

The 12th Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, September 1, 2019

“Kingdom Principles: The Law of Unity”

John 17:20-26

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:27-28)

All those who have been baptized in Christ have been _____ with Him and with each other. And all those things that used to _____ us: nation, race, ethnicity, language, gender, social economic status—no longer _____—because we are _____ in Him.

“I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that *they will all be one*, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you...May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.” (John 17:20-23)

“Then the Lord God said; ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.’” (Genesis 2:18)

“His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.” (Ephesians 1:5)

God formed us for _____ and created us for _____.

“I am writing to you so you will know how to live in the family of God. That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth.” (1 Timothy 3:14)

Church = *ecclesia* =

Church is not:

Church is _____. It brings _____ people together. One of the primary purposes of the Church is to connect people to _____ and each other.

“Since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other and each of us needs all the others.” (Romans 12:5)

Paul chose the body—an _____, _____ image to describe what

it means to be the Church. We _____ to each other—just like the hand belongs to the foot—as fellow believers, we are _____, _____, and _____.

Relationship can be hindered by the fact that we can become so _____, so over-committed, and involved in other things, that we have little or no time to _____ to our church family.

***Koinonia* =**

- **What role does community play in your life?**
- **What are your primary relationships?**
- **Have there been times when you have felt alone or lonely?**
- **How do you view the Church?**
- **Why is being part of a Christian community important to you?**
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WHY COMMUNITY IS SO IMPORTANT

#1. Community is the place where we _____.
No one of us is _____ to challenge and adversity. God intended that we be supported, _____, and _____ through the community of believers and the fellowship that we have with each other.

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

“How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me...” (Philippians 4:10)

“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. . . If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:12, 26)

When we’re _____ by trials, heartaches and the burdens of life we, too, need to be strengthened and encouraged by fellow believers. God, in His mercy and love, has chosen to come to us through _____.

“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

“This is my command: Love each other.” (John 15:17)

- **What have been the difficult times in your life?**
- **How has your Christian community supported you?**
- **How have you supported others during their trials and challenges?**
- **What is one way that you can grow in this area?**
- **How do you seek to strengthen and support the people in this place?**

#2. Community is the place where we _____.

“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.” (1 Peter 4:10)

God never meant for us to go it _____—your gifts, talents, and abilities are meant to _____ mine.

“Two people are better than one, because they get more done by working together.” (Ecclesiastes 4:10)

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?” (1 Corinthians 12:27)

When we come together as church and _____ our gifts talents, and abilities, the _____ is strengthened. Everyone has a _____ to play, and no one ministry is more _____ than the other. _____ we can make a significant difference for God and His kingdom—if everybody commits to doing their _____.

- **What gifts and talents has God given you?**
- **How do you use these gifts to build up the wider community?**
- **How have you benefitted from the gifts and talents of others?**
- **What is one way that you can grow in this area?**
- **How do you seek to love and serve the people in his place?**

#3. Community is the place where we are _____.

“Only fools trust what they think alone.” (Proverbs 28:26)

It’s so easy to be convinced that we’re _____, even when we’re wrong—it’s so easy to step off the path and travel in the wrong _____ without even knowing it. The community of faith is crucial to our well-being because it’s a source of much needed guidance, direction and sometimes even, _____.

“You shall guide me with your counsel.” (Psalm 73:24)

God yearns to guide us _____ through our lives, sparing us wrong turns and _____ paths.

“God’s intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known.” (Ephesians 3:10)

God wants to guide us with His _____ and through His _____ in the community of faith. God gives us _____ for the journey as we study His Word and pray together.

This guidance is essential to our _____, especially in today’s world where right and wrong have become blurred and _____ is restricted to what works best for me. This highly individualized, highly subjective approach to living, is _____ with community and fellowship, and the exact opposite of what God has called us to be in the world.

“In a multitude of counsellors there is safety.” (Proverbs 11:14)

- **How have you benefitted from the wisdom of others?**
- **How have you shared the wisdom that God has give you?**
- **Have you ever struggled to walk the path of faith? What tempts you or threatens to pull you from Christ’s path?**
- **What is one way that you can grow in this area?**
- **How do you provide guidance and support to the people in this place?**



Living in Christian community isn’t without it’s challenges and _____, and the church has not always been the _____ or safest place to be because were human and we’re imperfect. However, the mark of true fellowship isn’t the _____ of conflict or difficulties, but the _____ of compassion and love; forgiveness and reconciliation, in the midst of those difficulties and frustrations.

Despite the risk, Jesus calls us to be _____ with each other, and instead of walking away from community when we feel hurt or betrayed, to choose to stay and work it out together. And despite the busyness of our lives, Jesus calls to make church a _____—to show up—to reach out and make an unwavering _____ to each other and to a community where we’re strengthened, equipped for ministry, and receive wisdom and support.

You were created for community and formed for family. What role does fellowship with this church community play in your life and faith?