some dos and don’ts of problem solving” (*paragraphs 162–214*), and ask Me which “dos” you need to do and which “don’ts” you need to not do. You might even want to get input from your friends or shepherds regarding which things they feel you do well in and which areas you might need to work on. Then claim changes through the power of the keys.

Hot Key: Spiritual superglue

225. (Jesus:) The key of spiritual superglue will help to mend any problems or breaks in your unity. Its mending consistency and heavenly power will not only put broken pieces back together again, but can return them to new when applied in humility and love—removing any evidence of the break. When you use the key of spiritual superglue, problems are easily resolved and rectified; solutions are quickly found. It’s a problem-solving key that keeps you glued to Me and to one another in love and unity. Division dissolves when challenged with the key of spiritual superglue!

Prayer Boost

226. (Prayer:) We thank You, dearest Lover, that You’re the greatest Problem Solver. You came to Earth to solve mankind’s biggest problem—our need for salvation and to be free of having to pay the price for our sins. And during that time You solved so many more problems. When there was no wine at the wedding, You solved that problem and created more wine. When people came to You with their health problems, even afflictions they’d had for many years, You healed them and delivered them.

227. When there was no food for the multitudes You were teaching and everyone was hungry, You solved that problem and multiplied the loaves and fishes. When the religious leaders of Your day wanted to stone the adulterous woman, You had a big problem on Your hands, but You solved it by hearing from Your Father in Heaven. With great wisdom, humility and love, You put everyone in their place, and simply solved what could have been a very messy situation.

228. And every day of our lives You are available to help us solve our problems. We thank You for that, Jesus! We know that we're a mess. Our Home is a disaster without You! We're all human. We make mistakes. We say and do the wrong things at times. Sometimes we hurt others, but we don't want to, Jesus. That's why we need You so much. That's why we need Your love and the key of spiritual superglue to help us to mend any problems or breaks in our unity. We call on the Salvay to work in our hearts and lives, defeating the Selvegion and any of their attacks.

229. Please help us to see problems as challenges, not as dead ends or disasters. Help us to turn every problem and difficulty into a stepping-stone to greater progress, both as individuals and as a Home. We know that You have the power, so we unitedly call on that power together now. Turn us into problem solvers, Jesus, who love to face the challenges, knowing that the end result will be stronger unity and a more loving and close-knit winning team. We praise You in advance for doing it, Jesus.

Merry Medicine

The story of Jim

By Kevin

There once was a young man named Jim,
Who loved to change Homes on a whim.
When life got too tough,
When he'd sure had enough,
He'd flee like a geek from a gym.

He once lived in Rio, Brazil,
Where women wear pretty much nil.
But he tripped on a stool
And fell straight in the pool,
So he left, blaming Marcello and Jill.

So Jim moved to a more northern clime,
And soon was sipping French wine.
But the Home was a crowd,
And the kids were too loud,
So he bid bon voyage and bee-lined.

Surely Moscow'd do the trick,
Where Jim would find sheepy hot chicks.
But the breakfast eggs stunk,
Looked like green rubber chunks,
So he scrambled and beat it real quick.

But in his great haste to depart,
He crashed straight into old Uncle Bart.
Bart weighed many pounds,
So Jim soon found,
Himself bouncing straight back like a dart.

As Jim let out a great moan,
He thought, "Lord, wherever I've flown,
I find nothing but trials,
Crackpots and hostiles,
So why don't You throw me a bone?"

Softly the Lord answered, "Son,
Can you really just blame everyone?
Why not check out the mirror?
And it will become clearer,
Just who makes your life come undone.

"Now picture great men of conquest,
Alexander, who stood out from the rest,
If he ran when they saw
Any resistance at all,
He'd have been king of his tunic at best."

Once Bart helped untangle Jim's limbs,
Jim hugged old Bart and told him,
"I'll stick around for a while,"
And then with a smile,
Jim said, "Let's make our team win."