

Diligently Preserving Unity December 1, 2024

Ephesians 4:3, *“Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*

Diligent: eager to strive toward a goal with urgency and commitment

Preserve: to keep and guard

Unity: one, God-produced unity between believers

Ephesians 4:4-6, *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”*

Galatians 5:20-21, *“Hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy, and anything like these.”*

Galatians 5:21, *“I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

1 Corinthians 1:10, *“I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.”*

Why can it be so hard to maintain unity at times?

1. Selfishness

James 4:1-2, *“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight.”*

Philippians 2:3, *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”*

2. Exalting Human Leaders

1 Corinthians 1:11-13, *“My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. ¹² What I mean is this: One of you says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Cephas”; still another, “I follow Christ.” ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?”*

Philippians 2:1-2, *“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one purpose.”*

1 Corinthians 15:1-4, *“Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”*