



1 Corinthians 1:10-17 "Man's Wisdom Divides but God's Wisdom Unites"
Wk. 3 First Corinthians "Uncommon Sense: God's Wisdom over
Man's Pride through a Flawed Church."
By Pastor Onan Coca May 11, 2025

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers.

12 What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

[READ THE TEXT]

"People of God, this is the Word of God!"

Congregation - "Thanks be to God!"

[PRAY]

Good morning! My name is Onan Coca, and I have the joy and privilege of being an elder here at Highlands Community Church.

I have to begin by wishing my wife, all of the moms in our church, and all of the moms who may be watching online, including my own mom, a very Happy Mother's Day! Christian mothers are a gift and a blessing to our families and our world. The privilege and job of being a mom is one of the most consequential works that a person can do, and so I hope this morning that your families and your church have loved on you well and reminded you of the high calling of motherhood. What a blessing a godly mom is to her husband and her children.

Motherhood is powerful, isn't it? Have you ever noticed how a mom's shifting mood or behavior can affect the rest of the home? "If mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!" This popular phrase suggests that a



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mother's mood can significantly influence the overall atmosphere of a household; if she is unhappy, it can affect everyone else. You may have noticed that the same thing happens when mom and dad aren't on the same page. Your home could have great balance, and your lives could be chugging along just fine, but then something happens that puts mom and dad on different sides of an issue. The whole family grinds to a halt because of it. Maybe it has to do with disciplining a child, or with moving jobs, or schools or homes. Perhaps it's just about where to go for dinner, and now the argument is threatening to starve a teenage son!

How about a sports analogy? Whether the sport is baseball, basketball, or football, teams have to have a unified strategy when they compete. The NBA playoffs are happening as we speak; what would happen if, in the last seconds of a tied game, the coach called a timeout and designed a play for the team to run, but one of the players ignored the coach and did his own thing? The play would fail, and the team would look foolish.

Whatever it is, the lack of unity in the family or on a team can cause trouble, which is the same thing we're seeing as we continue in our series from First Corinthians this morning.

As Pastor Jody told us a couple of weeks ago, Paul wrote 1st Corinthians sometime between 53-55 AD. It's been roughly 25 years since Jesus' death and resurrection, and as we read, we already see the church struggling with divisions. And not just in Corinth. Remember from our study of Acts that a few years earlier, in 48 or 49 AD, the Council of Jerusalem had to settle a division between Jewish/Gentile Christians. Honestly, even the Apostles didn't always agree and get along, and if you read the rest of the letters in the New Testament, you'll notice that



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the topic of "divisions in the church" keeps popping up, and after 2000 years, we still haven't fixed this problem. Nor will we.

But just because we can't fix the problem on this side of glory doesn't mean we should stop trying. It will be important to remember that the central verse for our series in 1st Corinthians is **1 Corinthians 1:25 - For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.** We'll see just how spot-on this verse is today.

Before continuing, let's define some terms and give a broad overview of this "division vs. unity" topic because we will discuss this more in the coming weeks and months.

So **"what"** does "division vs. unity" mean, and **"who"** does it impact?

The "who" is the church, but here's a question you may not have considered. **"Who is the church?"** I'm going to move through a lot of information pretty quickly, but I encourage you to later spend some time reading [chapter 26 of the LBCF 1689](#), which goes deeper into who the church is and our role in this world.

Ekklesia is the compound of two words (*ek and kaleo*), which in the original Greek come together to mean **"to be called out of."** This should remind you of Pastor Jody's sermon from two weeks ago, where we saw that Paul used the word **"called"** in various forms as he greeted the "called out ones" in Corinth. While "ekklesia" literally means "assembly," our English Bibles often translate it to "church." The English word **church** likely comes from the Greek word **kyriakon**, which means 'belonging to the Lord.'



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The Baptist Book of Church Discipline, which comes from the London Baptist Confession of Faith 1689, says, *"A gospel church consists of such persons as have been called out of the unregenerate state into a state of grace, called with **an effectual calling**, called out of the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, or are judged in love to be so-called.*

*The word "church" sometimes means the whole body of believers and is commonly called the Kingdom or Family of God.' This includes those in heaven, called the church **triumphant** (Heb 12:23), those on Earth, called the church **militant** (1 Cor 12:28), and those elect **yet to be born.***

But what we mean by "church" is a number of disciples, saints, or believers that have been baptized and united together in gospel fellowship and is called a particular church."

Essentially, when we say the church, we can mean one of a few things:

PPT SLIDES

Who – **the Church**. But who is the church?

