

Divided We Fall

(Matthew 12:25)

- Introduction:**
1. (Psalm 133:1) How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.
 2. (Matthew 12:25).
 3. (Matthew 5:9).
 4. Jesus prayed for our unity (John 17:20-21).
 - a. Ills. of church in Michigan.
 5. Paul pleaded for unity (1 Corinthians 1:10; 12:25).
 6. So, we know unity is to be desired, and without it, we cannot fulfill our purpose, so how do we achieve it and maintain it?
 7. I want to offer several practical suggestions.

I. Stress Attitude Equally with Doctrine

- A. Platform of unity doesn't start in (Ephesians 4:4-6).
- B. Back up and read the first three verses that deal with attitudes.
- C. Believing doctrines is much easier than changing our attitudes.

II. Possess Lowliness (Ephesians 4:2)

- A. A lowly or humble person won't always have to get their way.
- B. Christians sometimes get bent out of shape over matters that shouldn't matter.
 1. Ills. of man who refused to serve because of change in worship order.
 2. Ills. brother who withdrew fellowship over communion cups.
 3. Ills. of brother who questioned faithfulness over PowerPoint.

III. Possess Gentleness & Longsuffering (Ephesians 4:2)

- A. Handle people with care.
- B. Some people are fragile
 1. Words can destroy (Proverbs 18:21).
 2. Ills. spilt blood, broken body.
 3. Ills. in Jesus' name, Amen.
 4. Ills. Join the church, my church.
 5. Ills. of preacher who yelled shut up!
- C. (2 Timothy 4:2).

IV. Bear with Each Other in Love

- A. Believe the best (1 Corinthians 13:7).
- B. Sometimes we get mad over imaginary offenses we created in our own minds.

V. Try Harder

- A. (Ephesians 4:3) Endeavor, give diligence.
- B. Don't be content with division.
- C. (Romans 12:14,17,20-21).

D. (Hebrews 12:14).

VI. Work Through Conflict

- A. The most popular means of conflict resolution in the church today is “church hopping.”
- B. (Acts 14:1-3) Paul stayed because of problems.

- Conclusion:**
- 1. Remember, unity is not an option, it is a command.
 - 2. Let’s step it up and seek the unity for which Jesus prayed.