



**“Thinking Clearly About Unity”**  
**Romans 12:16**  
**Romans 12: Devoted to Service**

*Romans 12:16 – “Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.”*

**The Cause of Discord**

The great destroyer of unity within the Church is pride (cf. Romans 12:3).

**Three Ways to Foster Biblical Unity**

**I. Sameness of Mind**

**“Be of the same mind toward one another”**

This is an oft-repeated phrase in Paul’s letters (Phil 1:27; 2:1-2; 1Cor 1:10; 1Pet 3:8).

It’s made possible as we seek the mind of Christ (Phil 2:5; 1Cor 2:16).

Unity is built around the awareness of what we share in common in Christ. We have a common salvation, Spirit, family, faith, message, mission, and hope (cf. Ephesians 4:4-6).

Two Kinds of Unity:

1. Unity of the Spirit – this is something believers already have (Eph 4:3).
2. Unity of the faith – this is something believers are working toward (Eph 4:13).

A very helpful suggestion from Rupertus Meldenius, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Lutheran theologian:

*“In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity.”*

**II. Lowliness of Mind**

**“do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly”**

“Haughty” – Greek: *hupsēlós* – adjective meaning high, elevated, lofty.

“Lowly” – could refer to lowly things or lowly people, or both.

Jeremiah 45:5 – *“Do you seek great things for yourself? Seek them not, for behold, I am bringing disaster upon all flesh, declares the LORD.”*

The greatest example of humility and lowliness in history is the incarnation, suffering, and substitutionary death of Christ (cf. Phil 2:3-8).

### III. Humbleness of Mind

**“Do not be wise in your own estimation.”**

This phrase is a quotation of Proverbs 3:7, and there are many similar warnings in Scripture (Prov 26:12; Isa 5:21; 1Cor 3:18-19).

Leon Morris: “The person who is wise in his own eyes is rarely so in the eyes of other people.”

Instead of having a high view of ourselves, we should have a high view of God! (Col 3:1-2)

Remember the difference between human wisdom and heavenly wisdom (James 3:13-17).

Human wisdom:

- Earthly
- Sensual
- Demonic

Heavenly wisdom:

- Pure
- Peaceable
- Gentle
- Willing to yield
- Full of mercy and good fruit
- Without partiality
- Without hypocrisy

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What are some causes of disunity in the Church? Do you think pride is at the root of all disunity? Why or why not?
2. What does it mean to “have the same mind toward one another?”
3. Is it possible for believers to have unity when they disagree on doctrine? Explain your answer.
4. Why should believers **not** be wise in their own estimation?
5. What main lesson or practical application are you going to take away from today’s message?