

Text: Genesis 11:1-9; Acts 2:1-11; John 17:20-23

Introduction

Gospel unity is essential to being a faithful gospel witness.

A Unity of Differents

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What are our 5 missional priorities as a church?
- Did anything in this message give you a new perspective on unity?
- What do you think of the idea that something has to be sacrificed? How might the cross inform how we think about that as believers?
- Why is it important for unity to exist not only within congregations but also between congregations within a city?
- How does the story of Babel teach a positive principle for the church?
- Why do you think that when unity exists, the sum of the parts is greater than the value of each part added together?
- Discuss the Lusanne movement's definition of evangelization as "the whole Church taking the whole gospel to the whole world."
- In Ephesians 4:1-3, what is our calling? How does what follows v1 help us understand how to walk worthy of that calling?
- How important to the witness of the church is unity among believers?
- What are two ways to work toward unity
- What are some good things we can agree on with many believers that ought to be accomplished in our community?

I. The Power of Unity (Gen. 11:1-9)

- A. The tower of Babel story illustrates the power of unity.
 - i. No unity: $1 + 1 = 2$
 - ii. Simple Collaboration: $1 + 1 > 2$. (Eccl. 4:9)
 - iii. Complete Unity: $1+1+ 1+1+1+1+1 >> 7$
 - iv. Increased Value of Each Part: $(1+1+ 1+1+1+1+1)/7 >> (1+1)/2$
- B. This is not inherently a Christian thing.

II. The Spirit and Unity (Acts 2:1-11)

- A. Pentecost reveals how God restores the power of understanding in order to do the otherwise impossible.

The miracle is a sign of what God intends to do through this new community.

B. This will require the whole church.

The *Louvanne* missions movement defined evangelization as “the whole Church taking the whole gospel to the whole world.”

i. We will not be able to take the whole gospel to the whole world without the whole church.

ii. This requires a work of the Spirit (Eph. 4:1-6).

a) Eph. 1:1 “There is one body.”

b) The unity we are called to requires the Spirit’s power.

c) However, we must make every effort to do so.

➤ Eph. 4:30

➤ Isa. 63:10.

To say that Gospel Unity is a missional priority is an understatement!

C. The necessity of Gospel Unity applies to our local mission and the world mission. (Matthew 28:18-20)

The *Didascalia apostolorum*: “[We] . . . divided the world among ourselves into twelve parts, and [went out] to the nations so that we could preach the word in all the world.”

We cannot accomplish world mission by ourselves but only in unity with the one body, empowered by the one Spirit!

III. The Witness of Unity (John 17:20-23)

A. We need unity to be faithful witnesses.

B. Finding what we can agree on.

Wes Lane: “What evil should die or what good should thrive because God’s kids are in town?”

i. Different approaches to unity.

a) Focus on everything we want them to believe

b) Focus on the good we want accomplished.

ii. Think on these things (Phil. 4:8-9).

C. Necessary but limited boundaries