

That all of them may be ONE

ONENESS GUIDE #1

# TOWARD ONENESS

September 12, 2010

Psalm 133; Ephesians 1:9-10; John 17

DESTINED FOR UNITY...  
WITH GOD

In Jesus Christ Our Lord

WITH EACH  
OTHER  
In The Church

WITH EACH  
OTHER  
In Our Family

## Unity: A Great and High Desire and Destiny

*...that all of them may be one,  
Father, just as you are in me and  
I am in you. May they also be in  
us so that the world may believe  
that you have sent me.*

- Jesus (John 17:21)

### PSALM 133

#### A SONG OF ASCENTS. OF DAVID

- <sup>1</sup> How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!
- <sup>2</sup> It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes.
- <sup>3</sup> It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion.  
For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

### EPHESIANS 1:9-10

#### THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL REVEALED

- <sup>9</sup> And he [God] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,
- <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.



## John 17 - The “High Priestly Prayer” of Jesus

### JESUS PRAYS FOR HIMSELF

17 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

“Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. <sup>2</sup> For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. <sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

### JESUS PRAYS FOR HIS DISCIPLES

<sup>6</sup> “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. <sup>11</sup> I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are

not of the world any more than I am of the world. <sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

### JESUS PRAYS FOR ALL BELIEVERS

<sup>20</sup> “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

<sup>24</sup> “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

<sup>25</sup> “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup> I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”



*Jesus Prayed for Us*

### CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR US (JOHN 17)

What He indicates we have & what He calls us to work toward...

*Through faith in Jesus, we have (1) the gift of a new identity & eternal life (vv.2, 9) as those given to Jesus Christ by the Heavenly Father. We have (2) the gift of God's revelation in His Word (v.6, 8, 14). And we have (3) the gift of God's glory shared with & through Jesus (v.22). We are called to work with Jesus toward a full realization of (1) unity (vv .11, 22-23), (2) joy (v .13) & (3) sanctification (vv.17, 19).*

## Self Study in Oneness for Week One

YOUR WORD IS A LAMP TO MY FEET AND A LIGHT TO MY PATH. - PSALM 119:105

- Day 1** **Look:** Read Psalm 133 (and the back page notes concerning this Psalm)
- Ask:** [Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper] 1. How does the Psalmist describe unity among family members (our families and God's family)? What does he say such unity is like? 2. How would you define "unity/oneness?" 3. Who is Aaron? When and for what purpose was "precious oil" put on his head (see Exodus 29:7)? What does a priest do for his people? 4. Why would dew be important? What does water do for people?
- Meditate:** Ps. 133 relates unity among people to the blessings of God. How do you see this connection in your life?
- Pray:** *Each day* - Praise God. Confess your sins. Thank Him for His Word & ask Him to help you understand & apply it.  
*Today* - Think of the relationships you have that are marked by a sense of unity, and give God thanks for them.
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- Day 2** **Look:** Read Ephesians 1:1-14
- Ask:** 1. What does this passage say God has done for us (make a list)? How secure are we through our faith in Christ? 2. What is "the mystery of God's will" (vv.9-10) that He has now revealed? Why does God want this? 3. The world values unity (peace movements, global village ideals...): Why don't we see it? Under what authority will it truly happen?
- Meditate:** If God Himself is working to bring everything together under Christ, what does this mean for your own efforts toward unity and to help others know Jesus as their Lord and Savior? Who can stop God? Who can stop you?
- Pray:** *Today* - Ask God to help you see what He has done and what He is doing to help you toward unity with Him and with other people. Give Him thanks for His redeeming & restoring work in your life and the security you have in Him.
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- Day 3** **Look:** Read John 17 (called Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer" & His "Prayer of Consecration for Himself & His Followers")
- Ask:** 1. (vv. 1-5) How is Jesus' prayer for God's glory and eternal life for His people related to what He is about to do (die on the cross)? 2. (vv. 6-26) What does Jesus say He has already given His followers? What are they yet to realize? 3. How does the unity of Jesus' followers relate to the world's understanding of Jesus? Is this comforting or convicting?
- Meditate:** If Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection effectively restores and guarantees our Oneness with God and so as God's family, why is there such disunity even among and within churches? How can we better show our true identity?
- Pray:** *Today* - Think of your relationships that are marked by disunity. Ask for God's forgiveness and for His grace, wisdom & strength to change them.
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- Day 4** **Look:** Read John 17 (esp. v.21 "*that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us...*")
- Ask:** 1. How are Jesus and His Father unified? Are they "the same?" Are they "one?" What does this oneness look like? How did it/does it show itself? 2. How does this picture of eternal unity help us understand what real unity is? 3. What does it mean for us to be "in God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?" How does this help us be "one" as God's family?
- Meditate:** Think of what Jesus did to open the way for unity to be restored between us and our Eternal Father? How can following His Way help us restore unity among our families and neighbors? What practical step will you take today?
- Pray:** *Today* - Thank Jesus for praying for you just before He died for you. Ask Him to make you more confident in His completed work that irreversibly restores our unity with Him. and to help you follow Him with greater courage.
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- Day 5** **Look:** Read Psalm 133, Ephesians 1:9-10 & John 17
- Ask:** 1. Based on the way you understand the "oneness" Jesus has with His Eternal Father, how would you define "unity" now... 2. What is revealed in all of this week's passages (Old Testament, New Testament, Gospel & Epistle) concerning what God values? What does this say about the consistency of God's character and purposes? 2. How and why do people help or hinder God in His work to bring us to oneness with Him and with each other?
- Meditate:** Would people looking at our Church conclude that unity was important to us? Why/Why not? What might people conclude about God by looking at your life and your relationships?
- Pray:** *Today* - Ask God what changes He would like us/you to make so our church and your life better reflect His glory and better accomplish His purposes.



