

Stepping Into...

“God Given Unity”

“When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you.”

Winston Churchill

Stepping Into...

Having “Unity” is God’s Plan!

John 17:20-23 NLT

²⁰ “I am praying **not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me** through their message. ²¹ I pray that they will **all be one**, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that **the world will believe** you sent me.

²² “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may **be one as we are one**. ²³ I am in them and you are in me. May they experience **such perfect unity** that **the world will know** that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.

Why is Unity Important?

DIFFERENCES: 1 Cor. 12:12 NIV

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its **many parts form one body**, so it is with Christ.

DEPENDENCY: 1 Cor. 12:21, 25-26 NIV

²¹ The eye **cannot say to the hand**, 'I don't need you!' And the head **cannot say to the feet**, 'I don't need you!'

²⁵ ...there **should be no division in the body**, ... its parts should have **equal concern for each other**. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.

“God so desires unity that he will always provide ways to overcome what divides us. We just need the desire to find them!”

Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15:20-24 NLT

²⁰ So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, **his father saw him coming**. Filled with love and compassion, **he ran to his son**, embraced him, and kissed him. ²¹ His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.' ²² "But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the **finest robe** in the house and put it on him. Get a **ring for his finger** and **sandals for his feet**.' ²³ And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.

What About the Older Son?

Luke 15:25-27 NLT

²⁵ “Meanwhile, **the older son** was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, ²⁶ and he asked one of the servants what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother is back,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf. **We are celebrating because of his safe return.**’

What Triggers Division?

Luke 15:28-30 NLT

²⁸ “The older brother was angry and wouldn’t go in. His father came out and begged him, ²⁹ but he replied, ‘All these years I’ve slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. ³⁰ Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!

What is an 'Older Brother' Mentality?

I have a **Right** to...

Be Angry ²⁸ *he...* "was angry and wouldn't go in."

Self-Justify ²⁹ "All these years I've slaved for you..."

Self-Pity ²⁹ *not...* "even one young goat for a feast with my friends"

Reject ³⁰ "Yet when this son of yours comes back..."

Blame ³⁰ "...after squandering your money on prostitutes,..."

Criticise ³⁰ "...you celebrate by killing a fattened calf!"

Keep things the way I want them!

What Was the Father's Response?

Luke 15:31-32 NLT

³¹ “His father said to him, ‘Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and **everything I have is yours.**

³² **We had to celebrate** this happy day. For your brother was dead and has **come back to life!** He was lost, but **now he is found!**”

Eph. 4:3 NLT

“Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit...

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