

**“Long-term Relationships”
May 5, 2013**

John 17:6-26

**“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”
(Ephesians 4:3) [“Alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences”
The Message]**

“There should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” (1 Corinthians 12:25-27)

PROP- We’ve been called to and graced for long-term relationships.

1. “AS WE ARE ONE” (John 17:22)

- Our God is “WE” (“Let US make...”)
- “Trinity” (though not a word in the Bible) describes the quality of relationship between Father, Son & Holy Spirit
- More than an organizational chart—sign of mature love (He IS love)
- Capacity of 3 distinct Persons to flow AS ONE—relationship at the highest level of loyalty/unity
- NOTE: “Unity” is ultimately the mark of being “like Him”

2. THREE DYNAMICS THAT UNITE US (with Him & with one another)

- a. HIS NAME (SEE John 17:11)**
We DEPEND ON Him (i.e., we “call on His name”—who He is)
- b. HIS WORD (SEE John 17:14)**
We KNOW HIM by His revelation to us.
- c. HIS GLORY (SEE John 17:22)**
We EXPERIENCE HIM (i.e., He becomes the “weightiest” factor in our life)

[NOTE: I don’t want “the deed”—I want to live here!!!]

3. UNITY HAS SOME AMAZING RESULTS

PSALM 133

- “Good”- i.e., doesn’t get any better than this
- “Pleasant”- *delightful (actually attractive)*
- The whole Body is anointed to heal & restore

- “Commanded blessing of life evermore”- Lit., a well-watered place; a revival atmosphere, a place that restores:
 - Set a bone—people get their walk back
 - Re-arm a battleship—people get their fight back
 - Restore a family—people get their relationships back
 - Restore nets—people get their destiny back (poverty broken)

4. OUR ATTITUDE IS OUR CONTRIBUTION TO UNITY

“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)

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

- REJOICE- *“to thrive; do well; because you are enjoying the company of Another!”*
- PRAY- *things you can’t immediately change or figure out—you turn over to God in prayer!*
- THANKFUL- *eucharist- “to come under the influence of”*

DECLARE WAR ON COMPLAINING, GRUMBLING, INGRATITUDE:

“Though they knew God they did not honor Him as God or give thanks...(as a result) they became futile in the speculations (*their vain, fearful imaginations always thought the worst & expected disappointment*)...God gave them over to a depraved mind (*sense of rejection pervaded their thought life*)...as a result they became gossips and slanderers.” (Romans 1:21, 28-30)

NOTE: The word for “slanderer” or “gossip” is *diabolos*—“devil.” Jesus used this word to describe Judas (John 6:70). It describes “*someone who cannot keep their negative perspective to themselves.*”

BUT WHEN WE ARE GRATEFUL:

- Problems are opportunities
- Struggles are growing seasons
- People are treasures in progress

RESPONSE:

- In covenant with Jesus—*eucharist*—“*come under His influence*”
- In new covenant with wider Body of Christ; local churches are places of healing, equipping, sending...some are “lifers”...others are not.
- Healthy relationships committed—not controlling or confining