1. **Visible** – those people who confess to be believers and do not destroy their testimony with public sin (may not be regenerate)
2. **Invisible** – those people who have been saved by grace, through faith (and are truly regenerate – only God can see the heart).
3. **Universal** – every believer across time and geography. From the Nicene creed, we are:
 - a. **One** – united in Christ.
 - b. **Holy** – this holds two meanings simultaneously – **first**, God has set us apart from the world and to His glory. **Secondly**, it means the church is to be pure as our God is.



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- c. **Catholic** – also means **universal** (no borders or immutable characteristics dividing us – like ethnicity, socioeconomic background, or family history.)
 - d. **Apostolic** – We believe, preach, and defend the teachings of the prophets and the Apostles, or Scripture, as our only rule for life and godliness. We are centered on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which declares that we are justified by grace alone, through faith alone because of Christ alone to the glory of God alone.
4. **Local** – local church bodies like Highlands.
- a. A committed (membership) group of *regenerate* people (saved and baptized).
 - b. Who live in community with each other - knowing and being known by each other.
 - c. Meet regularly to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments (communion/baptism), and practice church discipline when believers go astray. (*We worship God, edify each other, and evangelize.*)

So that's the "who." Now, let's talk about the "what."

What – **Unity vs. Division**

The Bible uses several metaphors to discuss our unity with God and each other.

1. **Metaphors:**

- a. Body (Rom 12:4-5, 1 Cor 10:17, 12:12&27, Eph 4:12, 5:23&30, Col 1:24)



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- b. Bride/Marriage (Throughout the OT, 2 Cor 11:12, Eph 5:31-32, Rev 19:7-8 & 21:9)
 - c. Family (Matt 12:49-50, 2 Cor 6:18, Gal 6:10, Eph. 2:19, 1 Tim 5:1)
 - d. Building/Temple/House (Isa 28:16, Ps 118:22, 1 Cor 3:11, 1 Cor 3:16-17, 1 Cor 6:19, Eph 2:19-22, 1 Tim 3:14-15, Heb 3:6, 1 Pet 2:5-7, 1 Pet 4:17)
2. **Universal Church** – Unity here is "easy" because it is mostly idealistic, not "practical." The LBCF 26.3 explains that while we are **united** in Christ, even the purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error (1 Corinthians 5; Revelation 2-3). This means though we are united, we will have differences.
- a. The preface to the LBCF 1689 says that it was written to explain what we believe and why (based on Scripture) compared to our Presbyterian and Congregational brothers (Westminster Confession and Savoy Declaration)
 - b. "to demonstrate our unity with both groups in all the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. We also wanted to demonstrate our unity with many others, whose orthodox confession have been published to the world..."
 - c. We do so modestly and humbly "so that the freedoms we have taken will be inoffensive, even to those whose beliefs are different from ours."
3. **Local Church** – Unity here is "hard" because it must be practical to "make the invisible church visible." (Calvin)



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- a. Scripture teaches that we are to walk before God in obedience, giving ourselves to Him.
 - b. Scripture teaches that We are to commit, walk with, and give ourselves to one another according to Christ's commands.

In doing these things we glorify God before an unbelieving world.
This is what makes us that "Shining City upon a Hill."

John 10:16; John 12:32; Matthew 28:20; Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 2:41-42, 5:13-14; 2 Corinthians 9:13

I know that was a lot of information in a short time, but it brings us to our passage today, where in verse 10, we read,

***I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you,
but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.***

Paul, who, as an Apostle, has the authority to demand things based on his position, calls on the church in Corinth, in the name of Christ, to agree, to not be divided in any way, but to be united in the same mind and judgment, because as our Main Point today says, **Main Point: "A church united in humility and love, displays God's Power through the Gospel."**



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Current estimates tell us that roughly 1/3 of the planet or more than 2.5 billion people call themselves "Christians." Somewhere between 9,000 and 33,000 denominations today including Protestant, Roman Catholic-affiliated, and Orthodox-affiliated groups. Knowing that there is such division in the world among those calling themselves Christians, what are we to make of Paul's appeal to unity over division?

1. Unity Over Division

The first thing we should note is that the Bible teaches us that no matter what we see with our eyes, the church of God, Universal, is united.

A. The Universal church is spiritually united.

The Nicene Creed, now almost 1700 years old, says, "We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church." Scripture teaches us that every believer is **ALREADY** united with Christ, and if we are united with Christ, then logically, we are united with each other. You can see this in passages like - John 17:11-26, Ephesians 4:1-16, 1 Corinthians 12:12, and Galatians 3:27-28. Listen to **1 Corinthians 12:12,**

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."

