

Better Together Unity

1 Corinthians 12:12-21, 27

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” **1 Corinthians 12:12-21**

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

1 Corinthians 12:27

Main Idea: We’re Better Together Because God Made Us For Unity

1. Unity is God’s Design

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.” **(v 12-14)**

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”

Psalms 133:1

Jesus prayed frequently to God the Father when He was on earth...

“But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.” **Luke 5:16**

..but there are only a few places that tell us what it was He prayed for specifically...

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message...” **John 17:20**

“I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity.” **John 17:20-23a**

So Jesus prayed for you and me and all who believe in Him!

2. Unity is Not Uniformity

“If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?” **(v 15-17)**

How do we build unity?

- Stay on task; follow the leading of Jesus.
- Use your gifts and talents for God’s glory and the good of others.
- Treat others as more important than yourself.
- Outdo one another at showing honor.
- Extend grace to others, and don’t let bitterness take root.

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled...” **Hebrews 12:14-15**

How do we disrupt unity?

- By being disconnected, avoiding the body of Christ and making life all about your own goals and plans.
- By being jealous of others - God made you to be you, so be you to the fullest (in a way that brings glory to God, not you.)
- By our attitude and actions - Gossiping, backbiting, a critical attitude, tearing others down.

“Our Christian fellowship would be ten thousand times more precious if every one of us would settle it with God that by His grace we would never let an unkind criticism go out of our lips against any of His people.” - H. A. Ironside

3. Unity (or Disunity) is Loud

“But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” **(v 18-21)**

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” **(v 27)**

Jesus said that the world will know we belong to Him because of how we love one another.

“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” **John 17:22-23**

How will the world know that Jesus is from God? How will the world know that God loves them as much as He loves His own Son? They will know it when they see His people living in unity!

Unbelievers - God offers a restored, reunited relationship with Himself..

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” **Matthew 11:28**

“everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” **Romans 10:13**

Believers - In Christ we are united and can say no to the things that divide us. In Christ we are one body, and we have a job to do, to love the world and point them to Jesus. We won’t do that very well unless we live in the unity that God designed us for. We’re Better Together!

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- The Bible Exposition Commentary – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- The Bible Knowledge Commentary – Walvoord & Zuck (1983)
- The Corinthian Confusion: A Study in 1 Corinthians – Vines (2005)
- Addresses on the First Epistle to the Corinthians –H.A. Ironside (1941)
- Tony Evans Book of Illustrations – Tony Evans (2009)

