

Better Together

Ultimately following Christ is something we do together in the church. We are the body of Christ. Christianity is a team sport.

UNITY

- Not uniformity, we are not the same
- Not unanimity, we do not agree on everything
- Oneness of heart and purpose

Satan's strategy to defeat you is to divide and to conquer.

Psalm 133

Beauty of Unity

- Vs. 1 = unity is pleasant!
- Disunity is so unpleasant and ugly. War is the ugliest thing on earth.
- One of the most beautiful things on earth is the church united under the Lordship of Jesus Christ
- **John 17:20-21**
- Unity is the very nature of God—Trinity
- Dwight L. Moody said, "I have never known the Spirit of God to work where the Lord's people are divided."
- We live in an extremely fractious world politically, philosophically and theologically. Something in us wants to fight against those who disagree. We must be right and others must be wrong. Like children, things must be done our way.
- Strength in numbers is only true if those numbers are united.
 - One brick is useless, but many bricks build a wall.
 - One shingle is useless, but many shingles make a roof.
- California redwood trees **grow** up to 300 ft. and live over 2500 years. Yet, they have an extremely shallow root system. You will never see a redwood standing alone. They **grow** in clusters, groups and groves.
 - The might of the redwood is not in itself.
 - For every foot in height, the redwood sends its roots not down, but three times that distance...out! A 300 ft. tall tree has 900 ft. of roots.
 - The roots of the trees are intertwined and twisted so that one tree is not holding up itself, but every tree is holding up the other!
 - These trees are locked to each other. There is no way that one tree can fall down; it is held by the strength of the other trees.
 - **It is your responsibility to send your roots out to be intertwined with the rest of us.** We can yank and pull on you, but only you can stretch yourself and put yourself out there.
 - **Whatever pulls you away from Christ's body is anti-Christ!**

Basis of Unity

- Cannot be agreement, because we will never agree on everything.
- Who is the basis of our unity = Jesus
- **1 Corinthians 2:1-5**
- Vs. 2 = anointing oil used on Aaron
 - Necessary for High Priest to enter Holy of Holies - must be washed clean and anointed with the fragrance of God's Spirit

- Myrrh, cinnamon, calamus & cassia blended with olive oil {harmonious blend of Christ in me & Christ in you with our various gifts blended together into one body by the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Unity is not some form of forced, contrived uniformity, but a beautiful blending together of the Holy Spirit
- Aaron cannot be ignored here. While he is the high priest, he is also a flawed human being. Yet, this precious anointing and blessing of unity flowed from his leadership to the whole group.
 - Some churches have a pastor who would lead, but is constantly resisted by the congregation. Other churches have a congregation desperately desiring a pastor to lead them, but the pastor will not give it.
 - Every team needs a captain. Usually, the success or failure of a football team can be traced to the effectiveness of its quarterback.
 - **Hebrews 13:17** NIV, "Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you."

Blessing of Unity

- Dew
 - Hot Mediterranean climate = morning dew is refreshing & life-giving necessity
 - In a day of disgruntlement, division, strife & disagreement, unity and harmony are like the morning dew in a dry and thirsty land
 - Dry farming—no irrigation & little rain = morning dew was the primary source of watering = food & income = blessing
- Nothing sweeter than dew of God's grace on a church
 - If you have ever been involved in the bitterness of a divided church, you know what I am talking about
 - What dew does for the land, unity does for the church
- Canadian Geese
 - V formation = 71% greater flying range than flying alone
 - Honking is the encouragement of the rank and file to those in the lead to keep up their speed.
 - When a goose gets sick or tired and falls too far back, two geese fall out with the one to help and protect it. They stay with it until it is able to fly again & get back in the formation.
- God commands his blessing in this place of unity

Prayer from Philippians 1:27 & 1 John 1:7

Heavenly Father, we pray that Cornerstone Church will stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Help us to walk in the light of your love and grace. Protect the fellowship that we have with one another and Your Spirit, and with you Dear Father. We ask for all of this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.