



MAY 15

CHRIST, CULTURE, AND THE CROSS

THE UNITY PRINCIPLE



GETTING STARTED

This weekend we continued our series, *Christ, Culture & the Cross*, and we learned that *Unity... Is A Top Priority*. We will explore this more in our Life Groups this week.



STUDY QUESTIONS

- 1) Michael shared that many scholars see **1 Corinthians 1:10** as the theme verse of 1 Corinthians. Whether that's true or not, there is no question that the topic of unity will come up many times in this letter. But *unity* is not *uniformity*.
 - a. What do you think the difference is between the two?
 - b. How can getting caught up in *uniformity* hinder us from seeking *unity*?
 - c. What do you think it looks like to be *united* despite our differences in the church of Jesus Christ?
- 2) In 1 Corinthians 1:12, Paul lists four names of prominent Christian leaders the Corinthians church were dividing over. Each group may have been following one of these four as their primary spiritual teacher.
 - a. What were the names of the men they were following?
 - b. Why do you think it's so natural for people to divide over and associate with certain spiritual leaders?
 - c. What types of secondary issues do you see the church dividing over in our culture?
- 3) Before this message, how would you have answered the question "What does it look like to live a life worthy of the calling of Jesus?"
- 4) This weekend we looked at two other passages where the Apostle Paul drives home the point that *Unity... Is A Top Priority*. Read **Philippians 1:27-2:8** and **Ephesians 4:1-6**.
 - a. According to both these passages, what does Paul say it looks like to live a life "worthy" of the Lord?
 - b. What do all Christ-followers have in common according to Ephesians 4:4-6 and Philippians 2:1?
 - c. How did Jesus model these values in His life?

- d. Look back at your answer to question 2b above. What difference do you think it would make if we kept what we had in common at the forefront of our mind when we disagree on important, but secondary, issues?
- e. Think about a secondary issue you are passionate about. Imagine discussing this topic with a believer who disagrees with you on that issue. What would it look like to preserve the unity of the Spirit while still engaging in passionate discussion?
- f. What settings do you think are best suited for discussing important but controversial topics in a way that protects the unity of the Spirit? For example, texting, social media, face-to-face, phone call, small group, etc.?

5) Unity was important to Paul because it was important to Jesus. Read what Jesus prayed for the night He was arrested in **John 17:20-23**.

- a. What does Jesus pray for and why?
- b. To what extent do you think the church in our culture places a high value on unity?
- c. In your opinion, what are some examples of things that are sometimes prioritized above unity, and why?

6) At the end of the message, Michael asked us an important question:

Are You A Source Of Conflict ... Or A Force For Unity?

- a. How would you answer that question?
- b. How do you think those who know you best would answer that question?
- c. Can you think of one or two times when you have “poured water” on the fire, and been a force for unity?
- d. Can you think of any times when you have “poured gas” on the fire, and been a source of conflict?

7) The Corinthians saw themselves as wise, spiritual, and mature—because they were willing to fight and divide over their favorite leaders and important but secondary issues. However, this divisive spirit was actually proof of their immaturity. Do you sense the Holy Spirit challenging you to change the way you measure maturity in any way? If so, jot down some notes about what He is showing you in your journal and then spend some time asking Him to teach you how to make unity a top priority in your life.