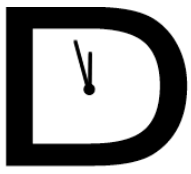


# DECISION

## *Devotion*

### ***4. Devotion to Church Unity***

*December 1, 2009*



DECISION

# Devotion to Church Unity

*To be devoted to church unity is to honour the final wishes of our savior.  
To be devoted to church unity is to love the church like Jesus loves her.*

## Key Verse: Romans 15:5

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,”

## John 17:20-26

Background:

Jesus is reaching the end of his life. He knows he will be arrested, tried, tortured, and executed within a few hours.

Having spent countless nights at prayer and communion with his Father, he spends one last night speaking with his Father.

He prays for, what would seem to be the most important things to Him: (1) His calling, vv. 1-5, (2) His leaders, vv. 6-19, (3) all future believers, vv. 20-26. That’s us! *So what is His prayer for us? Read John 17:20-26.*

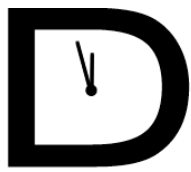
<sup>20</sup>“My prayer is not for them alone [his disciples]. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup>that **all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are **in me** and **I am in you**. May they also be **in us** so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup>I have given them the glory that you gave me, that **they may be one as we are one**: <sup>23</sup>**I in them** and **you in me**. May they be brought to **complete unity** to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. <sup>24</sup>“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. <sup>25</sup>“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me **may be in them** and that **I myself may be in them**.”

Paul picked up on the importance of this and expanded on what it means to be one, to be in unity.

Romans 12:1-21      14:1-8, 19-21      15:1-7

*What are some things that build unity?*

*What are some things that break unity?*



DECISION

3. Breakaway Group Discussion – December 1, 2009

# Devotion to Church Unity

## What **builds** unity?

**Common Identity** – eg. flag, patriotism, identity in Christ.

Read Ephesians 1:1-14 – Note how many times “us” is found there? How many times is “in Him” found?

Given that this scripture defines our identity in Christ, how should that change how we treat other believers?

*Q. How does our spiritual identity help to build unity within the church?*

### **Common Purpose**

Background: Almost all the Kings that came after David sinned and God judged them by sending the people of Israel into exile. Nehemiah is an important servant for the Babylonian King and desires to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the city walls and bring honour to Israel again. The King agrees.

Nehemiah 4:6 Ezra 3:1 Nehemiah 8:1 Amos 3:3

*Q. What common purpose do you have with someone or group of people?*

*Q. What would it be without that purpose?*

### **Common Worship**

Psalm 55:14 Malachi 3:16

*Q. How can worshipping together build unity?*

**Other:**

## What **breaks** unity?

**Injustice** (taking advantage of one another)

Nehemiah 5:4-8 Acts 6:1-4

*Q. How does this happen today?*

*Q. How can we avoid or remedy it?*

### **Pride, Selfish Ambition**

Psalm 49:11-13

2 Samuel 18:18 – Absalom, King David’s son, tried to take the kingdom from David, but God crushed him in favour of David.

*Q. How often does this cause division?*

*Q. Is it easy to spot? Is it easy to remedy?*

### **Disagreements, Misunderstandings**

Acts 11:1-4, 18 – Background: Jewish Christians didn’t think non-Jewish people could enjoy the same faith as them. This almost caused much division in the church. They openly dealt with it and unity was maintained.

*Q. How much should we all agree on things?*

*Q. Is it good to agree to disagree once in while?*

*Q. What balance should we take?*

**Other:**