When God's People Unite

Psalm 133

11/4/2012



- Satan sows tares among the wheat (Mt. 13:38; II Cor.11:13)
- Satan seeks to disturb the unity of the church by creating discord and division (James 3:14-16)

Gal. 5:15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another

***Experience the blessings of unity!**

Four descriptions of unity:

I. Unity is <u>GOOD</u> (v. 1a)

II. Unity is <u>PLEASANT</u> (v. 1b)

III. Unity is <u>PRECIOUS</u> (v. 2)

IV. Unity is <u>REFRESHING</u> (v. 3)

CONCLUSION: If we work as a team, God can do a great work through us.

When God's People Unite

Psalm 133

11/4/2012



- Satan sows tares among the wheat (Mt. 13:38; II Cor.11:13)
- Satan seeks to disturb the unity of the church by creating discord and division (James 3:14-16)

Gal. 5:15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another

***Experience the blessings of unity!**

Four descriptions of unity:

I. Unity is _____ (v. 1a)

II. Unity is _____ (v. 1b)

III. Unity is _____ (v. 2)

IV. Unity is _____ (v. 3)

CONCLUSION: If we work as a team, God can do a great work through us.

When God's People Unite

Psalm 133

11/4/2012

"A song of degrees of David" - This psalm, like Psalms 120-134, formed a Jewish hymnbook that was used by pilgrims who travelled to Jerusalem for the yearly feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.

What a sight David sees as throngs of Israelites walk up the mountain ranges into Jerusalem. This gathering of young and old, rich and poor is remarkably special because it is not marked by jealousy, fighting, and alienations in the family of Israel. The scene is one of joy, love, and oneness!

It is to such a sight that David exclaims, "Behold" -- look, see, visualize, the blessedness of unity!

We ought to be united.
After all, we are…

Playing on the same team
Heading in the same direction
Serving the same Master

***Experience the blessings of unity!**

Four descriptions of unity:

I. Unity is GOOD (v. 1a)

Biblical unity is good -

1. Because its cause (source) is good

The source of Biblical unity is God.

God is called the author of peace, not confusion (I Cor. 14:33; II Cor. 13:11)

SEE: Eph. 4:1-6; John 17:21

2. Because its effect (result) is good

The consequences of unity are truly good.

a. A work is accomplished for God's glory

We are laborers together with God (SEE: I Cor. 3:1-9)

b. A message is conveyed to the watching world (John 17:21 - "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Jesus is concerned about the Spiritual unity of His People
(John 17:20-23)
("Father, make them one")

v. 20
Christ's prayer for sanctified saints extends beyond the first-century disciples, to all believers who would come to faith via the disciples' testimony in Scripture.

v. 21
Our oneness happens when we are a united team or "flock" set apart from the world. You cannot have Godly oneness with worldly saints. Sanctification must precede unity.

"One in Us" – Oneness is only possible because of the common relationship we have in God!

The believer's unity results in bringing the unbelieving world to faith.

The world comes to realize that only God can produce a unity among diverse and numerous people.

Note: the unity of the early Church –

Acts 1:14
These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 2:1
And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 2:44
And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

Acts 2:46
And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

John 17: 22
This shared "glory" is not the shared glory of Christ's deity (which He had before creation – Jn. 17:5), but it is the glory of Christ's grace and truth which He deposits in the life of all of His children.

John 1:14
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Such grace and truth is the secret to our unity.

John 17:23
Christ's concern for our unity with each other is due to His concern for

our unity with Him.

True unity is not legalistic in nature (not forced by sharing common rules); rather, it is theistic in nature (a result of our common relationship with God).

Not a mechanical unity (forced externals), but a spiritual unity (internal).

II. Unity is PLEASANT (v. 1b)

The Hebrew word for "pleasant" is used of:

1. The harmony of good music (EX: of an orchestra) (as opposed to the annoying sound of wrong notes at wrong times - Ex: warm-up time)

2. The sweetness of honey (as opposed to bitter things)

A. Unity is pleasant to God

B. Unity is pleasant to ourselves

C. Unity is pleasant to others

"Behold how. . . pleasant it is. . ."

"Brethren" - It is understandable that the unsaved cannot get along, but for those in the same family to not get along is truly a travesty.

The opposite: Behold, how bad and how irritable (unsettling, troublesome)it is for brethren to dwell apart in disunity.

EX:Cain & Abel
Abram & Lot (Gen. 13:8 - "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.")

Jacob & Esau

God hates discord sown among the brethren.

It is Satan who sows tares of division (Mt. 13:39). He first divided man from God and then men from each other (Spurgeon, p. 171)

III. Unity is PRECIOUS (v. 2)

"Precious ointment" - the oil poured upon the high priest was precious because it was a one of a kind, rare, uncommon oil (Exod. 30:32 - "Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make nay other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you.")

