

That They May Be One: The Importance of Unity in the Church



John 17



1. Unity within the local church.
2. Unity in our relationships with other churches.

1. Unity in the local church is a big deal for Jesus.

- a) How many times he speaks about unity.
- b) The fact that this was the last prayer he prayed for his disciples before he was arrested.

2. The kind of unity that Jesus wants the church to have: the same kind of unity that God the Son has with God the Father.

John 17:20-21a - My prayer is not for them alone. 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.

3. Unity can only come about through the power of God working in our lives.

John 17:11b - Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name - the name you gave me - so that they may be one as we are one.

3. Unity can only come about through the power of God working in our lives.

a) We need to be protected because Satan is working hard to create disunity in the church.

John 17:15 - My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

3. Unity can only come about through the power of God working in our lives.

b) There is enough sin in us to destroy the unity that we're supposed to have as Christians.

4. Unity can only come about when we allow ourselves to be sanctified by the word of God.

John 17:17 - Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

5. When Christians are unity it's one of the greatest reasons that people can have for believing that Christianity is actually true.

John 17:23b - May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Final Points:

1. If you're in a fight with another Christian, you need to do everything that you possibly can to be reconciled.
2. We need to make sure that we're doing everything we can to promote and preserve the unity that we have in the church.
3. If Christians are to be united, what about unity with other churches?

Ephesians 4:1-5 - As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.