



**June 3, 2018**

## **Harmony: Different Together**

### **Who are the people God wants me to love, serve and share with?**

**Day 1:** Read Acts 18:1-6 about Paul's visit to Corinth. Paul saw the receptivity and opportunity to share with the Corinthians and took it. If you read on in chapter 18, you find many people began following Jesus. Paul stayed in Corinth almost two years, working alongside of them, sharing his faith, and helping to make disciples. Paul's approach was unique to the religious cultures and people of this eclectic city. What are the environments and who are the people that you have a unique understanding of, that you are a part of? Is it a team you're on, a work environment, your neighborhood? Everyone we know is someone we can love and serve. Every environment you're in is an opportunity unique to your life where you can love and serve. Which relationship(s) would you like to be more intentional?

### **How do I love others while in disagreement with them?**

**Day 2:** The city of Corinth was a thriving city by the sea attracting people from the surrounding region. Just like us, the people of Corinth had differing experiences, views, cultures, and religious backgrounds. Diversity is crucial but often invites tension and division. What arena of life today do you experience division? Are you on a side or somewhere in the middle? What has most informed your decision to be on a side? Can you love the people on the other side? **Read Matt. 12:25.** A kingdom divided cannot stand. Do you have opinions that stand in the way of your ability or willingness love and harmonize with others? Whether in politics, at work, home, or church, Jesus points us the posture and tone we are to have with others. **Read John 13:34-35.** How do you apply these verses with openly debated issues? Or what about arguments you have in your own mind (about others)? What are 1-2 practical ways you can apply these verses to specific people this week?

### **What does harmony sound like?**

**Day 3:** In I Cor 1:10 Paul writes, "that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought." On Sunday, Cory used the term harmony, which is best understood in the context of music. Different parts, different tones that make one pleasing

arrangement. In an orchestra, consider the instruments – violins, flutes, clarinets, horns, cymbals... Hearing most in isolation can be enjoyable. However, when played in unison, a whole new experience unfolds. Take 10 minutes to listen to a well-known symphony. Try Beethoven Symphony No 6. Sit back in a chair and close your eyes. As you listen, notice the harmony...every instrument speaking its own voice yet playing together. That's the beauty of harmony and how we are called to live in our homes, schools, places of business, and as a church.

### **What is your responsibility to the group?**

**Day 4:** reflect back to the orchestra from yesterday? How easy would it be for this group of musicians to get off track? One section or individual with a different desire or agenda dramatically changes the experience for everyone. Eves drop on Jesus' prayer the night before He dies. **Read John 17:20-23.** What amazes you about Jesus' prayer? Consider that for a few minutes. Does it give you a different glimpse of God? One point, maybe the main point Jesus was making had to do with unity. As He and the Father are in step with each other, Jesus wants us to be in step with him and one another. Notice the reason or the why, "...so that the world will know." Considering your role in a larger group – church, small group, family. What is your responsibility to the group in making harmony? What part are you currently playing or could you play?

### **Others' interests above our own.**

**Day 5:** When we are insecure in our identity, we're at risk of putting ourselves first, of securing power or position, asserting our own rights or opinions. **Read Philippians 2:1-11.** What was Jesus' attitude and behavior? Secure in his identity, he lived in humility and self-sacrificing love. If we are united with Jesus (as He is with the Father), how are we to live? There are several practical and specific ways to demonstrate love and unity: do nothing out of selfish ambition, consider others, look beyond your own interests to the interests of others. Here is a sobering quote from Oswald Chambers. "Am I getting nobler, better, more helpful, more humble or am I getting more self-assertive, more deliberately determined to have it my own way? In the context of unity with others and putting them first, Paul is pointing us to Jesus and how he lived, the attitudes and behaviors we are to take on as his followers.



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**I Corinthians 1:10:** *“I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.”*

Unity...

- ... is not \_\_\_\_\_.
- ... does not equal \_\_\_\_\_.
- ... in and of itself is \_\_\_\_\_.

Philippians 2:1-8

- For Unity to work, I must put \_\_\_\_ before \_\_\_\_.

John 17:20-23

- Jesus: If you desire to put U before I, then you must put \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_.

Harmony and unity is \_\_\_\_\_ (vertically rooted); and \_\_\_\_\_ (horizontally displayed).

**Next steps:**



- What practical step would God have you take to display harmony? To live in unity? To whom can you express interest? In what way could you put someone else’s needs above those of your own?