

LESSON SEVEN

**THE UNITY
PRINCIPLE**

The Unity Principle

Part 1 (of 2 parts)

University Objectives... (Reviewed)

_____ the Word!

_____ the Word!

_____ the Word!

Semper Vivus: _____

“This _____ is _____!”

“University” Defined:

“An institution of _____ at the highest _____.”

Principle Seven (of 12)

The _____ Principle

I can find ultimate purpose in life only by learning the essentials of unity in the Body of Christ, which is the Church. I must do all in my power to determine my Spirit-given position in the Body. Once determined I must strive in this position to strengthen the whole. I hereby resolve to choose this course of action daily, and in God’s power I consider it done.

Primary Passage...

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:3-5 (NIV)

Foundational Premise...

“Premise” Defined:

“A proposition upon which an _____ is based or from which a _____ is drawn.”

Premise...

“The believer’s capacity to meaningfully _____ to the _____ of Christ’s Body is in direct proportion to the investment of his or her _____ into a _____ community of other believers.”

Scripture:

If you’ve gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you care—then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don’t push your way to the front; don’t sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don’t be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend

a helping hand. Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself.

Philippians 2:1-5 (MSG)

...He [Christ] handed it all out in gifts to the people. Is it not true that the One who climbed up also climbed down, down to the valley of earth? And the One who climbed down is the One who climbed back up, up to highest heaven. He handed out gifts above and below, filled heaven with his gifts, filled earth with his gifts. He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher to train Christ's followers in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ.

Ephesians 4:10-13 (MSG)

Cultivating Community **"The Brotherhood of the Believer!"**

"Brotherhood" Defined:

"The quality of being brotherly by participating in and contributing to fellowship."

"Community" Defined:

"A group of people having common interests; sharing, participation and fellowship."

"Com-" Defined:

A prefix meaning "together; with; joint; jointly."

"Unity" Defined:

"Singleness or constancy of purpose or action; the state or quality of being in accord; harmony."

COMMUNITY...

“Together in accord; with harmony; joined together with a purpose.”

The Brotherhood of the Believer! Seven Qualities for Cultivating Community

“Quality” Defined:

“Any of the features that make something what it is.”

“Cultivate” Defined:

“To promote the growth of; to nurture; to foster.”

The Suffix “-Ship”

“Something showing, exhibiting or embodying a quality or state of something.”

1. Quality One: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.

1 Peter 3:8 (NLT)

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NLT)

2. Quality Two: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

We who believe are carefully joined together, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also joined together as part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:21-22 (NLT)

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and sympathetic? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one heart and purpose.

Philippians 2:1-2 (NLT)

3. Quality Three: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

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

1 Corinthians 12:12 (NIV)

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others.

Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

4. Quality Four: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

God has given gifts to each of you from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow through you.

1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)

So look at Apollos and me as mere servants of Christ who have been put in charge of explaining God's secrets. Now, a person who is put in charge as a manager must be faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 (NLT)

5. Quality Five: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing.

Philippians 2:3-4 (NLT)

My goal is that they will be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have full confidence because they have complete understanding of God's secret plan, which is Christ himself.

Colossians 2:2 (NLT)

For you... have been called to live in freedom—not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love.

Galatians 5:13 (NLT)

6. Quality Six: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NIV)

Timothy, my dear son, be strong with the special favor God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others.

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)

7. Quality Seven: _____

Function: To _____

Scripture:

The one who plants and the one who waters work as a team with the same purpose. Yet they will be rewarded individually, according to their own hard work. We work together as partners who belong to God. You are God's field, God's building—not ours.

1 Corinthians 3:8-9 (NLT)

Under his direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT)

Talk Back Time:

(Share what you've learned with your small group.)

Discuss what you feel are the greatest hindrances and obstacles to birthing and sustaining unity in the Body of Christ. What do you think are keys to overcoming or removing these obstacles or hindrances?

Pray Back Time:

(Pray what you've learned in your small group.)

Ask God to heal schisms, both in our churches locally as well as globally. Be as specific as possible without naming names as you pray for a spirit of unity in Christ's Body. Pray also for unity in our nation so God might continue to bless our land.

The Unity Principle

Part 2 (of 2 parts)

The Servanthood of the Saint! **Seven Impressions for Refreshing the Saints!**

Scripture:

I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth. I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

1 Corinthians 16:15-18 (KJV)

“Addicted” Defined:

From the Greek word _____: “To be _____; compelled; _____.”

“Refreshed” Defined:

From the Greek word _____: “To give _____ again. To give intermission from _____.”

Scripture:

The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.

2 Timothy 1:16-18 (NKJV)

So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time. Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone, especially to our Christian brothers and sisters.

Galatians 6:9-10 (NLT)

SERVANTHOOD: Impressions on Becoming a Refresher of the Saints

1. Impression One:

Refreshing the Body means to go out of your _____ to do a kind _____ for a brother or sister in the _____.

Scripture:

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Luke 10:33-34 (NIV)

2. Impression Two:

Refreshing the Body means to pray _____ for the _____ of another before thinking just of _____.

Scripture:

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people...

1 Timothy 2:1 (NIV)

3. Impression Three:

Refreshing the Body is to develop an _____ of needs about us; to become, in effect, others-_____ rather than self-centered.

Scripture:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)

4. Impression Four:

Refreshing the body is to build up someone who is _____ by offering a kind _____ or by carrying out a thoughtful _____.

Scripture:

Everyone enjoys a fitting reply; it is wonderful to say the right thing at the right time!

Proverbs 15:23 (NLT)

The words of the godly encourage many, but fools are destroyed by their lack of common sense.

