

Week 6 Prayer Guide Unity of Heart and Mind



Last week we prayed for our leaders, and ourselves, to be yielded to God so that they could be guided and empowered by the Spirit. There is something else that we need in order to be able to move forward.

God calls his people to live in unity with one another, so it is important to make every effort to live together in harmony with everyone. Regardless of beliefs and differences, God commands us to do all in love.

Life is messy, relationships are messy. Times of stress can strain relationships and we end up hurting each other and destroying the unity we have worked hard for. Satan's goal is to destroy our unity. Let's fight together toward living in peace and harmony. God has given us the ability to be patient, kind, and loving through actions and words. Scriptures remind us that it is our responsibility as Christians to lead the way for unity among all nations and people.

Day 1

Read: The verses below

John 17: 20-23 I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. ²¹ 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. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

²² “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. ²³ I am in them and you are in me. 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.

Romans 15: 5-6 - May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Think/Meditate:

- What does God desire in the church and why? Before it can be in the church, where must it be?
- What is the result of not having this unity? Do we care?

Pray:

- Pray for God's empowerment for yourself and others that we may take the seeking of unity seriously throughout our Church.

Day 2

Read: The verses below

Romans 14:19 - So then, let us aim for unity in the church and try to build each other up.

Philippians 2:3 - Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.

Acts 4:32 - All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.

Colossians 3:13 - Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

Think/Meditate:

- Why is unity so hard?
- What makes it particularly hard for you at times?
- Are you willing to seek it?

Pray:

- Pray for God's empowerment for yourself and others that we may seek unity.

Day 3

Read: The verses below:

John 13:34 - So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

1 John 4:20 - If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?

Colossians 3: 13-14 Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

1 Peter 3:8 - Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude.

Think/Meditate:

- What comes before unity? Why do you think that this is? Why is this so important?
- What makes it particularly hard for you to love some people at times?

Pray:

- Pray for God's empowerment for yourself and others that we may seek genuine love for others.... Even if we don't like them!

Day 4 and Beyond

Read one or two of the small sections below and think and pray about them.

i. God Loves Unity

Psalm 133

A song for pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem. A psalm of David.

1 How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony!

*2 For harmony is as precious as the anointing oil
that was poured over Aaron's head, that ran down his beard
and onto the border of his robe.*

*3 Harmony is as refreshing as the dew from Mount Hermon that falls on the mountains of Zion.
And there the Lord has pronounced his blessing,
even life everlasting.*

Even though unity is difficult and life is busy, God desires unity. If God desires unity we must work hard toward that goal!

ii. Division Hurts the Church – the Body of Christ

Titus 3:10 - As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him.

Romans 16:17 - I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

Matthew 7:1-5 - Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can

you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Galatians 6:1 - Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.

Division resulting from purposeful complaining, desires for revenge, and a need to control others, is sadly not missing from the church at times. We need to recognize and deal with wrongful division while at the same time being extremely careful to not think that we are superior or that we don't need to love and restore the one whom we may be creating problems.

iii. We Are One Body and Need Unity

Romans 12:4-5 - For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (NASB)

God can and does use our division for His glory. He has given us different gifts. He has given us different backgrounds and personalities. The enemy can also use it to quench the spirit and destroy our testimony – if we don't handle it well.

iv. What breaks the Unity in the Church?

Ephesians 4: 1-3 - Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The problem is that the church is full of humans who fall short daily. Unity in the Church requires a community that is working together- setting aside the preferences of the individual in order to reach for the Kingdom of God!

v. Part of the Role of Leaders is to Help People Mature in Unity

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

If God has given us leaders, we need to pray for them, and support them, and remind them of their calling.

vi. Remember... Preferences are Deadly!

Philippians 1:27 - Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

We each have preferences – (how we worship, , how we share the gospel, when we take communion, when the church should meet, what church priorities should be, etc.). We can be quick to assume that when things don't go according to our preferences we can't stay.

Further when we are not happy about things we often voice our opinion (planting seeds of doubt in others) to God urges us to fight back against the enemy's strategy and to pray for unity.