

# UNITY HIS PLAN

*Memory Verse: "And over all these virtues, put on love which is the bond of perfect unity." - Colossians 3:14*

## Overview

In today's study on Unity, we will look at God's plan for His creation and how it impacts the way we live. Is our culture familiar with these concepts, and how might that affect our part to play in His story.

## Key Verse

"as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth."

- Ephesians 1:10



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1

If you haven't already, spend a few minutes praying, inviting the Holy Spirit into your conversations.

2

Read Eph 1:9-10 (try using different translations). What stands out to you about this passage? How significant is unity in light of this passage? Why? Does this change anything for you?

When Paul wrote his letters to the Churches, they would have been received and understood as a group, a body, and only then internalised as individuals. 'You' would be plural, not singular. We often read the Bible with a singular perspective first and then how we relate to the rest of the body after.

3

In light of the above, how might this impact unity? What does it show about our culture today? Do you resonate with this? How do we see unity/disunity in the world? How do we see unity/disunity in the Church?

4

Read Eph 2:12-22. In light of this passage, why is unity so essential? If we are united in Christ because of what He did on the cross, is it okay to keep those we disagree with at arm's length? Having been brought into a new household, how might our experience of family impact the way we treat our new family? Knowing the importance of unity, what might look different for you?

## APPLICATION



1

### Thinking

What is the main thing you have learnt or been reminded of in today's study?

2

### Doing

How are you going to apply what you've learnt?

3

### Committing

Commit to keep each other accountable in your application. Be ready to share the next time you meet.

4

### Praying

Close this study in prayer, thanking God and asking Him for help, strength, and wisdom.

# UNITY

## UNITY AND DIVERSITY

*Memory Verse: "And over all these virtues, put on love which is the bond of perfect unity." - Colossians 3:14*

### Overview

In the last study we looked at the importance of unity and how God's plan is to unite all things in Jesus. What has changed for you since then? Was it difficult/helpful?

Today we're going to explore the value in diversity and how it can actually strengthen our unity.

### Key Verses

"For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

- Romans 12:4-5



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2

Read out the Key Verses (try using different translations). What stands out to you from this? How does the body analogy help us understand the unity God wants? Why do we sometimes prefer uniformity over diversity?

We're all made in the image of God but look different and have different interests, likes, dislikes, personalities, and so on. Sin wants to use our differences to cause conflict. However, if each individual is an image bearer of God, we can stand against sin by allowing someone's differences to teach us something beautiful about God's nature.

3

Read 1 Cor 12:12-26. We often think of this passage in light of our own Church body. What could things look like if we extended it to the wider body in our town, city, or even our nation? What stops us from working with other parts of the wider body in our locations?

Within a marriage, two worlds merge into one. A healthy marriage will keep conversing until it grows and moves forward together.

4

Sometimes you sacrifice, sometimes you compromise and vice versa. Why? Because you love each other. Read John 13:35 and Col 3:14. We've been made one in Christ, but we bring our worlds into it. How can we begin to grow and move forwards as one (Read 1 Peter 3:8)? Do you have practical examples to share?

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## Jesus' Example

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### Overview

In the last study we looked at how diversity can actually enhance unity, but also some of the challenges we face in it. What did you apply from that study? Was it helpful/difficult?

In this study, we're going to look at the unity Jesus had with His Father, and what we can learn from Him.

### Key Verse

"I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—"

- John 17:22



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Read out the Key Verse. What is the glory we are given (use Rom 8:16-17 to help)? In what ways is Jesus one with His Father? How is that similar/different to our oneness with each other? Use John 17:26 to aid your discussion.

Jesus often spoke of His Father carrying out His work through Jesus, as though it wasn't Jesus doing it but it was His Father (John 14:10). This wasn't a metaphorical way to share that Jesus was doing what His Father wanted; he truly believed that His Father was at work through Him. They were so united that it was the work of both in and through Jesus' actions.

3

How does the above help you understand Phil 2:12-13? Does this give you a greater understanding of 'oneness' with God? Share why.

4

Read John 14:9-10. Jesus and His Father were so united that when others saw Jesus, they saw His Father. Our unity with others flows from our unity with God. Does your life reflect your unity with God to others? Do they see Jesus, and through Jesus, the Father, when they see you? How can you learn from Jesus in this?

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# UNITY

## Our Beliefs

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### Overview

In the last study we saw how Jesus' unity with His Father is an example for us to mirror. What's changed for you? Has it been helpful/difficult?

In today's study we'll look at one of the biggest causes of disunity amongst the body - our beliefs. How can we approach this area?

### Key Verse

"Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind."

- 1 Peter 3:8



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Read out the Key Verse (try using different translations). We often put the most essential part at the start or the end, but notice Paul's pattern of A, B, C, B, A. What do you think Paul's most important part is? What might he be trying to tell us?

When Jesus called the disciples to follow Him, they had different perspectives, opinions and worldviews; some were from entirely opposing sides. That didn't change the instant they followed Jesus, but they were united because it was about Him first, not their views. There was space to grow and learn. Their disagreements never split them; it led them to seek Jesus together.

3

Read 1 Cor 1:10; Phil 2:2; Rom 16:17-18; 1 Tim 6:3-5. What do you think 'unity of mind' means? Should we stop loving those who don't share our mindset? How do we hold the tension between these scriptures? It can be quicker and easier to write people off if their views differ, but what might look different if we applied our Key Verse?

4

What do you think are the minimum requirements to become a Christian? Read Rom 10:9-13; John 3:16; 1 Cor 15:1-4; Eph 2:8-9; Luke 22:39-43. Look back at the paragraph above point 3. They didn't know He was the Messiah, but at some point along the way, their eyes were opened. Unity of mind comes as we grow together, but we're already united in Christ.

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