

Message Series

“...By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35

OVERALL QUESTION:

What does love LOOK like from the outside?

How will someone see that you love one another?



Get your journal out or your phone to take notes!

Opening Prayer

Take us on a journey...

Open our hearts.

Stop us from being offended and start listening.

Help us grow.

Help us value Your Church above our preferences.

Help us get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

Review

Speaks life — not burning the church down. (Eph 4 / James 3)

Helps wisely — burdens and loads. (Gal 6)

Forgives and restores where possible. (Col 3 / Eph 4)

Goes direct — talk to them, not about them. (Matt 5 & 18)

Goes low — takes the towel. (John 13)

Builds courage in others. (1 Thess 5 / Heb 10)

Makes space — hospitality. (Rom 12 / 1 Pet 4)

Last Time



Mature love makes space.



Hospitality is love with room for others.

A letter to Share with you!! – Great Job.

Who did you tell about the message?

Who encouraged you to do the challenge?

Who did you make space for this week?

Ice Breaker

Have you ever seen people fight over something small...
and lose something precious?

A seat.
A song.
A routine.
A preference.

Was it worth the cost?

Today's Big Idea

Love One Another #9

Unity is not automatic.
Unity is not accidental.

Christ creates unity.
Mature love fights to protect it.

Love fights for unity.

Ephesians 4:1–3

Walk in a manner worthy of the calling...
with all humility and gentleness,
with patience,
bearing with one another in love,
eager to **maintain the unity** of the Spirit
in the bond of peace.

Notice the Word

Paul does not say:
“Create unity.”

He says:
“Maintain the unity.”

Christ has already made us one.
Love protects what Christ has made.

Ephesians 4:4–6

One body.

One Spirit.

One hope.

One Lord.

One faith.

One baptism.

One God and Father of all.

Unity Is Not Uniformity

Unity does not mean:

same personality

same background

same opinions

same preferences

same gifts

Unity means we belong to the same Lord.

Unity Is Not Pretending

Biblical unity is not fake peace.

It does not ignore sin.

It does not silence wounded people.

It does not avoid truth.

Unity is truth and love walking together.

The Great Enemy of Unity

Selfishness.

“My way.”

“My seat.”

“My music.”

“My ministry.”

“My comfort.”

“My preference.”

Take Note



Mature love values **people** above preferences.

Preferences matter.

People matter more.

Unity dies when preference becomes more important than people.

Philippians 2:3–4

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,
but in humility count others more significant than
yourselves.

Let each of you look not only to his own interests,
but also, to the interests of others.

The Mind of Christ

Jesus did not grasp status.

Jesus did not cling to comfort.

Jesus did not demand His rights.

He humbled Himself.

He served.

He gave Himself for us.

John 17:20–23

Before the cross, Jesus prayed for us:

“That they may **all** be **one**...”

Christian unity was on Jesus’ heart
before He went to the cross.

The Gospel



Sin separates everyone from God (Rom 3:23)

God came down to meet us in Jesus

Jesus Died in our place so we don't have to pay the price of our disobedience

God raised him up again 3 days later (1 Cor 15:3-9)

We all can be forgiven and united with God by turning around, accepting that free gift, and putting our faith in Jesus.

Making Him **our** Lord and Saviour (Rom 6:23, 5:8, Act 2:37-39)

The Gospel

There is no longer
Jew nor Gentile (Everyone not Jew)
Slave nor Free
Male nor Female

We are all God's Children
We are all brothers and sisters in Christ
For you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:26-28; 1 Cor 12:13)

The Gospel

Jesus did not merely teach unity.

He died to make us one people.

At the cross, Christ removes hostility,
reconciles sinners to God,
and brings divided people into one body.

Ephesians 2:14–16

He himself is our peace.

He has broken down the dividing wall of hostility.

He reconciles us both to God
in one body through the cross.

Romans 15:5–7

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such **harmony** with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with **one voice** glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you.

