

“got unity?”

June 26, 2024

Intro-

- Essentials of the fridge...eggs, milk, that sandwich meat that no matter how hungry you are, you won't eat it...
- Essentials of the Christian walk...Bible reading, prayer time, scripture memory...but what about relational unity???

1 Cor 1:2-3, 10-17 *To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ...10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.*

“Don’t get me wrong: God is all for unity between God’s children. Scripture describes the experience of unity as “good and pleasant” (Psalm 133:1), and it commands all Christians to diligently pursue “being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord” (Philippians 2:2). But nowhere in the Bible does God promise that the pursuit of unity, even among real, Spirit-filled, earnest Christians, won’t be as hard as it often is.” **John Piper**, “Why Is Christian Unity So Hard?” *Desiring God Ministries*

A lack of unity leads to a humbling reality

1 Cor 3:1-3 *But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is **jealousy** and **strife** among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?*

Strife: Conflict | Angry or bitter disagreements

Corinthians were arguing over “who was a more esteemed Christian”...

How does jealousy and strife affect people today? Jobs? Families? Friends? (David and Bathsheba)

How does jealousy and strife affect me? (In the church)

How does jealousy and strife affect you? (Family, teams, schools, friends)

Relational Unity gets disrupted when some other MOTIVATOR shows up!

What's motivating you toward or away from the youth group or people in the group?...What "force" is inside of you that is pushing you toward or away from the people in youth: Belonging, friendship, popularity, fear-of-man, comparison, insecurity, quest for uniqueness, pride...

"A list of possible motivations would be endless, but the most common can be reduced to a dozen or so. To discover your motives, ask yourself these questions: What motivates me? Why do I do what I do? Even better, ask, What do I really want? If I don't have _____, I am miserable. Here are some typical answers. Pleasure Freedom/Autonomy Power Peace Love/Intimacy Happiness Comfort Significance/Reputation Meaning Respect/Admiration Control Success. You have probably been motivated by all of these at one time or another, but some people have specialties." **Edward T. Welch**, "Motives: Why Do I Do the Things I Do?" pg. 49

Ok Harrison, I get I have some personal motivators, but we're all different...we all have things that pull us in different directions...

Yeah...We're not all the same...

John 17:20-23 *"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*

- "That they ALL might be ONE"
- Favorite colors

1 Cor 12:12-27

- Why does unity matter? Because we NEED each other.
- What makes Jesus' desire for unity matter to me?

Write this down: "I am motivated by unity when I am gripped by God's purpose and glory"

“Simply put, the heart’s root motivation is, “I WANT.” “I want comfort, power, pleasure, control . . . for myself, against God.” By nature, the heart is selfish. It wants what it wants when it wants it. It doesn’t want God setting limits or providing direction. When changed by God Himself, the heart’s selfish and anti-God motives are not erased, but they are gradually replaced by a desire to love God and live for Him alone..” **Edward T. Welch**, “Motives: Why Do I Do the Things I Do?” pg. 49

Is it really that big of a deal?

Eph 4:4, 15-16 *There is one body and one Spirit...15 we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, **when each part is working properly**, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

- It doesn’t take much for the body not to work properly...Unity is a team sport.
- Tug-of-War

Each of us play an ACTIVE role in the participation of the working body.

1 Cor 13:1-7 *If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

- There’s motive attached to your gifts. Unity is a combination of your God given skillset with the Holy Spirit guiding you.

Rom 16:17-18 *I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.*

Jude 17-19 *But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. 18 They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." 19 It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.*

- Those who cause divisions are not those who are walking by the Spirit.
- A great sign that we have drifted away from the Holy Spirit is the reality check of division!

"...all of us are needy...Jesus made this idea clear in John 7:37 where the gospel reads, "Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.'" What happens, my friend, if you deny your thirst or are unable to satisfy your thirst? You will get thirstier. You will become more and more desperate to satisfy that thirst because thirst cannot be denied or ignored. The only way to deal with this thirst is to quench it. In this passage, Jesus proclaims loudly that He alone can satisfy the thirst for life in each and every one of us...Since we're all in Adam, we're separated from the Spirit and the life He alone can bring. We all grow up functioning in the flesh as our default mode...living in the flesh comes to naturally for us that we don't realize how wrong it is...When compared to how God originally designed us, our really is a sad existence. Is it any wonder God called this death? It's so far removed from the life we could have had." **Frank Friedmann**, "Stunned by Grace" pg. 53-54, 58-59

Are you living in default mode? Are you seeking to fill your thirst with selfish desires that cause conflict and strife?

So God already knew unity between believers would be hard...and even in Christ my sinful "default mode" nature constantly pulls me from wanting to be unified...now what?

"Paul can command the church to live in unity because there already is an actual spiritual unity in Christ which exists among genuine believers." **Wayne Grudem**, "Systematic Theology: Second Edition" pg. 1076