

## Group Resource

# Sermon Notes – Sunday, May 11, 2015

**Series:** Why Church?  
**Message:** Unity through Agreement, Part III  
**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:11-16; John 13:35

- I. In this series, we are examining God’s design for the church and the powerful impact that the church can make in this world.
- II. There are three essential areas of agreement in the church.
  - a. Agreement with God
  - b. Agreement with Delegated Leadership
  - c. Agreement with One Another
- III. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Level of Prioritized Agreement In The Church: **Agreement with One Another**
  - a. God has equipped us with the grace and strength to do the hard work of building unity through agreement with one another in the body of Christ. We shouldn’t stray away from the church because broken relationships or hurt may be possible. Instead, we should demonstrate through reconciled relationships, the power of God to triumph over every situation/circumstance.
- IV. Why is agreement with one another essential to unity and power in the body of Christ?
  - a. The Apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth (**1 Corinthians 12:12-27**) that each part of the church is essential. The Scriptures remind us that, “God has put each part just where he wants it” and the body would cease to function properly if every part of it was the same. “If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?”
- V. We have to make these confessions of faith in order for the body to be in agreement.
  - a. **God has gifted ME with a responsibility in the body of Christ that others need**
  - b. **God has gifted OTHERS in the body of Christ with things that I need.**
  - c. **God brings these giftings together to make the church healthy, growing and full of love.**
  - d. Remember the instruction in Ephesians 4:16: “As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow.”
- VI. There are over 50 verses in the New Testament that instruct us how to treat ONE ANOTHER. They deal with maintaining unity, getting along, loving each other, walking in humility with one another and how to deal with various relationships and circumstances.
- VII. In order to walk in agreement with one another in the body of Christ, there are 10 one-anothers that we should practice on a daily basis.
- VIII. **1 - Accept one another.**
  - a. *Romans 15:5-7 – 5 May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. 6 Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.*
  - b. Jesus Christ is our example of how to accept each other. While we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. Loving us as sinners does not diminish God’s desires for us to be transformed in his presence (sanctification).
  - c. Accepting one another doesn’t mean eliminating a biblical standard for holiness. Rather, it means that we welcome one another in the body of Christ no matter what stage that one might

be at in their walk with Christ. As we welcome one another, we also encourage one another to live upright, Godly lives in this present age through the strengthening of the Holy Spirit.

- d. The Scriptures instruct us that believers are called to accept those who are different from us. In James 2:2-9, the Apostle reminds us that favoring those who only look, talk, or act like us dishonors the name of Christ.
- e. An oft quoted phrase in Christian circles is “Don’t judge me. He who is without sin, cast the first stone.” Some may imply that accepting one another means that we turn the blind eye to sin. However, context plays an important part of a fully understand of what Jesus was demonstrating in John 8. When the adulterous women was brought before Jesus, the teachers of the law were trying to catch Him in a trap. While Jesus said that “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her,” he concluded his remarks by saying that she should “Go and sin no more!” (John 8:11)

**IX. 2 - Be Devoted to one another, honor one another**

- a. **ROMANS 12:3-10** <sup>3</sup> Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: **Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us** <sup>4</sup> Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, <sup>5</sup> so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

<sup>6</sup> **In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.** So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. <sup>7</sup> If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. <sup>8</sup> If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

<sup>9</sup> Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. <sup>10</sup> **Love each other with genuine affection,\* and take delight in honoring each other.**

- b. Being devoted to one another means that we commit to love, support and rely on one another. We honor one another’s role in the body of Christ by acknowledging the gifting that is in each one of us. The Apostle Paul remarks that, “*In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.*” Honor recognizes that gifting without feeling the need to diminish the value of our own gifting or compete with that gifting. We must take effort to overcome pride with humility and replace jealousy with honor.

**X. 3 - Serve one another**

- a. **Galatians 5:13-15** - <sup>13</sup> For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. <sup>14</sup> For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>15</sup> But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.

- b. **1 Peter 4:10-11** (NIV) - <sup>0</sup> Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

- c. It is human nature to want to be the master rather than the servant or to be the one being served rather than the one doing the serving. However, an essential part of agreement in the body of Christ is living according to the counter-cultural practice of serving one another.
- d. Jesus is, again, our example of how to treat one another in the body of Christ. In Mark 10, Jesus called the disciples together and said, “*You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them.*” <sup>43</sup> But among you it will be different. *Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant,* <sup>44</sup> and *whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else.* <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- e. Christians are not called to focus solely on their own needs, but to serve the needs of others.

## Group Resource

**Let's Talk Notes– Sunday, May 11, 2015**

**Series:** Why Church?  
**Message:** Unity through Agreement, Part III  
**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:11-16; John 13:35

- 1) The sermon reminded us that the gospel is ultimately expressed in community. What is community and how are you called to be a part of a gospel community? How does isolation and lack of community hinder the body of Christ from growing and being healthy? Give some practical ways that the church can be a community.
- 2) Pastor Joseph identified 3 confessions of faith that every believer needs to make in order to walk in agreement with one another:
  - a. God has gifted ME with a responsibility in the body of Christ that others need.
  - b. God has gifted OTHERS in the body of Christ with things that I need.
  - c. God brings these giftings together to make the church healthy, growing and full of love.Have you wrestled with the magnitude of any of these confessions? Share a gifting that you have identified in yourself and a gifting that you have identified in one other individual in your real.life group.
- 3) What does it mean to be a church that accepts one another? Pastor Joseph stated that acceptance means that “we welcome one another in the body of Christ no matter what stage that one might be at in their walk with Christ” **Read James 2:2-9**. How was the church unaccepting of the poor man? What can you personally do to help the church excel at accepting one another.
- 4) **Read Galatians 5:13-15**. What does it mean to use our freedom to serve one another in love? How well do you pay attention to the needs of others? If serving is simply meeting a need, what are some needs that are in the church, your community, your neighborhood, your family or your workplace?
- 5) Listen to the following song “Membership” by artist Steven the Levite:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5agKCi31lo>

Discuss the lyrics of Verse 1

*Listen, this is written for long term visitors/  
non-committers who get the word, but never get to  
work/  
at least not in conjunction with a church/  
they stay away and say they afraid of getting hurt//  
but pain is never excuse for disobedience/  
church wasn't created to cater to your convenience/*

*And God didn't give you gifts to be greedy with/  
mission without the church is missing a main ingredient//  
I know I rushed in without much of an introduction/  
but membership is what we're discussin'/  
committing to a community through a cov'nant/  
and doing the 'one another's of scripture with brethren//  
(membership!) it actually happens at salvation/  
but practically it happens in active participation/*