The question is, how is the church united if we don't agree on everything? The universal church is united on the "fundamental doctrines" of the faith and the centrality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which declares that we are justified by grace alone, through faith alone because of Christ alone to the glory of God alone.



B. Local Church Focused

Secondly, this passage is a "local" church directive. Pastor John MacArthur explains that the *"unity of doctrine in the local assembly of believers, **not** the spiritual unity of His universal church"* is what Paul emphasizes here.

Paul is asking the church in Corinth to eliminate the artificial lines they've drawn among themselves. Notice the language he uses – he calls them "**brothers**" and tells them to be "**united**," to all "**agree**," to be of the "**same mind**," and of the "**same judgment**."

A few more Greek words for you to consider here:

First, *katēr-tis-men-oi*, which in our ESV reads "that you be united," actually literally means "**having been knit together**." In the Greek, the word *Nous*, or "**Mind**," points to the intellect or understanding. Meanwhile, the word *ga-no-mey*, or "**Judgment**," points to their thoughts or opinions.

These are relational **AND** intellectual words. They are words that express **BOTH** affection **AND** correct doctrine. Paul is calling Corinth to love **AND** think together.

C. Local Church is United in Love and Doctrine

Finally, These words point to consideration, communication, and, especially, taking *multiple* things and making *one* thing.

Paul wants the Corinthians to think about and then agree, in their thinking, around the foundational Gospel truths that they had already testified to believing.



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Beloved, if you can't agree on every bit of doctrine, agree on loving each other and putting unity before being 100% right about everything. Be agreed on the most important things, and be willing to disagree on things of less importance.

This passage we're covering today is one of the main reasons that here at Highlands we talk so much about the Creeds and Confessions. In fact, if you go to our website and click on the "about" page, you'll find a handful of useful links that outline many of our core beliefs and views of the teachings of Scripture. You'd see things like the London Baptist Confession of Faith 1689, the Baptist Catechism, the Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Chalcedonian Definition, and more.

Why? Why would we directly point to things that might "divide" us from others?

As Paul explains here in 1st Corinthians, it is **vital** for the local church to be united **AND** be of the same mind and judgment regarding what Scripture teaches.

At the end of the letter to the Romans, Paul tells the church in Rome to **Romans 16:17-18, "watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive."**

The "doctrine" they'd been "taught" was everything Paul had just covered in Romans. Paul is not saying to avoid Christians who may not know or assent to everything he'd just covered in Romans, but to **avoid people who "cause divisions" and "create obstacles" over the doctrines in Romans.**



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The Apostle was stressing that **disunity of doctrine will weaken a local church and destroy true unity.**

The Creeds and Confessions allow us to avoid divisions and strife because members can clearly see that the church consistently teaches the Bible as a whole and that our articulated beliefs come directly from Scripture. It also highlights when members cause divisions or strife over beliefs held by the body.

According to Scripture, agreement in the local body looks like this: when we confess the whole counsel of God with a godly spirit of unity in the essentials, liberty in non-essentials, and love in all things.

So, church, be united and have the same mind and judgment because...

"A church united in humility and love, displays God's Power through the Gospel."

But why does Paul have to appeal to them not to be divided? Worldly wisdom had brought division into their church.

2. Worldly "Wisdom" brings Division

Look with me to verses 11 and 12,

11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers.

12 What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ."



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If you find yourself judging the church at Corinth, consider the culture around us today. So many people are hoping and trying to become "influencers." Social media is filled with thousands of people competing for the interest and attention of their neighbors, and almost everyone who uses social media has their favorites. The religious fervor with which otherwise unreligious Americans pay attention to their favorite entertainers gives new meaning to the "cult of personality."

To make matters worse, the church is not immune from this either. The internet is flooded with people who doggedly follow their favorite "Christian influencers," whether they be Pastors, theologians, pundits, or entertainers. At times, these factions will even come into conflict, and you'll see so-called Christians treat each other so poorly it would make the Apostle Paul threaten to pull the car over.

The church in America has much in common with the church in Corinth.

The truth is that people love following leaders. Maybe it's part of that sin-sick, heart-bent towards idolatry, but we still suffer with the same malady we see here in Corinth.

Pride. Proverbs 13:10 tells us, *"By pride comes nothing but strife..."* and we can see this is the case in Corinth.

The Corinthians were FIGHTING about the men who were leading them. They used Paul, Apollos, Peter, and even our Lord as proxies for their fleshly pride.

You might imagine one brother standing up and saying, "C'mon son! I'm an OG original. I joined up and was baptized when Paul first got here!"

And then someone coming behind him, wearing their Apollos ERAS t-shirt and friendship bracelets, and saying, "Oh my goodness, isn't



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Apollos, just the best preacher you've ever heard? His preaching is so original; it's no wonder all the other preachers are jealous of him!"