Unity like the anointing oil is a precious commodity. It is priceless! Cannot be bought, can't be imitated!

"Ran down . . . went down" - The profuse pouring of the costly oil drives home a point. Unity produces not a small smidgen of peace, joy, comfort, and blessing, but a bountiful supply.

EX: the woman who used the costly ointment on Jesus - did not view it as a waste!

IV. Unity is REFRESHING (v. 3)

Nothing is as refreshing in a hot, dry climate like Israel as the morning dew which glistens with the morning sun, giving a cool refreshing start to the day and supplying the water needed to prolong the life of the grass and vegetation.

"Unity is like a cool breeze on a hot day!"

CONCLUSION:

V. 3

Just as God commands blessing upon Zion, so He commands blessing upon those who dwell in unity: "United we stand, divided we fall"

3 Essentials to Biblical unity:

1. Sharing a common relationship
   (the oneness of being, which comes "in Christ" - see: Eph. 4:1-5)

2. Sharing common convictions
   (a oneness of thinking which comes from the Bible - Amos 3:3; I Cor. 1:10)

   Agreement not necessarily in every detail or fine point of doctrine, but in the indisputable, clearly revealed essentials.

3. Sharing a common goal
   (a oneness of service which is focused on Christ)

4. Sharing a common cause

Disunity is so destructive because rather than working together you are working against each other.

Four attitudes that promote unity:

1. Unselfishness(Acts 4:32 - "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.)

2. Humility(Phil. 2:2 - "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.)

3. Compassion & love(I Pet. 3:8 - "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous")

4. Peace(Eph. 4:3 - "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace")

See: Ephesians 4:

v. 3-6

Context =not external unity with other churches (organizations)
but internal heart unity (relational)

A. Unity is maintained by effort

"Endeavoring" = making every effort

Church unity is like marriage - you must zealously work at maintaining it.

"Did you know you can't create unity in the church? God already created it; all you can do is destroy it. The unity of the church is already done by the Holy Spirit; all we can do is mess it up." (MacArthur)

"To keep" = to guard, preserve, hold on to

EX: Peter imprisoned by Herod and slept between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison"

"Unity" = comes from the word which means <u>one</u>

Paul is <u>not</u> talking about our being united <u>to</u> the Spirit, but our being united (in a common oneness) with other believers <u>by</u> the Spirit

Unity is:oneness, singleness, harmony, agreement, togetherness, comradery, blending, joining, cooperation, a pulling together, a standing shoulder-to-shoulder, and working side by side

B. Unity is held together by peace (v. 3b)

"Bond" = idea of gluing, cementing, or tying together

Ja. 3:18 - "And the fruit if righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace"

A home without peace is a home without togetherness

A business without peace is a business without harmony

A church without peace is a church without unity

C. Unity is illustrated by Spiritual reality (v. 4-6)

a. ***"One body"*** - all believers, collectively, "Bride"

ILLUS: unity of Body in Heaven; earthly local churches are representative

I Cor. 12:13 - *"For by one Spirit . . . one body"*

> Eph. 2:16 - Christ abolished the O.T. Law as a means of approaching and serving God by His death, "*That He might reconcile both unto God in <u>one body</u> by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby"*

b. ***"One Spirit"*** - Read Eph. 2:18

I Jn. 4:1 - "Try the spirits. . . " (there is one <u>true</u> Spirit)

A divided church is not right with God - the Spirit only leads one way

c. ***"One hope" -*** a single confidence. We all share a common salvation. We have the same assurance. WE look forward to the same eternity.

d. ***"One Lord"*** (Master, owner) == Christ

He has right to rule over your life if He is your Lord.

e. ***"One faith"***

Only one means of truth - Bible

Only one means of salvation - Christ

f. ***"One baptism"*** (water = symbol; Spirit = reality)

Both are implied here.

Ex: Peter linked water baptism with Spirit baptism when he said, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

g. ***"One God and Father"***

Similar statement to I Cor. 8:4b & 6
"Father of all" - all who have accepted His "calling" or invitation to salvation (v. 1,4)
"Above all" - sovereignty (power); powerful
"Through all" - source (provision); provisional
"In all" - sustenance (personal relationship); personal

Our Lord beckons us with outstretched Hand,

Come together in unity as before Him we stand

Each member finding their own special place

Part of His Body and filled with His grace

Proclaiming, 'we are the body of Christ in this place'

Living-stones made up of many unique parts

Build together with love and the joining of hearts

Dependant on each other and our Father above

Marching forward united under His banner of love

Declaring: ‘It’s Jesus, the Christ we’re taking hold of.’

by Marie