

SERMON NOTES

Title: Protecting the Unity in Our Church (II)

Text: Ephesians 4:3; Colossians 3:14

Topic: Unity. Teacher: Pastor Barry

Time: 9/15/24. File Under: Christian Living



REVIEW

FOCUS ON WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON.

BE REALISTIC IN YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

CHOOSE TO ENCOURAGE RATHER THAN CRITICIZE.

REFUSE TO LISTEN TO **GOSSIP.**

Listening to gossip is like accepting **stolen property** and it makes you just as guilty of the crime. (Proverbs 17:4; Jude 1:19; Proverbs 20:19)

People who gossip **to you** will also gossip **about you.**

The fastest way to end a church conflict is to **lovingly confront** those who are gossiping and **insist they stop.** (Proverbs 26:20)

PRACTICE **GOD'S METHOD** FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION.

“If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him – work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you’ve made a friend. If he won’t listen, take one or two others along so that the presence of witnesses will keep things honest, and try again. If he still won’t listen, tell the church.” (Matthew 18:15 – 17a Msg)

If the person still refuses to listen after that, you should **treat that person like an unbeliever.** (Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:5)

SUPPORT YOUR PASTOR AND LEADERS.

There are no **perfect** leaders. (Hebrews 13:17). Not even **Jesus** could make everyone happy!

Pastors will one day **stand before God** and give an **account** of how well they watched over you. (Hebrews 13:17)

The Bible gives pastors very specific instructions on how to deal with divisive people in the fellowship. (II Timothy 2:14, 23-26; Philippians 4:2; Titus 2:15-3:2, 10-11)

- They are to avoid **arguing**
- gently **teach** the opposition while praying they’ll change
- **warn** those who are argumentative
- **Plead** for harmony and unity
- **Rebuke** those who are disrespectful of leadership
- **Remove** divisive people from the church if they ignore two warnings

One reason God puts us in a church family is to learn **unselfishness.** (I Corinthians 10:24)