

WHEN GOD LIVES IN YOU

CHARACTERISTICS OF
THE HOLY SPIRIT

WEEK 3 - THE SPIRIT OF UNITY OVERVIEW

One of the primary challenges for the health of the Church is that it's made up of... well, *people*. We are prone to division and easily fall into traps of "othering" those not like ourselves. The good news is that God's Spirit is constantly working to overcome those divisions to make us one. It is God's Holy Spirit who allows a diverse community of faith, made up of different cultures, perspectives, and backgrounds, into a single, unified body.

In a time filled with political rage, cultural tribalism, and divisive rhetoric, ideas of unity, even within the Church, can sometimes seem like wishful thinking. However, if we allow the Spirit of Unity to transform us, we can overcome the hatred of our time and demonstrate to the world that an entirely different kind of community is possible. What might it look like to invite the Holy Spirit to give us hearts of unity this year, as we allow our lives to be shaped by the others-focused, self-giving love of Jesus?

*Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit,
binding yourselves together with peace.*
Ephesians 4:3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some examples of friction that you have experienced in real community? How was the friction resolved?
2. Read [Ephesians 4:1-3](#).
 - a. How do we get to a place of unity in a diverse church?
 - b. What did Ken mean when he said unity is "cross-purchased reality"?
 - c. What does "make every effort" look like in real church life?
 - d. Why should we "bind ourselves together in peace"?
3. What is the difference between Christian unity and the world's unity?
4. Why do you think unity in the church comes under attack? (see [Ephesians 4:27](#))
5. Read [Ephesians 4:4-6](#).
 - a. Ken said, "In a body, you don't amputate what annoys you—you heal what's wounded, strengthen what's weak, and restore what's strained." Explain how this relates to the unity God has given.
 - b. How could the church steward unity?
6. Ken asked us to consider three questions this week:
 - 1) Where have I built or rebuilt a dividing wall that Jesus died to tear down?
 - 2) Who is one person God is calling me to move toward this week—listening well, owning my part, and making peace?
 - 3) What is one thing I can do this week to strengthen the "bond of peace" at Grace Church—in the way I speak about people, speak to people, and respond to people?