**Studies in the Book of Ephesians: Solus Christus (Christ Alone) – Unity**

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As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”

(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:1-16)



# Introduction

When we are united in one purpose and one goal, breakthrough happens. There is power when we are united.

Jesus has given us the Great Commission, which is the global mission of the church, ‘to make disciples of all nations’. This can be achieved through unity among believers.

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

We are called to be like-minded, to be one in spirit and of one mind.

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (Philippians 2:1-4)



**BIG IDEA: Unity is not just agreed upon. It has to be built upon.**

Unity is not just a theological agreement. It is meant to be lived out. It is not merely a concept, but has to be made into reality. It is meant to be how we live our lives.

# We are all United in Him

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:3-6)

You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness. (Ephesians 4:4-6, MSG)

We are all saved by the same God, so we carry the same DNA. Everything we are, think and do is to be permeated with Oneness.

# There is Unity in Diversity

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-13)



Unity does not mean uniformity. We do not have to look the same or sound the same. If God wanted us to all be the same, He would have made us copies of each other. However, He made us all different for a reason. There is power when we embrace the differences in each other. That is one of the most significant steps towards unity. Get rid of stereotypes.

DUMC’s tagline is to Love God, Serve People, and Make Disciples towards **Christlikeness**. Not to make disciples who look or act like us.

# Unity brings Growth

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. (Ephesians 4:14-15)

The bond we have is stronger when we are united. We will not be easily deceived by false teaching and deceitful schemes. It will be harder to break us apart.

# Unity requires Work

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:16)

In the context of the local body of the church, we all have a part to play. If we are not united, we start to break apart, we cannot fulfil our individual responsibilities, and thus we cannot fulfil our mission.

To attain unity, we have to work for it. Attaining unity is more than just a theoretical idea, but it is a message that has to be lived out.

# C:\Users\huixian\Desktop\index.jpgHow do we build unity?

## Be selfless

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves. (Philippians 2:3)

Think about why you come to church and why you serve God. Are you only looking to gain something for your own benefit?

Our attitude in serving should be one of humility, with a desire to love and bless others. Sometimes, we find that we are blessed in the process of serving others.

## C:\Users\huixian\Desktop\Helping-Others.jpgValue others above yourself

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves. (Philippians 2:3)

Think about why you offer to help others. Do you help someone else because you think you are better than the other? Or do you approach to help others because you value them and genuinely want to make their lives better?

We are to get rid of selfishness and self-centeredness, and to consider others above ourselves.

## Serve others

Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (Philippians 2:4)

What is your attitude in serving? Is it only for your own good?

We are exhorted to look to the interests of others and not our own.

Conclusion:

We are a family of God. We worship together, pray together, and share life together. We do not have to separate ourselves because of our differences.

Unity is not just agreed upon. It has to be built upon. Seek to build unity by being selfless, to value others above yourselves, and to serve others.



**One hundred religious persons knit into a unity by careful organization do not constitute a church any more than eleven dead men make a football team. The first requisite is life, always.**

**A.W. Tozer**

Sermon summary contributed by Anthea