

## A United Church in a Divided World      John 17

What divides people in our world today? **Everything!**

- *The setting of the thermostat divides co-workers at the office!*
- *Who does what chores inside/outside of the house divides a family!*
- *Choosing a color for kitchen cabinets divides a marriage!*
- *What we believe about the function of government divides countries!*
- *What political stance we take on certain issues divides a nation!*
- *What we believe the Bible teaches (our doctrine) divides churches!*
- *How we handle the sin in our lives, & in the lives of others, divides us all!*

Division, misunderstanding & separation are **inevitable** in this broken world.

We too are broken, and contribute to the division & disunity all around us!

The truth is that any sense of unity in this world, apart from a work of God in us, will always prove to be temporary & extremely fragile at best!

- *In the winter, there is a sense of unity that the heat should be on, but...*
- *When a family agrees on a weekly chore list, there is a sense unity, but...*
- *A husband & wife can agree on the color of the cabinets, but...*
- *National governments can come together to solve a world issue, but...*
- *Political parties can together sign a bill to address a national crisis, but...*
- *Churches can together declare that the Bible is the Word of God, but...*
- *We can all agree that sin has wreaked havoc on all of God's creation, but...*

How is the Church to respond to the brokenness & division in our world, when we ourselves are broken and divided too? **We pray!**

Jesus prayed for us too, & His High Priestly prayer serves as the basis of our hope to be the Church we are called to be in this world! **John 17**

Because Jesus fulfilled perfectly, what every one of us has failed to do, God has glorified the Son and given Him the authority over all things, to grant eternal life to all whom God the Father had given to Him.

Jesus can give, what we could never acquire on our own! -That is **the gospel!**

Jesus, in His coming made manifest to us the realities of the glory of God and the Kingdom of Heaven! **But He also prayed that these things would be made manifest in us as well!**

As the Church of Jesus Christ, we are not to reflect the realities of this world (brokenness & division), but the realities of God and His Heavenly Kingdom.

**But there is only one way that this is made possible, & that is for us to be one!**

Jesus is praying that we would be united with the Father through the Son, and that we would also be united with each other through the Holy Spirit!

We must deal w/our relationship to God before we can deal rightly w/each other. **"Our broken horizontal relationships, with each other, ultimately comes from our broken vertical relationship with God."** - Vermor Pierre

As the divide between God & man is dealt with thru Christ, what divides & separates us can also be overcome! **This is what Jesus meant by His prayer!**

We were made for peace & unity, not division! And it must start with our relationship with God & then extend to those around us! **Ephesians 2:13-16**

**"For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility" – Ephesians 2:14**

Jesus Christ is our **peace!**

- Because of Him, we have been forgiven by God, therefore we can forgive.
- Because we have been reconciled, we can be reconciled w/one another.
- Since our sin has been dealt with on the cross, so too has the sin of others been dealt with, therefore what divides has been & can be removed.

Because we have been made one with God, & can be one with each other, there is hope that unity is possible in this world! **The Church is that hope!**

Now don't confuse unity with uniformity! The unity between the Father and the Son did not imply "sameness", so too for the Church!

We are one body, made up of many different members, w/different functions. We can have different opinions on politics, music, clothing, doctrine, etc. but because of what Jesus has done for us, we can be united as one!

**The human body can do incredible things when it is united in purpose!  
So too, can the Church do incredible things when it is united with Christ!**

What is the world seeing in us right now? Is Jesus' prayer being fulfilled? Is the Church a bright display of the gospel in a lonely & divided world?

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