

Sunday, June 25, 2017 - "Unity & Credibility" - Doug Kempton

Key Passages: John 17:20-23, Acts 6:1-7

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

Main Ideas

- In John 17 Jesus prays for Himself...then his disciples...then all who will believe (that's us)
- Glory = the unspoken manifestation of God & through Jesus we have this
- Brokenness all around but God wants us to Step into it as he revives the world
- **4 Unity Truths** from past two weeks (1. We ARE united 2. We sabotage our unity when we hold onto any identity marker above Christ 3. The Spirit of God moves through out unity 4. Our unity makes God know)
- **The Credibility of the Gospel rides on whether we are united or not**
- "God is most glorified when we are most unified"
- Matt 24:27 says that people group will be against people group and worldview/ideology will be against worldview/ideaology
  - Our eyes are trained to see contrast
  - John 17:23 - that they may become perfectly one
    - We should stand out from the world
    - The church is called to be different
- Acts 6:1-7 is a case study about how to be unified and deal with conflict (there will be conflict) as the church
  - **3 Principles for preserving unity**
    - 1) Empathy
      - No Justification for bad behavior
      - No excuses
      - no dismissal of feelings or hurt
      - Unity happens when we learn to listen to one another
    - 2) Solidarity
      - The leaders brought together the entire church
      - When we stand in solidarity against injustice everyone wins
    - 3) Action
      - We still have to do something (not like the leaders in Acts said "We're sorry that's hard for you, good luck with that)
      - We are empowered to bring and be part of the solution
- In the church in Acts Jesus prayers in John 17 were answered
- We are called to be perfectly one and to make God know through our unity as the church

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. Which of the 4 unity principles is affecting the way you think about unity the most? explain why
2. When was a time you saw unity OR disunity in the church affect the credibility of the Gospel?
3. How is God calling you to grow in the area of empathy?
4. How is God calling you to grow in the area of solidarity?
5. How is God calling you to grow in taking action for unity?
6. How is God asking you to be an active participant in the unity that Jesus prayed for in John 17?
7. What is God inviting you into as a result of this passage or sermon?

**\*\*15 Minutes with God Reading Plan-**

**Mon: Matthew 23 Tues: Matthew 24 Wed: Matthew 25 Thurs: Matthew 26 Fri: Matthew 27**

**\*\*5 Minutes Reading/5 Minutes Writing/5 Minutes Praying**