

**“We are Family:  
Creating Unity in Our Community of Faith.”**

Greg Wendschlag      April 23, 2017

*“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us **do good** to all people, **especially to those** who belong to the **family of believers**” Gal. 6:9-10*

We are Helpful: Practicing Unity

We are Wise: Protecting Unity

We are Truthful: Preserving Unity

*“I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Eph. 4:1-3*

**1. Unity: Work at it!**

*“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*

- Unity is difficult because people are so **different**.
- Unity requires **relationship** with people.
- Unity requires **submission**.

*“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others”. Phil. 2:4*

**2. Unity: Be patient.**

*“Be patient, bearing with one another in love.”*

- Patience: taking a **long time** to boil over
- You don’t need **patience** until you are in a **relationship** with someone.

*“A man’s wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.” Prov. 19:11*

### 3. Unity: Be humble.

***“Be completely humble and gentle...”***

- Humility is not thinking less of your self. Humility is thinking of your self less.
- Pride is not solely arrogance. Pride is self-preoccupation.

*“Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment...”Rom. 12:3*

#### **Practical Ways to Build Unity This week**

- Make one phone call to touch base with another LIFER.
- Have a meal with another LIFER or LIFER family.
- Post a reason you are thankful for another LIFER on social media.
- Pray for those that try your patience. Ask God to give you a sincere love for them.
- If there is a present conflict between you and another LIFER, make an appointment to start the peace process. **Remember, this is known conflict, not an annoyance you have with the other person!**
- Daily ask God to help make your time, “Not about me!” Ask God to help you serve others with pleasure.

*“All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.” John 13:35*

#### Questions for the GIC this week

1. How have you overcome difficult differences with others to create unity?
2. Have you ever felt that it's easier to avoid relationship and thus avoid conflict? What are the pros and cons of that mindset?
3. How do you feel about the word “submission”? Why do you feel that way?
4. Would you call yourself a patient person? Why or why not? What are you doing to allow God to develop the fruit of the Spirit in you in this area?
5. Think about the definitions Pastor Greg gave for humility and pride. How are those definitions different than what you previously thought? How do these fresh definitions affect how you see yourself, others and life situations.