



Dave Browning
Pastor of Strategic Ministry
June 23 & 24, 2012

**"I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians.
Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."
– Mahatma Gandhi**

John 17:18-23

As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. 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. 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. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

There are prayers we pray to which Jesus is the answer.

There are prayers Jesus prays to which we are the answer.

The Case for Unity

1. God is unity.

Takeaway: We can be different personalities, but we must have the same nature.

2. Family is unity.

Takeaway: Unity involves a group perspective, instead of individual one.

3. Church is unity.

Takeaway: Unity is not uniformity. It's embracing diversity within the will of God.

Book of Common Prayer

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggles and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Continues on back)

Disunity arises from:

1. Elitism (= better than)
2. Judgmentalism
3. Impasse

Progression of Conflict

Problem ➡ Disagreement ➡ Contest ➡ Fight ➡ Impasse

Steps 1-2 are healthy conflict

Steps 3-5 are unhealthy conflict

Unity is:

1. Possible

If we keep the main thing the main thing

If we keep the main King the main King

2. Pleasing

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! – *Psalm 133:1*

3. Powerful

By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. – *John 13:35*

The number one way that others will know we are Christ-followers:

the way we treat each other.

Small Group Questions

- 1) Do you think American culture has become more divisive or more unified in the last ten years? In what ways?
- 2) Have you ever experienced a church split? What were the circumstances?
- 3) What have you learned about unity in a family context? Does that have application to a church?
- 4) Have you ever seen humility diffuse a conflict? Tell us about it.
- 5) How can we pray for each other?