



1. When you think of the word “unity”, what ideas come to mind? What are some areas in life that you have observed where having unity with others is beneficial? Why do you think being unified with others in order to accomplish something is so powerful?

*Answer— We can observe unity at work whenever we see teams at work. Whether it is a sports team or a team at work or school, uniting together is a force-multiplier: A group of people working together to accomplish something will always accomplish more than separate individuals trying to accomplish the same thing.*

2. Read John 13:34,35. In this passage, Jesus said that if we love each other the way he loved us, then that would prove to the world that we are his disciples. How did he love us? Why do you think that type of love would be attractive to unbelievers? Now read Philippians 2:1-4, where Paul talks about having unity. In what areas does he say we should be unified? If we are going to accomplish this, what does he say we will need to do? Do you think that is what Jesus meant when he commanded us to love each other? How would it change our lives if we were to put the needs of others before our own needs? If we all did this as Christians, would our own needs be met?

*Answer— Jesus loved us unconditionally, which means he did not love us because we loved him first, he loved us because he chose to love us, even when we did not know him or care about him, even when we were his enemy because of our sin. This type of love is attractive because we want people to love us unconditionally, but most human love is conditional. I love you because you love me. In Philippians, Paul says that we should be like-minded (think about everything the same way), have the same love (love unconditionally as Jesus did), be one in spirit (be controlled by the Holy Spirit), and have the same purpose (God’s purposes for our lives). If we are going to be able to do this, we will need to place the needs of other Christians before our own needs, like Christ did with us when he put our need of salvation before his own needs. This requires humility which means to see others as being more important than yourself. This is exactly what it means to love unconditionally the way Christ loved us.*

3. Read John 17:20-23. What did Jesus pray for us? Why do you think that instead of being unified, it seems that there is so much division in the church?

*Answer—The simplest answer to this is that we are sinful beings. Instead of putting the needs of other Christians before our own, we put our own desires and wants first. Instead of helping*

*other Christians when they struggle, we gossip about them. The other reason is that Satan knows that the worst thing that he could face is a unified church, so he works hard to divide us, to cause us not to love each other.*

4. Pastor Rick said that when we are unified, it removes fear and creates a bold church. Do you think this is true? Why do you think it works this way? Read Philippians 1:12-14. Do you think this is what Paul is referring to?

*Answer—When you see other Christians taking a stand for Christ, it makes you see that if they can do it, then you can do it and it shows you that you are not alone. When you know that there are others doing the same thing as you, their courage becomes contagious. That is what unity of purpose produces—bold Christians unafraid to stand up for what they believe in.*

5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26, which is perhaps the greatest example given in scripture of what it means to have unity as Christians. Discuss from this passage what principles are taught about what creates unity and what would cause division.

*Answer—Seeing each part of the body, no matter which part you are, as being vitally important to the function of the whole produces unity. When one part sees itself as being more important than the other parts (pride), that causes division. Caring for all of the parts equally produces unity, caring only for the more “important” or “visible” parts causes division.*

