



### **Above the Fray An Intentional Unity**

We're divided over political parties. We're divided over presidential candidates. We disagree on where to get our news and what constitutes fake news. We're divided over policing and immigration and how to achieve racial equality. We're divided over our response to Covid ... and Satan is loving every minute of it. Unity is a choice ... so let's choose it. It's not just a nicety. It's the Jesus-way of living.

#### **Scripture:**

Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. 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. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,  
one God and Father of all,  
who is over all, in all, and living through all.

Ephesians 4:1-6

Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if

you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.

Romans 13:1-7

#### **Ice Breaker and Intro Question:**

1. What is a fun rivalry you enjoy or are passionate about? (Cubs vs. Cards, Coke vs. Pepsi, Mac vs PC, etc.)
2. What resonated with you from Sunday's service? (Sermon, scripture, song, etc.)

#### **Discussion Questions**

3. Take a moment to read Ephesians 4:1-6 quietly by yourselves. Spend a few moments meditating on the power and importance of unity. Then share what you noticed as a group.
4. Read Romans 13:1-7 quietly by yourselves. Take some notes on what you see about having respect for all authority. What did you learn? What was your least favorite verse? What from this passage challenges you?
5. Eddie shared, "It's in community that we learn how to resist our selfishness and unite with others." How does this challenge or comfort you?
6. Unity is something we have to pursue; it's active, not passive. What is one thing you can do to pursue unity this week?
7. Spend some time as a group praying (out loud if possible, but silently if that's best) for the things you discussed.
  - Pray for us to live with humility and gentleness.
  - Pray that we would be patient with each other.
  - Pray for unity in our church and in our communities.

#### **Additional Resources:**

- We've put together some practices and prayers to help guide you during this teaching series. Visit [www.wschurch.org/resources](http://www.wschurch.org/resources) to learn more.

#### **Notes:**