

Life Together - Unity

Key Passages:

Ephesians 4:3-6, 15,16
John 17 (esp 20-26)
1 Corinthians 12, 13
Genesis chs 1, 3

Psalms 133
Colossians 2:19
Romans 6:1-13
Deuteronomy 6:4

This topic – one of the best I could want to talk about!!

1. " It matters a lot to God"

Its best to start with what God wants first – and never lose sight of that – that is our standard.

- **Psalms 133 1-3** (NAS)How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity. For there the Lord **commanded** the blessing – even life forever
- **John 17:11, 21,22,23**

In Their own unity together, Jesus' prayers are the will of the Father - expect them to be answered in you.

2. No wonder that God wants unity for us

He is ONE – **Deuteronomy 6:4**
Ephesians 4:4-6

- ### 3. Man when he separated himself from God in sin, became incapable of unity – hid from God, blamed his wife
- In the beginning God separated the light from the darkness
Separation from anything which is holy from anything that has sin –
Genesis 1 and 3

Working from the negative to the positive – I first want to look at where unity is not!

2. Are you trying to get unity? Don't even try –

you haven't got it in you!

Don't make unity or the church your goal – the horizontal approach

Seeking unity – getting nothing

If you go for the Church, you get nothing, - you can form, organise, act as a church, have the right set of beliefs, knowledge – and what you get is a form, an organisation, an act, accurate facts – but nothing!

If you go for God, you get everything, including the church

eg

- Political correctness/ conviction that we should be loving/united – trying to be one – we ought – trying to find unity -> lowest common denominator - "faith"

5. Each holding the Head – **Colossians 2:19**

Near to our goal – near to others with same goal
Our goal is God Himself

Actually the 2nd half of the verse is talking about the entire body being held together

6. Holding the Head

.....there is a body

How do you get into this body? How are we made part of His Body, His Spirit, His oneness?

- Cleansed and forgiven because of the Cross
Romans 6:4 Jesus died on the cross so that we could effectively die – to the old separate ways and receive His new life – death and resurrection
- He sent His spirit so that we could be baptised into His body
- Not a picture – **A FACT**
- Baptised into one body by the spirit – **1 Corinthians 12:12,13**

Ephesians 4:4-6. We're only ONE as we are in the One Lord – part of His ONE BODY v16, held together. **Colossians 2:19** held together in the Body

- **1 Corinthians 12:12, 13**

One body – many parts

How do I function in my body?

- ✓ Can't form a body – its born
- ✓ Diversity of parts v14 v19
- ✓ Would be incomplete without every part v21
- ✓ Look after every part instinctively v25
- ✓ No Competition in the body v24,(v15)
- ✓ Unity is characteristic of a body v12
- ✓ Cohesive – no independence
- ✓ Naturally- no self consciousness
- ✓ Unity of direction, nature, functioning
- ✓ Vital organs are invisible!
- ✓ Attached – not part of the body if detached

7 What happens to damage this?

Maintain the unity of the Spirit **Ephesians 4:3** – (not create it maintain it)

- Enemy of our souls who wants to bring separation again
- We are able to sin, **we are able to stop holding the head**
- We can be subject to misunderstandings, misrepresentations, the sin of others

BUT

Whose body are we?

Jesus laid His own life down for us. We must daily lay our lives down for each other.

- ✓ Keep holding the head.

- ✓ Keep forgiving
- ✓ Keep positively loving others and denying your own self/preferences
- ✓ Refuse to believe the philosophy of this humanistic age – you don't have to seek first your own self fulfilment, self esteem, etc – lay it all down and love.
- ✓ **1 Corinthians 13**

Wherever the relationship is strained or broken, check your own heart to see if there are elements that this passage describes that you are not doing - don't try – receive the Lord, hold the head, be filled with the spirit, see your brother as part of the same body as you are

God is Love – and we are part of His body, with His heart

Lizzie Page, November 2005