



UNITY & COMMUNITY

“We are all called to initiate involvement in each other’s lives... We covenant together to work and pray for unity, to walk together in love, to exercise care and watchfulness over each other, to faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require, to assemble together, to pray for each other, to rejoice and to bear with each other, and to pray for God’s help in all this.” 9 Marks of a Healthy Church, p. 221, Mark Dever.

“Don’t just share your struggles, and above all, don’t just commiserate with one another. Remember, we are to be ministers of grace to each other. We are to seek to be avenues of the Holy Spirit to help the other person appropriate the grace of God. Praying with and for one another, sharing applicable portions of Scripture, and helping each other submit to God’s providential dealings with us, must characterize our times together.” Transforming Grace, p. 193, Jerry Bridges.

But God’s goal is not simply to have us stop looking down on other races. God wants unity, not just a ceasing of hostilities. He wants the very makeup of His church to preach the gospel: that despite our racial variants we are united under one ancestor, Adam; that we had one problem, sin; and that we have one hope, salvation in Christ. He wants us to demonstrate to the world that this unity in Christ is weightier than anything that might divide us. When the Holy Spirit confronted Peter’s racism, he didn’t just command him to quit looking down on other races. He commanded Peter to embrace Cornelius, to go in and eat with him. Peter did not go from “racist” to “non-racist”; he went from “racist” to “gracist.” Gaining by Losing, p. 164, J. D. Greear.

“We must remember throughout our lives that in God's sight there are no little people and no little places. Only one thing is important: to be consecrated persons in God's place for us, at each moment.” Francis Schaeffer.

“We don’t come to church, to be a church. We come to Christ, and then we are built up as a church. If we come to church just to be with one another, one another is all we’ll get. And it isn’t enough. Inevitably, our hearts will grow empty, and then angry. If we put community first, we will destroy community. But if we come to Christ first and submit ourselves to Him and draw life from Him, community gets traction.” C.S. Lewis.

“Love as distinct from "being in love" is not merely a feeling. It is a deep unity, maintained by the will and deliberately strengthened by habit; reinforced by the grace which both partners ask, and receive from God. They can have this love for each other even at those moments when they do not like each other; as you love yourself even when you do not like yourself.” Mere Christianity, p. 99, C.S. Lewis.