Proverbs 10:21 (NLT)

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

Proverbs 18:21 (MSG)

5. Impression Five:

Refreshing the Body is to become a walking

_____—a person who is

“appreciation conscious,” one who refuses to have an

_____ anywhere in Christ's body.

Scripture:

Meanwhile, I thought I should send Epaphroditus back to you. He is a true brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier. And he was your messenger to help me in my need. I am sending him because he has been longing to see you, and he was very distressed that you heard he was ill.

Philippians 2:25-26 (NLT)

You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

Matthew 5:9 (MSG)

6. Impression Six:

Refreshing the Body is to make it possible for God's

_____ to do their _____

more effectively.

Scripture:

We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety.

2 Corinthians 1:8-11 (NLT)

7. Impression Seven:

Refreshing the Body is to put on the garments of _____ and _____, to be covered in the likeness of _____ Himself and thereby cause every person whom he or she meets to feel just a little closer to _____ because of their encounter.

Scripture:

...clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.

Romans 13:14 (NLT)

...In the Messiah, in Christ, God leads us from place to place in one perpetual victory parade. Through us, he brings knowledge of Christ. Everywhere we go, people breathe in the exquisite fragrance. Because of Christ, we

give off a sweet scent rising to God, which is recognized by those on the way of salvation—an aroma redolent with life.

2 Corinthians 2:14-15 (MSG)

Principle Seven Reviewed

The Unity Principle

I can find ultimate purpose in life only by learning the essentials of unity in the Body of Christ, which is the Church. I must do all in my power to determine my Spirit-given position in the Body. Once determined I must strive in this position to strengthen the whole. I hereby resolve to choose this course of action daily, and in God's power I consider it done.

Primary Passage...

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:3-5 (NIV)

Passages for Further Study

(See following page for an example.)

Look up these passages in your Bible, underline key phrases or put a box around them. Put a number “7” in the margin of your Bible by that passage and circle it. Then, go back to your primary passage (Romans 12:3-5) and in the margin write these verses beside it or at the bottom of the page. In this way you will begin to cross-reference your Bible.

- Romans 12:3-5
- Psalm 133:1-3
- Proverbs 15:23
- Romans 12:10-16
- Romans 15:1-3
- 1 Corinthians 10:12-17
- 1 Corinthians 16:15-18
- Ephesians 1:15-23
- Ephesians 2:14-22
- Ephesians 4:1-3
- Ephesians 4:11-14
- Colossians 1:9-18
- Colossians 3:15-17
- 2 Timothy 1:6-18
- Philemon 4-7
- Hebrews 6:10
- Hebrews 13:1
- 1 Peter 4:10
- 1 John 3:18
- Philippians 2:1-5
- 1 Peter 3:8
- 1 Corinthians 12:12
- 1 Corinthians 4:1-2
- Colossians 2:2
- Galatians 5:13
- 1 Thessalonians 5:14
- 2 Timothy 2:1-2
- 1 Corinthians 3:8-9
- Ephesians 4:16
- Galatians 6:9-10
- Luke 10:33-34
- 1 Timothy 2:1
- Proverbs 10:21
- Proverbs 18:21
- Philippians 2:25-26
- Matthew 5:9
- 2 Corinthians 1:8-11
- Romans 13:14
- 2 Corinthians 2:14-15

- 33 God's riches, wisdom, and knowledge are so deep that it is impossible to explain his decisions or to understand his ways.
- 34 "Who knows how the Lord thinks? Who can become his adviser?"
- 35 Who gave the Lord something which the Lord must pay back?
- 36 Everything is from him and by him and for him. Glory belongs to him forever! Amen!

Psalms 133:1-3
 Proverbs 15:23
 Romans 12:10-16
 Romans 15:1-3
 1 Corth. 10:12-17
 1 Corth. 16:15-18
 Eph. 1:15-23
 Eph. 2:14-22
 Eph. 4:1-3
 Eph. 4:11-14

Principle 7
 Primary Passage

Dedicate Your Lives to God

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¹Brothers and sisters, because of God's compassion toward us, I encourage you to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, dedicated to God and pleasing to him. This kind of worship is appropriate for you. ²Don't become like the people of this world. Instead, change the way you think. Then you will always be able to determine what God really wants—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

Col. 1:9-18
 Col. 3:15-17
 2 Tim. 1:6-18
 Philemon 4-7

³Because of the kindness^a that God has shown me, I ask you not to think of yourselves more highly than you should. Instead, your thoughts should lead you to use good judgment based on what God has given each of you as believers. ⁴Our bodies have many parts, but these parts don't all do the same thing. ⁵In the same way, even though we are many individuals, Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other. ⁶God in his kindness gave each of us different gifts. If your gift is speaking God's word, make sure what you say agrees with the Christian faith. ⁷If your gift is serving, then devote yourself to

①
 Primary Passage
 Heb. 6:10
 Heb. 13:1
 1 Peter 4:10
 1 John 3:18
 Phil 2:1-5
 Phil 2:1-5
 1 Peter 4:10

^a11:27 Or "covenant." ^a12:3 Or "grace."

1 John 3:18 Phil. 2:1-5
 1 Peter 3:8 Proverbs 10:21
 Col. 2:2 Gal. 5:13 1 Thess. 5:14
 1 Peter 4:10

Additional Notes:

Talk Back Time:

(Share what you've learned with your small group.)

Describe someone (outside of your family) that you have seen embody a spirit of servanthood. How did they impact your life to either bring you to Jesus or help you grow in the Lord? What do you believe are keys to developing a servant's spirit?

Pray Back Time:

(Pray what you've learned in your small group.)

Ask God to help clarify and simplify your Spirit-given position in the Body of Christ, both to impact where you live locally and out to the nations, internationally. Ask God to show you how you can serve those who are gathering in the global harvest.
