

## **Week Three: "Costly Unity"**

### **Day One: "Unity: Gift and Work"**

**Read:** Ephesians 4:3-6

**Reflect:** How does a diverse church become unified?

In your experience, what are the main ingredients of unity?

**Dig:** Is unity a gift of the Holy Spirit or a result of human effort - or both?

Since the Bible is written to the Ephesians as a letter, with a flow of thought, how is verse 3 connected to the thought of verse 2?

What does the word "keep" in verse 3 tell you about whether unity is first a gift or a result of effort?

How much effort are we supposed to exert for the sake of unity?

**Apply:** What effort (prayer, kind words, email, notes, service - something specific) is God calling you to make to preserve unity?

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### **Day Two: "Unity of the Spirit"**

**Read:** Ephesians 4:3-6

**Reflect:** Why does the Spirit, in your opinion, love to work where there is unity?

**Dig:** How often is "the Spirit" mentioned in verses 3-6?

How is this unity described in verse 13 of this chapter?

What "bond of peace" do we find in Ephesians 2:14-18?

What groups needed the Spirit's gift of unity?

**Apply:** The appropriate response to being called (Ephesians 4:1) into the situation of Peace and reconciliation created by the gospel is to live a life of peace and reconciliation. Who do you need to forgive?

With whom is God calling you to reconcile?

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### **Day Three: "Unity: Based in Trinity"**

**Read:** Ephesians 4:3-6

**Reflect:** When you think about the mystery of the Christian teaching of the Trinity (One God in three persons), what is the first thought that comes to your mind?

**Dig:** How many times is the word "one" used in this section (verses 3-6)?

Why might that be significant?

Why might the author (Paul) tie church unity to the Trinity?

Note that all three persons of the Trinity are mentioned. Paul used "body" imagery for the church. How does the use of that image strengthen his call to unity? See 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.

If the Trinity is the basis of our calling to unity, how must we act toward each other in order to give others an accurate picture of our Triune God?

**Apply:** Sing a Trinitarian song (out loud if possible) to conclude your worship time.

Suggestion:

*"Father, I adore you, lay my life before you, how I love you."*

*"Jesus, I adore you..."*

*"Spirit I adore you..."*

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**Day Four: "Unity: Practiced and Everyday"**

**Read: Ephesians 4:3-6**

**Reflect:** How is unity in the church expressed other than during our worship times?

**Dig:** Moving back to verse 2, notice that the last two words of that verse are "in love". The Greek word for this kind of love, which is costly and self-sacrificing, is agape.

Look up 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. What does this passage from 1 Corinthians and Ephesians 4:3-6 have in common?

The Spirit is mentioned twice in Ephesians 4:3-6. He is also mentioned in Ephesians 4:29-30.

What do we do to the heart of the Holy Spirit when we practice disunity?

What do our mouths and the way we use them have to do with unity?

**Apply:** How can you use your tongue today to build up unity?

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**Day Five: Memory Work**

**Step One: Read aloud Ephesians 4:1-2**

**Step Two: Recite from memory Ephesians 4:1-2**

**Step Three: Read aloud verses Ephesians 4:3-6**

**Step Four: Recite from memory Ephesians 4:1-6**