



**Warm up question:** How important is unity to you personally? How can unity benefit you in your workplace, friendships, and family?

**Prayer Focus:** Help us to learn to walk in a way that preserves unity.

**Ask the following Thought & Discussion Questions giving plenty of time for discussion.**

1. If unity is so universally praised, what stops us from being united? What is so challenging about unity?
2. In Jesus' prayer, in John 17:20-23, he points out that if we were united as He and the Father were united the world would know that Jesus had been sent into the world. Do you believe that? How does unity teach outsiders about Jesus?
3. What lesson about God's thoughts on unity (from what we read in Ephesians) particularly strike you? Why is our unity so important to God? Do you work for unity as much as He does?
4. Read Psalm 133 as a group. What do you think of the imagery the psalmist uses to illustrate the goodness of unity? What is the significance of the threefold repetition of the phrase *coming down*(NASB) in verses 2 and 3? What role does God play in **our** unity?
5. Discuss together what the character traits from Ephesians 4:1-3 mean:
  - a. Humility and gentleness
  - b. Patience and tolerance
  - c. Unity preserving diligence
6. Answer these two questions as you ponder each character trait mentioned in the last question: How would this trait help me play my part in preserving unity? How can I better demonstrate this trait in my everyday life?

**This Week:** Pray that God would grant us unity in His Spirit and look for ways to walk in humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance, love, and diligence every day.

**Close by singing:** Blest be the Tie

1. Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.

2. Before our Father's throne  
We pour our ardent prayers  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
Our comforts and our cares.

3. We share our mutual woes  
Our mutual burdens bear  
And often for each other flows  
A sympathizing tear

4. When we asunder part  
It gives us inward pain  
But we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again.

## Embodying the Fullness of Jesus Christ

### Ephesians 4:1-3

Growing to be more like Christ is goal number one in the Christian walk, that's why we call ourselves Christians. But there is only one way for us to truly attain to the fullness of Christ, and that is through being apart of Christ's body (the Church) and being united (Ephesians 1:22-23). Jesus himself prayed to God about you and me being united in John 17:20-23; not only was he concerned about unity's importance to those who would follow after him, but did you catch **why** it would be so pivotal for us? The answer lies in verses 21 and 23—*that the world may know that You sent Me*.

As we survey the first three chapters of the letter to the Ephesians, this ideal of a unified church is held up by the Holy Spirit, as He writes through Paul, so that we can meditate on it.

Ephesians 1:9-10—*to bring unity to all things in heaven and earth under Christ.*

Ephesians 1:22-23—*...gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

Ephesians 2:14-18—*He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace...*

Ephesians 2:19-22—*the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.*

Ephesians 3:17-19—*...may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ...*

Psalms 133—*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!*

As great and motivating as it is to look into how important unity is to our savior, we are still left with the most difficult question about unity—**How?** How can we attain to that standard of unity? The rest of the letter to the Ephesians focuses on answering this question for us in practical terms, but we will just examine the first 3 verses of chapter 4.

Ephesians 4:1-3—To be unified we are going to have to learn how to walk all over again.

1. Learn to walk in humility and gentleness
2. Learn to walk in patience and tolerance, in love
3. Learn to walk in preserving diligence