

## Unity

**Key Text:** Ephesians 4:1-6; *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup>Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup>Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup>There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.* (all Bible passages from the NIV)

The following five commitments are needed to cultivate, maintain and demonstrate unity. How might they affect the way we work together as a board or committee [or team of Servant Leaders]?

- A commitment to **love Jesus Christ** above all things and to **sacrifice all of our mini-agendas** for His sake

Ephesians 4:1 *[above]*

Ephesians 4:15-16 *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

Matthew 22:37 *Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' "*

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

- A **commitment to sound doctrine**, which never sacrifices the truth, but always prioritizes it in a spirit of grace

Ephesians 4:4-6 *[above]*

Ephesians 4:13 *until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

Ephesians 4:15-16 *[above]*

Philippians 3:15 *All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.*

- A commitment to develop **Christ-like character**, especially **humility** and **submission**

Ephesians 4:2 *[above]*

Romans 12:3 *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

Philippians 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

1 Peter 3:8 *Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.*

- A commitment to **respect and pursue God-given diversity and accept one another** as Christ has accepted us

Ephesians 4:11-13 *It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

Romans 12:4-8 *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27 <sup>12</sup> *The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink...*

<sup>27</sup> *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

Colossians 3:11 *Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.*

Romans 15:7 *Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*

- A commitment to strive earnestly and prayerfully to **pursue peace, resolve conflict, and preserve relationships** despite personal differences

Ephesians 4:3 *[above]*

Proverbs 19:11 *A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.*

Luke 6:27-28 *"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*

Romans 12:18 *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

Galatians 6:1 *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*