## Notes

**Psalm 133** is part of a group of Psalms (120-134) called the “Songs of Ascents” which were used especially by pilgrims making their way “up” to Jerusalem for special annual Feast Days. Like most of these, Psalm 133 puts great emphasis on “Zion” (the site of the old Jebusite fortress which David conquered and upon which the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of God were later built) as the special place where God’s people meet with Him and where His blessings come down. Thus people’s travel there for special festivals was of vital importance for Israel’s well-being. The imagery of “precious oil running down on Aaron’s beard” recalls his anointing as High Priest, God’s mediating agent of instruction and blessing (see Exodus 29:7). “Dew of Mt. Hermon” speaks of vital divine refreshment in a region where water was scarce. Both of these images offer a “downward” movement which meets the “upward” movement of God’s people to God’s city. And in the ending climax of the song, these opposite movements crash in a glorious bestowing of life-giving blessing. And *this* is what real unity among people is likened to!

**Ephesians 1:9-10** reveals what Paul the Apostle calls “the mystery of God’s will.” With absolute *inclusiveness*, He is bringing “all things” together. And with absolute *exclusiveness*, He is bringing such unity under only “one head, even Christ.”

Here is the way Bible scholar Richard Peace ([Ephesians Commentary](#), Serendipity House, 1986) reflects on this passage:

*What did Paul see that so overwhelmed him? Quite simply, he had a vision of the unity, hitherto unimaginable, that had been brought about by the redeeming work of Christ... It is this call to unity that we too in the twentieth century need so desperately to hear. We need to hear it on a global level because the twin phantoms of nuclear holocaust and famine have the power to destroy the human race as we know it. We need to hear it on the national level because the socio/economic/ethnic divisions have grown so deep that they threaten to splinter the country into warring factions. We need to hear it on the religious level because the divisions between denominations and within congregations mute the powerful word of Christ. We need to hear this word of unity within families because, assaulted on all sides, they are breaking apart and we are quietly becoming a nation of lonely individuals. As Paul so eloquently points out, there is only one individual who has the power to heal such deep divisions: the Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins and rose again from the grave.*

**John 17** records the prayer of Jesus at the close of the Last Supper just before he went to the cross for us. Here we catch a remarkable glimpse of the Son of God praying that His Father’s purposes may be completed through the sacrificial mission He is about to fulfill and through the witness of His current and future followers. Central among these is God’s goal of unity. George R. Beasley-Murray ([John](#), Word Biblical Commentary, v.36, p.306) says: *It is of fundamental importance to recognize that in the prayer the basis of the unity of the Church is the nature of God and the reality of his redemptive activity... As such it transcends all human efforts at reconciling the conflicting interests of people, including those of Christians in their endeavors to harmonize their own interests. Since the unity of the Church is rooted in the unity of God and the redemption achieved in Christ, we are to understand that the prayer of Jesus is answered: God has made the Church one in Christ... There is no gulf created by the cultures, traditions, social mores, and political orders that cannot be bridged in Christ. That is good news for telling in a nuclear and space age, wherein the divisions of nations who cannot trust one another threaten to destroy them all... Churches are composed of sinners saved by grace, and sometimes the sins are more apparent among them than the grace. For this the churches and their agencies have need to repent--again, and again, and again. but they also have need to listen to the prayer of Jesus--again, and again, and again... Perhaps then reflection on the fact that the unity of the Church was the subject of Jesus’ prayer to God rather than exhortation to disciples may drive us to our knees in prayer for grace that his prayer may be answered in us, and in our own churches, that the world may be able to perceive in us the reconciling power of God in Christ.*



## Small Group Guide

**Hearing About Us** - 1. Share your full name with the group. Who named you? Is there a story behind your name? 2. Tell why you have chosen to be a part of LLW (or this Small Group) for this Fall. How are you hoping to benefit from this experience?

**Heeding God’s Word** - 1. What does it mean to you that Jesus prayed for you just before He went to the cross? 2. What does real unity look like? 3. As time permits, share any insights you gained from your Self Study for this week (see page 3).

**Helping One Another in Prayer to God** - Share prayer requests among group members as you are willing & able. Ask one member in your group to lead into prayer, saying out loud something like “Dear God, hear our silent prayers for one another” and then after a while closing with a short audible prayer or a simple “Amen.”