

“Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians: Unity in the Church”
Philippians 4:2-3

Why Unity Should Matter to Us

- Out of love for others.

- Love for our leaders.

Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. (Philippians 2:2)

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. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

- Love for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore. (Psalm 133)

- Out of love for the world.

I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 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. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 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. (John 17:20-23)

While Christian proclamation might make the gospel audible, it is Christians living together in local congregations that make the gospel visible. (Mark Dever)

The Christian community demonstrates the effectiveness of the gospel. We are the living proof that the gospel is not an empty word but a powerful word that takes men and women who are lovers of self and transforms them by grace through the Spirit into people who love God and others. We are the living proof that the death of Jesus was not just vain expression of God's love but an effective death that achieved the salvation of a people who now love one another sincerely from a pure heart. (Chester and Timmis)

- Out of love for Christ.

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

How Unity Should Be Pursued by Us

- In the church we serve...

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matt. 5:9)

- In our personal lives...

- Apologize whenever we are in the wrong.

Every one of us will offend someone, perhaps even today. Every one of us will sin against others, including people we love. The devil would have us to double down and dig in. Saying "I'm sorry" might make us look weak. But then we remember that we're Christians. And nothing makes us look weaker than crucifixion. (Russell Moore)

- Overlook offences when possible.

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (Romans 12:18)

Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. (Proverbs 19:11)

- Give no room to the Enemy ever.

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

- Look to Jesus always.

Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshipers met together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be, were they to become 'unity' conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship. (A.W. Tozer)