One Voice

A united church is not a church where everyone gets their way.

A united church is a church where everyone is learning to glorify God together.

One Lord.

One people.

One purpose.

Can Move Forward?

Yes.

Unity is not just about avoiding fights.
Unity is about moving together.

A church looking backward fights over preferences.
A church looking forward shares one purpose.
And makes sacrifices to make it happen!

One Vision. One Purpose.

Our shared purpose is simple:

Follow Jesus.

Love one another.

Build up the body.

Welcome outsiders.

Make Christ known...

Make Disciples who are Disciple Makers

That is enough to keep us busy & moving together.

Romans 14:1

“As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions.”

Not every disagreement is a Gospel issue.

Some things are **core doctrine**. (Non-negotiable beliefs)
Some things are **wisdom**.

Some things are grey areas of beliefs you can live with
Some things are just preferences.

Romans 14:19

“So then let us pursue what makes for peace
and for mutual upbuilding.”

Pursue peace.

Pursue building up.

Not winning arguments.

Not defending preferences.

Two-sided Coin

- HEADS — My Nature
- My way
- My comfort
- My preference
- My control
- TAILS — What Jesus Wants
- One body
- One Lord
- One purpose
- One another

Only one side looks like Jesus.

Avoid the Two Ditches

Left Side —  False Peace

Avoid every disagreement.
Pretend everything is fine.
Never confront sin.
Keep everyone smiling.

That is not biblical unity.

Avoid the Two Ditches

Right Side —  Fight Over Everything

Major on minors.

Make preferences into doctrine.

Always correct.

Always complain.

Always divide.

That is not biblical courage.

Middle of the Road

Biblical Unity

Truth without cruelty.
Love without compromise.
Humility without weakness.
Conviction without division.

Unity fights for what matters most.

What Unity Sounds Like

“I can live with that.”

“That is not my preference, but I can support it.”

“How can I help?”

“What will build up the body?”

“What helps us follow Jesus together?”

Unity speaks with humility.

What Kills Unity?

Gossip.

Suspicion.

Unforgiveness.

Preference wars.

Control.

Pride.

Refusing to move forward together as a group.

What Protects Unity?

Humility.

Gentleness.

Patience.

Bearing with one another.

Forgiveness.

Going direct.

Choosing the body over yourself.

Practical Examples

Music style.

Seats and routines.

Building decisions.

Service structure.

Who gets noticed.

Who gets their way.

How we respond to change.

The Question

Is this worth damaging unity over?

Is this doctrine?

Is this wisdom?

Or is this preference?

Mature love values people above preferences.

No Spectators

Unity is not just the pastor's job.

Unity is not just the deacons' job.

Unity is not just for mature Christians.

Every disciple either protects unity
or weakens it.

Diagnostic Questions

Am I easy to offend?

Do I insist on getting my own way?

Can I disagree without dividing?

Do my words protect unity?

Am I moving with the body, or pulling against it?

What preference might I need to lay down?

Take Note



Love fights for unity.



Mature love values people above preferences.



Jesus made us one.



Now let's live like it.

Call To Action

Protect unity this week.

Do one simple act:

Refuse one divisive conversation.

Lay down one preference.

Encourage someone you disagree with.

Pray for the unity of the church.

Choose what builds up the body.

Loving Accountability

Who are you going to share this message with that WAS NOT here today?

Who will ask if you did it?

Who will help you protect unity this week?

Where will you choose people above preference?

Conclusion

A disciple of Jesus:

Speaks life.

Helps wisely.

Forgives and restores where possible.

Goes directly to the person.

Goes low.

Builds courage.

Makes space.

Fights for unity.

Final Word

Jesus made us one.

Now let's live like it.

Love fights for unity.

Closing Prayer

Lord, teach us to love each other like You loved us.

Help us value people above preferences.

Help us protect the unity You have made.

Give us one heart, one voice, and one purpose.

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