

UNITY: THE POWER OF ONE – JOHN 17:6-19

Reflections from last week: The goals of this 3 week series are to define what unity is not and what unity is. In doing so, this will give Living Hope Bryan a clear picture of what we should be doing as a church. As a church, Our Mission is this: LOVE GOD & LOVE PEOPLE, this is what our goal is as a church body. Last week, I shared how we will seek to move towards this goal by sharing our refined Vision Statement: Unifying, Growing, and Serving others for the purpose of proclaiming Christ.

Unity is not something we can manufacture, it is not something we can plan, or create. I am afraid that sometimes that we worship the idea of Unity but not the One who unifies. We love the concept of Unity, but we really don't truly understand the cost. We come thinking Unity can be measured by a feeling, success, people singing in unison, or popular/majority vote. None of these things portray the biblical definition of Unity. Remember sometimes we can be unified around the wrong things.

Biblical Examples of Unity gone wrong:

A.) The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)

B.) Joseph's Brothers plotting against him (Genesis 37)

C.) The nation of Israel convincing Aaron to build for them a false god (Golden Calf) (Exodus 32)

D.) The majority of the nation of Israel was afraid to enter the Promise Land (Numbers 13)

E.) There was Unity among the Sanhedrin that they should stone Stephen because they did not want to listen to his message (Acts 7)

Know this, the enemy does not want us to be unified, so he uses the most powerful weapon at his disposal, **OURSELVES**. **SELF** is what keeps unity from happening. Often we allow preferences (what we think), pressures of life (this is too hard), or perceptions (It is always been like this) to determine God's destination for our life. The sad reality is this we are okay with that. This is not okay. What we need is people to stand up like David who was unified in God purpose, that when no one else would stand up against Goliath for God he did, we need people like Elijah who stood against 450 prophets of Baal, worshipping the One True God, and we need people like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who would not worship other Gods even seemingly everyone else did. However the greatest example of being unified in God's purpose is seen in life of Jesus. Last week we observed how Jesus prayed to be glorified, so His Father in heaven would be glorified. What this meant is that Jesus was obedient to God's purpose which was to die for the glory of God. Today, we will see Jesus continue in this prayer now shifting his prayer towards his disciples.

CENTRAL IDEA: "Unity is not something we can achieve, but in a person in whom we must believe (Jesus).

I. UNITY IN CHRIST HAS BEEN REVEALED (vs. 6-8)

⁶ *"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.*

This is great news! The pressure is off because Jesus has done the work necessary for us to be united with God. Notice what Jesus says in these verses, ("**I have revealed you**", "**I gave them** the words you gave me and they accepted them", "They knew with certainty **that I came from you**, and they believed that **you sent me**.")) Unity happens because of Jesus, not us. The problem we don't seem realize this at times, we are not paying attention to the job description. Notice again what Jesus did, (He came, He revealed, and He gave) that was the task assigned to Jesus. Notice what the disciples task was which is ours as well (They obeyed, They accepted, and They believed). Think about what Jesus has done, "**I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world.**" He has revealed God to us. I love how the ESV Bible translates this verse, "⁶ *"I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world."* Jesus has revealed to us God's name. Think about that, "The name of God."

The "name" is identifying and distinguishing mark of who we are as a person. This is why Moses in Exodus 3:13 wanted to know what name of God was so He could tell the Israelites who was responsible for delivering them from Egypt Jesus also indicated the importance of His Father's name throughout His earthly ministry (Jesus did works in His name) *John 10:25, ²⁵ Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me. (We are children of God by His name) John 1:12, ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."* (They believed in His name) *John 2:23, ²³ Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. (By His name we are saved) John 3:18, ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."* Jesus represents the Father. **JESUS CHRIST IS GOD PERSONIFIED.** Unity in Christ has been revealed, our response must be obedience (v.6), the results of obedience is knowing with certainty (personal intimate knowledge of, something that you can hold or possess) **WHO'S NAME ARE WE TRUSTING OUR LIVES IN? Is it our name, is our spouses name, is it our job's name, is it our American Currency's name (Ironic that our currency says, "In God We Trust", is it our churches' name? Are we unified to the wrong thing? IF YOU AREN'T TRUSTING IN HIM, THEN YOU ARE NOT UNIFIED IN HIM AND AS A RESULT YOU ARE LIVING IN SIN.**

II. UNITY IN CHRIST SECURES (vs. 9-12)

⁹ *I pray for them. (Jesus prays for them, Why?) I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours (Jesus prays for them because they are gift from God) ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. (Jesus cherishes the gift the has been given to Him, We belong to Him, we were bought with a price) And glory has come to me through them.* (Jesus knows that his disciples will continue on the mission which He has already revealed which is the GLORY OF GOD, this is why He prays). ¹¹ *I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them (To keep or preserve) by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. ¹² While I was with them, I protected them (to guard) and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.* Jesus knows since they are going to continue on with the mission which is the GLORY OF GOD (Making much of Him) they need the protection that only God can provide. **We are keep safe, preserved, and guarded by the name of Jesus.** Anything that is in Jesus name is secure, it cannot be repossessed. **This is GOOD NEWS.** The pressure is off. **UNITY IN CHRIST IS GUARANTEED BY THE POWER OF HIS NAME.** The reference to Judas shows that those outside of Jesus' name are lost and doomed. Remember Judas trusted in his name and was concerned for himself.

III. UNITY IN CHRIST DIVIDES (vs. 13-19)

¹³ *"I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full (Abounding, Complete, Not lacking) measure of my joy within them. Jesus knows what his disciples need. He knows that their Unity in Christ will be under attack. Jesus prays that they will know joy that comes from Him. Notice Jesus doesn't pray that they would be happy, but they would have the full abounding joy of Jesus. Joy is that inner peace and strength that springs forth regardless of circumstances. Why did they need this full measure of joy? ¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. Why do they need joy? Because the world vehemently opposes what they represent. Notice what Jesus prays, ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Jesus doesn't pray for isolation, but for protection. We are to carry on the mission that Jesus has already revealed, which is to make the Glory of God known by making Jesus known. We can't do this and isolate ourselves from the world, even though the world hates us. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. The word sanctify means to "set apart". How are we set apart? By truth. What is truth? God's word is truth. **GOD'S WORD IS THE PATHWAY TO HOLINESS. What does His word say? John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."** God's word reveals His character, His holiness. **Know His Word, Know Holiness. When we know His Word, Know His Holiness, We will see God's glory. The Holiness of God and Glory of God are closely connected. The reason we don't see the glory of God is because we don't know the word of God which leads us to the Holiness of God.** The Holiness of God will drive us to God and His mission. ¹⁸ *As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.* Jesus states that He set Himself apart to do the Father's will which was to come and die as the atoning sacrifice for all of our sins. Because of this, we can be sanctified (Holy, complete)*

Unity in Christ is an eternal guarantee based on the truth of God's word. My prayer today is that by the grace of God you would obey, accept, and believe in Jesus the revealed Son of God.