

Let's Stay Together

1 Corinthians 1:10-16 (NIV)

¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,^[a] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. ¹¹ My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. ¹² What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas^[b]"; still another, "I follow Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Giving Honor to God the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. To All of God's Sons, Daughters, and Children. Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow. Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, as we lift up the Name of the Lord. The topic of today's didactic sermon is "Let's Stay Together."

According to the text, the Apostle Paul is addressing an issue of division in the church. The parishioners are beginning to take sides, and a division is taking place. He shares with them the importance of knowing that "It's really about Christ." Christ is not divided. The focal point is not Paul or Apollos; it is Christ Jesus. Jesus is the center of the story and the focus. In fact, Christ didn't send Paul to baptize, but to preach the Gospel – simple, full, and free. Many theologians feel that effective preaching can truly reach the masses as Paul shared – not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. I'd like to share with you a few points this morning and then I'll conclude.

- A house divided against itself shall not stand.

In the Gospel, Matthew 12:25 teach us "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. It's important that work together in the body of Christ to resolve issues efficiently and effectively.

The Reverend Al Green shares relationship insight in the song "Let's Stay Together." He says 'I, I'm I'm so in love with you. Whatever you want to do Is all right with me. 'Cause you make me feel so brand new, And I want to spend my life with you. (This is love y'all) Let me say that since, baby, since we've been together. Ooh, loving you forever, Is what I need

Let me, be the one you come running to. I'll never be untrue-Oh baby.

Let's, let's stay together ('gether), Lovin' you whether, whether. Times are good or bad, happy or sad. Oh, oh, oh, oh, yeah. Whether times are good or bad, happy or sad.

In any relationship there may be some ups and downs, or hills and valleys, but whether you're going through a pandemic or if you're going on vacation, it's a blessing to stay together in Christ. Romans 5:1-5 says *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

Came somebody say we are connected with God through Christ Jesus? Let's Stay Together Y'all. No matter what the opposition may look like. Let's Stay Together. (Unity in the Lord Jesus Christ.)

- The message of the Cross

1 Corinthians 1:18 - For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

This is why we must constantly preach and teach 'The Message of the Cross'. Many want to be entertained, but we must preach and teach the message of the Cross. This is why we must be instant in season and out of season. John 3:16-19 says "For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Romans 10:9-11, says If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame." The message shows God's love for humanity through His Son Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit.

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- The Fellowship of the Saints

Hebrews 10:23-25 teach us, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. There is power in the church's ability to simply come together. Hallelujah. I'm blessed when I come to church. Hallelujah, somebody...

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It seemed like it was yesterday, when I could hear the members of the church singing that opening hymn. I was a child standing up and I could feel the spirit of God flowing throughout the church. The God who created the heavens and the earth was there. The power of the shed blood of Jesus was there. Redemption and forgiveness were there. The Holy Spirit of God was there. It was like an anthem and the people sang of unity and the blessedness of our Lord in unison. Do you remember? They sang of fellowship, and they had been through the trials of life all week. The struggles of finding a job. Many had gone through so much just to be accepted socially and seen so many dark clouds, but they made it to church, and it was power in the fellowship of the saint. They'd open up their hearts and their mouths and sing "What a Fellowship."

*What a fellowship, what a joy divine, Leaning on the everlasting arms.
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, Leaning on the everlasting arms.
Leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms.
Leaning, leaning, Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim's way, Leaning on the everlasting arms
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, Leaning on the everlasting arms
Leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms
Leaning, leaning on the Jesus, leaning.
I'm leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*What have I to dread, what have I to fear, Leaning on the everlasting arms
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, Leaning on the everlasting arms
Leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms.
Leaning, leaning, Leaning on the everlasting arms.
Leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms.
Leaning, leaning, Leaning on the everlasting arms.
Leaning on the everlasting arms!!!*

In closing, you might say "You see my glory, but you really don't know my story." I've been through so much this week and the storms of life were raging and almost... I said almost, knocked me down. But God allowed me to make it through. So, I decided... Can I get a witness? I decided... Help me somebody. I decided in my spirit, that I would come today to give the Lord some praise. I came to testify that if it had not been for the Lord Jesus Christ ... On My Side. Where 'O Where would I be. I thank God that He gave me enough sense to come, because of the power of Almighty God, the Power of the Blood of Christ, the Power of the Holy Spirit, and And.... AND... the Power of the Church in the Fellowship of the Saints of God. Help me Somebody. I can shout. I can testify that I made it. I can tell somebody that He healed my body. God healed my sin-sick soul. No matter, what the trial or trials may look like "Let's Stay Together in Christ Jesus." Beloved, if you find that today you are lost... far from the Ark of Safety, Come on in out of the storm. If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame. (Romans 10:9-11) Hallelujah, Amen.