Maybe it's a Jewish convert who rises next and takes hold of his lapel and says, "I'm so thankful that I'm not as petty or Gentile as any of you. Peter is our best leader, and we should be more like the church in Jerusalem."

Or finally, in comes the Corinthian 'Milton,' wearing his suspenders and pushing up his glasses before "Jesus Juking" and saying, "Well, **ACKSHUALLY**, I'm with Jesus."

These prideful Corinthians had split into factions and, in so doing, were putting the entire church at risk.

While we can't be sure what the factions were saying, Paul is not happy about any of it. The Corinthians had listened to these faithful men and the message of freedom they preached, but instead of boasting only in Jesus and the Gospel, they ignored the message and focused on the messengers as a way to puff themselves up.

It's disgraceful, which should remind us of another Proverb. **Proverbs 11:2 "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom."**

Again, don't be smug; we are no better, and this is a trap we can easily fall into as well. Take a moment to consider the last time you let pride carry you away.

I'm sure no one here has ever treated their spouse like one of those political debate videos - where some famous pundit "**DESTROYS**" an ignorant college kid? Where you're arguing, and you finally prove them wrong, before lording it over them for days on end?



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Maybe you're as smart as Dave Ramsey regarding your money, and you just can't understand why some people can't manage their incomes better. Or perhaps you're killin' it at the gym lately, and you can bench way more than your workout partner, so you call him something mean, like "toothpick arms?"

Or maybe you're a parent who has warned their teenager multiple times about not waiting until the last minute to do their work. Then, one day, they come to you with tears in their eyes to say they did it again, and this time it cost them. They failed a class. Did you respond with a prideful, "I told you so?"

Maybe it's just me who struggles with pride, but somehow I doubt it.

The Corinthians' sinful bent had taken something good – the gracious teaching of these loving men of God and twisted it until it threatened to divide and destroy their church.

It's this sinful division that Paul is about to come down on – hard. Let's look back at our text in verse 13:

13 Is Christ divided?

Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.)

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.



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Paul plays with the language, connecting verse 13 back with verse 10. Earlier, he called on the Corinthians to "knit themselves together." Now he's demanding to know if the Savior had been carved apart and different pieces distributed to these groups. It's an extreme image meant to cause discomfort and shock.

No, Jesus has not been split into parts! Jesus is One! He can never be divided, and Paul's point is, neither should His people.

Ephesians 4:5 says, *"There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."*

The Corinthians weren't just dividing themselves by splitting up into factions; they were implying that there was a division between the faithful ministers who had been teaching them. They were positioning Paul against Apollos, against Peter, and even against our Lord. But Paul will not allow it. There is only one gospel, and it cannot be divided, which Paul explained in Galatians chapter 1:

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the Gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed."



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After shocking them by asking if they had divided up the Savior, Paul follows quickly with two more rapid-fire rhetorical questions aimed at chastising his audience. **"Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"** Of course not. Paul now alludes to two of the most impactful images for the Christian – the cross and the waters of baptism.

In their pride, the Corinthians were seemingly in danger of starting new religions based on their wrongheaded view of their own baptisms. Instead of rejoicing in Christ's sacrifice on the cross or rejoicing in the God who had plunged them 'neath that flood and cleansed them of their guilty stains, making them white as snow, the Corinthians had taken their eyes off heaven and set their sights on men of dust.

Church, are your eyes fixed above? Or do you too get caught staring at creation instead of the Creator? Let us not boast in men but in the cross, where our Savior was crucified for us.

Paul's frustration is so heavy that, as we read, it may feel like he is minimizing baptism. He's not. Instead, he's grateful that he didn't baptize much in Corinth because he recognizes that it could have worsened the problem.

These people were boasting not of their salvation and baptism but of **WHO** baptized them. Paul wants them to realize that we are not baptized into Paul, Apollos, or Cephas! We belong to Christ alone, and His Gospel is all that truly matters.



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17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Remember that in Acts 9:15 our Lord personally commissioned Paul to preach the Gospel after He blinded him on the road to Damascus. *"Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel."*

While every believer is called to obey and be baptized, Paul's charge was to carry the gospel to the world because it is God's Wisdom in the gospel message that changes hearts and leads lost sinners home.

3. God's Wisdom Brings Unity

Truly, it's God's wisdom that brings unity, because only the Gospel message, or "the cross of Christ," has the power to save!

