

INTRODUCTION: Jesus took a personal interest in individual people. Jesus reminds us that it is indeed hard to hate up close. However, it can also be hard to love up close. Up close we tend to see the blemishes, the inconsistencies, the shortcomings—all the things that can make it a challenge to love someone. That's why Jesus prayed in the garden for his followers to be one. He prayed that they would love and serve one another in such a way that the world would believe their message. This prayer is perhaps the only prayer that believers have the capacity to answer on Jesus' behalf.

DISCUSSION:

1. What about oneness or unity among Jesus' followers makes their message more believable?
2. New Testament unity was not uniformity but unity in diversity. How can people who are different in personality, perspective, and experience truly have the unity the New Testament so clearly calls for as it relates to the local church?
3. Have you been a part of a church that struggled with unity? What were some of the things that were driving that church apart?
4. Give an example of when it was difficult to love up close.
5. Is it possible to have unity with other Christians even when you disagree on doctrine? What would that look like? (Think 1st tier issues versus 2nd tier issues)
6. In Colossians 3, Paul listed compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with, loving, and forgiving. Which do you struggle most to live out and why?
7. Among this list in the New Testament of ways to "one another one another," which do you think is most difficult to practice? (Love, bear with, carry each other's burdens, build up, prefer, accept, forgive, submit to, comfort, stir up, pray, serve, be hospitable, judge not, seek good for, envy not, bless.)
8. Why is it virtually impossible for a local church to be both on mission and in conflict at the same time?
9. In Proverbs, God says He hates those who "sow discord among the brethren." Why does God take this issue so seriously?

APPLICATION:

1. Pick a word from Paul's list in Colossians 3 and make it your word for the month. Write this word on cards, notes, etc in order to concentrate living it out.
2. Pick a one another verse from the New Testament and stick with it for the next month, seeking ways to live it out.
3. Be someone's reason for believing!

MEMORIZATION:

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

5 REASONS YOU SHOULD LEAVE YOUR CHURCH

1. [Group]

When it comes to sin...if your church talks, reacts, thinks, and behaves more like the Pharisees than Jesus...leave!

2. [Group]

When it comes to the Bible... if your church uses the Word of God as a means to withhold, hide, or minimize the Love of God....leave.

3.

When it comes to truth & grace...if your church is more in love with telling truth than showing grace...leave.

4.

The disciples were going to have to work together for things to work.

5.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for **those** who will believe in me through their message,

John 17:20 NIV

6.

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.

John 17:21 NIV

7.

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be **one** as we are one —

John 17:22 NIV

8.

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.

John 17:23 NIV

9.

Unity & Credibility

Our Behavior & Their Belief

10.

Don't be someone's reason for not 'believin'.

11.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with **one accord** in one place.

Acts 2:1 NKJV

12.

All the believers were **one** in heart and mind.

Acts 4:32 NIV

13.

Don't be someone's reason for not 'believin'.

14.

The Body of Christ is to be as attractive, compelling, and loving as Jesus Himself was while on earth.

15.

Rome
Corinth
Galatia
Ephesus
Philippi
Scattered

16.

ONE ANOTHER EACH OTHER:

Love, Bear with, Carry each other's burdens, Build up, Prefer, Accept, Forgive, Submit to, Comfort, Stir up, Pray, Serve, Be Hospitable, Judge not, Seek good for, Envy not, Bless

17.

It is easier to be **one** with each other when you one another each other.

18.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Colossians 3:12 NIV

19.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Colossians 3:13 NIV

20.

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:14 NIV

21.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:15 NIV

22.

If your church spends more time in conflict than on mission...leave.

23. [Group]

It is easier to be one with each other when you one another each other.

24.

Without unity, we lose credibility.

25.

26.