



United – Unity in the Church – Message 3

Announcements

The Other Side: Getting Through Life's Storms // Small Group Members, how many of you know people who struggle with adversity, fear, insecurity, anxiety, and doubt? Here's your chance to step out and host a group for five short weeks with your family, friends, neighbors or co-workers. You can help change their lives forever. When you email smallgroups@churchoftheking.com, we will contact you to let you know your next step.

Warm-up

Choose one of the warm-up questions below.

- If you got something spiritual tattooed on your body, what it would be and what would it symbolize? If you already have a spiritual tattoo, why did you get it? What does it symbolize?
- If you are at the zoo, what animal do you enjoy watching most and why?

Word and Application

Our third and final message in the *United* series concludes with an essential focus on unity in the Church. Guest Pastor Jim Laffoon from King's Park International Church in Durham, North Carolina gives a comprehensive teaching about what both *unity* and *disunity* look like for the Church.

Read Ephesians 4:3-6. Why is this command in the Bible? What do you think needs to happen in order to stay united as the body of Christ?

The Power of Unity:

One of the reasons we are called to unity as followers of Jesus is because there is **The Power of Unity**. Let's take a look at what scripture teaches us about the extraordinary power unity produces.

Small group lessons are available at cotkleaders.com.

Read Genesis 11:6-7 and Matthew 18:19-20. What do these passages tell you about the power that results from being a unified people? How does knowing this principle change your view of the importance of Believers being of one accord? Share a time when you experienced or witnessed extraordinary results because everyone involved were in complete alignment with their purpose and goal.

Unity does not mean uniformity. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

The Pictures Of Unity:

The unity described in the New Testament was not based on sameness, common interests, or the bonds of friendship. In fact, the diversity of the church made true unity impossible *without* the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:13, Acts 8:14-17 and Acts 4:32. How do these three passages speak to unity within the early church? What, in your opinion, holds the present-day Church back from following this example.

The Pain Of Disunity:

Despite the examples of Spirit empowered unity, the New Testament does not lack painful examples of disunity as well.

Read Acts 15:38-40 and 1 Corinthians 11:18-22; 27-30. What are both some practical and spiritual dangers of disunity amongst believers? On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rank spiritual unity in today's Church?

The Principles Of Unity:

Although there are several principles about unity in the scriptures, these three are central to the level of unity we are describing today. Read the principles with the responding scripture verse then summarize each.

- **Influence of the Cross – Read Ephesians 1:14-16**
- **Inspiration of the Holy Spirit – Read 1 Corinthians 12:13**
- **Identification with Christ – Read Galatians 3:28**

The Practices Of Unity

Read Ephesians 4:25-32. Does this passage surprise you with the disunity occurring in the church of Ephesus? Are there any similarities with disunity in today's Church?

Read Galatians 5:14-16 and John 6:63. According to these two passages, how can we avoid falling into the trap of disunity and dissension?

What is the Holy Spirit speaking to you personally about your part to bring and keep unity in the Church?

Prayer

Holy Spirit, we ask you to reveal to each of us any of our words, thoughts or behavior may be causing disunity or divisiveness within the Church body. We repent of being lead by our flesh. Instead we commit to the leading of your Spirit to keep unity. Pray for specific needs of the group.