Paul will repeat the last part of verse 17, this idea of not speaking well, a few more times as we move forward in both 1st and 2nd Corinthians. It could be humility or an allusion to Apollos' renown as an orator, but I think that what Paul is doing here is highlighting the fact that only the gospel has the power to save sinners. Because as 1 Corinthians 1:25 says, *"...the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."*

Remember, all the problems with the church in Corinth that we've covered today have revolved around their pride in their religious connections. Paul's point here is that all of this is useless without the gospel!



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Baptism is important. Baptism without the gospel is useless. A brilliant and wise argument about why you should believe is good. But without the gospel, it's useless.

Your intellect can't save you, your talents can't save you, your politics can't save you, your work ethic can't save you, your sense of humor can't save you, your personality can't save you, your good looks can't save you, your family can't save you, your friends can't save you, your teachers can't save you, your church can't save you. You can't try hard enough, be good enough, or fake it till you make it. ONLY THE GOSPEL CAN SAVE YOU. ONLY THE GOSPEL.

So, what is the Gospel that Paul preached?

First, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this world, lived a sinless life, died an unjust death for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the third day, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies. In this way, He made reconciliation with God possible. (1 Corinthians 15:1-11)

1 Corinthians 15:3-5 "...Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures."

Secondly, salvation is a gift from God, received by grace through faith in Christ, not by works of the law (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:21-28). Justification comes through trusting in Jesus' atoning work, not through our efforts.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast."



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Third, the gospel is for all people – it breaks down ethnic and cultural barriers (Romans 1:16; Galatians 3:28). Christ's sacrifice makes salvation accessible to everyone who believes.

Romans 1:16 "16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Fourth, believers are **united with Christ**, transformed by the Holy Spirit, and called to live holy lives (Romans 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17). We are free from the power of sin and called to live for God's glory.

Romans 6:4 "4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

Fifth, we have a great hope because Jesus **is** coming back; we **will** be resurrected as He was, and God's eternal kingdom **will** be established (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-24).

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 "13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord."



1 Corinthians 1:10-17 "Man's Wisdom Divides but God's Wisdom Unites"

Wk. 3 First Corinthians "Uncommon Sense: God's Wisdom over

Man's Pride through a Flawed Church."

By Pastor Onan Coca May 11, 2025

This is the Gospel, and it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, but it's also what makes unity in the church possible, And... **Main Point: "A church united in humility and love, displays God's Power through the Gospel."**

[CALL TO OBEY]

In our Call to Obey today,- I want you to consider "How to Promote Unity" at Highlands.

1. **Read Your Bible Every Day** – On this topic, John MacArthur said, "The only source (for this kind of) unity is God's Word, which establishes the standard of truth on which true unity rests."

John 17:14-19

"14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."

2. **Be Humble** – If pride is disgraceful and brings strife, it's opposite, humility, brings peace and harmony.

Romans 12:16 "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight."

Philippians 2:3 "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."



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If you want to live in unity and peace with your brothers and sisters, humble yourself and put them first.

3. Be Loving – 1 Peter 4:8 says, "Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins."

Knowing that people are sinners and that relationships are messy, we must be prepared to let love cover a multitude of sins. In so doing, we will reap the rewards of friendship and unity.

Colossians 3:12-15 "12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."

4. Prioritize the Gospel – Lastly, follow Paul's example in First Corinthians and prioritize the gospel. The gospel calls us all to repentance and faith; we need to read it, hear it, and preach it constantly. Remember that the power of the gospel is not in eloquence or persuasion but in Christ crucified—foolishness to the world, but to us who are being saved, the power of God.

Ephesians 2:1,4-5, 13-16, 19-22

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins... But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together** with Christ—by grace you have been saved... now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself



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is our peace, who has **made us both one** and has **broken down** in his flesh **the dividing wall** of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself **one new man in place of the two**, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might **reconcile** us both to God in **one body** through the cross, thereby killing the hostility... So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and **members of the household** of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being **joined together**, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being **built together** into a **dwelling place** for God by the Spirit.

So church, let us heed Paul's appeal, knitting ourselves together in humility, love, and the unchanging truth of the Gospel, so that we may stand as one body, united in Christ, reflecting His glory to a divided world.

Let us pray.

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]



[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

Elder – "Christians, what do you believe?"

Congregation - recites the Apostle's Creed.

**I believe in God the Father, Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
Born of the virgin Mary;
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell.
The third day He arose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven;
And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
The holy catholic church; the communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body;
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

[BENEDICTION]

[RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY]

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible

John MacArthur's Bible Commentary

["What is a Reformed Baptist"](#) by Tom Hicks

["The Three Forms of Baptist Unity"](#) G3 Press

["Advancing Christian Unity"](#) by Anthony Burgess

["Duties of Christian Fellowship"](#) by John Owen