

Leaning In to God's Family

Message Notes

Last week we talked about our UPWARD CALLING

- We have an UPWARD destination, UPWARD focus, and an UPWARD ministry as priests
- This week I want to focus on the INWARD calling.

Seven brides for seven brothers

- She thinks she's going to be married to one man
- He gets home and all of his brothers come out to meet her
- You didn't just come to Christ, you came to his FAMILY
- Like the disciples didn't just get Jesus, they got each other!

Unity is the dream of Christ and the apostles

- In John 17 Jesus prayed that we would be ONE
- In Paul's letters, he is always pleading with them to be ONE
- In John's epistles, he is pleading with them to be ONE

Unity was at the birth of the early church

- Together as a new adopted family - Still happens today
- Together in devotion to the Lord. Joint prayer, joint worship, joint study
- Together in resources and provision.
- Together in suffering.
- They fiercely guarded their unity!

What does the church look like today?

- Instead of family, very individualistic with many arguing that corporate bodies are not necessary
- Instead of joint devotion, Church is seen as an event not a family
- Instead of taking care of one another, we expect Social Security, and other peoples families, to take care of their problems.
- Instead of suffering together, when Christians are persecuted, we run the other direction.
- Instead of fiercely guarding our unity, we fiercely guard our opinions.

Paul's Recipe for UNITY

- **Colossians 3:12–16 (NLT)** — 12 Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. 16 Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

5 Angles of Unity

1. ATTITUDE of Unity (5 Attitudes)

1. Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.
2. **Mercy** "I feel your pain"
3. **Kindness** "You get my smile"
4. **Humility** "I am your servant, your desire matters more to me than my own"
 1. Lean in here... Pride is the number one enemy of unity. Self-seeking is the number two enemy.
 1. **Pride** - I am right, I am better, I am smarter, I am sufficient
 2. **Self-seeking** - I want for myself
 3. **Philippians 2:3–5 (NLT)** — 3 Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. 5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.
 5. **Gentleness** "I'm not ready for a fight, you can't get me to fight"
 6. **Patience** "I'm not giving up over something little, I'm here"

2. ACTION of Unity (two actions)

1. ***Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.***
2. ***Extend grace*** to one another's faults (Like a husband and wife learning each others weaknesses)
 1. **Ephesians 4:2 (NLT)** — 2 Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.
3. **Forgiveness** (Forgive ANYONE who offends you)
 1. Come against superficial forgiveness, religious forgiveness

3. AFFECTION of Unity (one heart = agape)

1. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony
2. CLOTHE YOURSELF WITH AGAPE! This is not a self-seeking love
3. Most love is self seeking or mutually beneficial
 1. My dog - I love him because he is cute
 2. My car - because it is a good car
 3. My friend - because it is a mutual benefit
4. Agape is NOT self-interested
5. We are FAMILY
 1. **Matthew 12:46–50 (NLT)** — 46 As Jesus was speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. 47 Someone told Jesus, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak to you.” 48 Jesus asked, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” 49 Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “Look, these are my mother and brothers. 50 **Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!**”
 2. We are not enemies
 3. We are not business acquaintances
 4. We are not unfriendly neighbors
4. **ATMOSPHERE of Unity**
 1. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace.
 2. Peace is in the air, Shalom is in the air.
 3. Jesus is the prince of Shalom..
 1. He settles the storm (Peace be still)
 2. He settles the war (Between the lion and the lamb)
 3. He settles the striving (Between the disciples for who is the greatest)
 4. He settles the stress (He walked through the wall and said, shalom)
5. **AGREEMENT of Unity**
 1. Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.
 1. Share His message with one another
 2. Sing songs about him together

Other passages:

- **Philippians 2:1–4 (NLT)** — 1 Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? 2 Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. 3 Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.
- **Ephesians 4:2–6 (NLT)** — 2 Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love. 3 Make every effort to keep yourselves united

in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. 4 For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. 5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.

- **Galatians 6:2–3 (NLT)** — 2 Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. 3 If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.
- **Romans 15:5–7 (NLT)** — 5 May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. 6 Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.