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Series: [The Anatomy of a Church](#)

The Anatomy of a Church (52)

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

[Acts 20:28](#)

(Continuation from 03/01/15)

The Internal Systems-2

UNITY

Jesus prayed that all Christians would be one, just as He and the Father are one, so that the world would know He was sent by the Father. He prayed that we would be unified ([John 17:21](#)).

[John 17:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹ **that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.**

That basically refers to the unity of believers as a result of salvation, but Jesus also wants us to have unity in the life and purpose of the church.

The apostle Paul told the Ephesians to endeavor “**to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**” ([Ephesians 4:3](#)).

[Ephesians 4:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³ **“being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”**

He didn’t tell them to generate unity; they already had it. They were to maintain the unity God had already given them.

Unity is an important part of church life. That’s why Satan constantly attacks it. Some years ago, I went to a Bible conference and had the opportunity to talk with the daughter of Dr. Criswell, who pastors the First Baptist Church of Dallas. She told us, “Dad once had a man on his church staff who tried to split our church. He was very torn about that. One Sunday he became so concerned about it that he called a construction company and said, ‘Before next Sunday, I want kneeling benches installed in every pew in this church.’ By the next Sunday, every pew had kneeling benches. (They’re still there today.) When everyone came into the church, he said, ‘By the grace of God there has never been a split in this church, and there never will be.’ Then he told the entire congregation to kneel on the benches in prayer. God healed the rifts that had been developing in the congregation.”

Unity brings God glory. It honors His name. Satan is incessantly trying to divide churches. I praise God that Living Word Christian Center has never experienced a split. There have been people who wanted to leave because some little thing didn’t happen the way they wanted it to. Even if they were right, humility and love don’t act to bring about division.

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No one is perfect, so there will always be little things that people disagree about.

Nevertheless, we should always get on our knees together and seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace ([Ephesians 4:3](#)).

[Ephesians 4:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

That was the desire of the New Testament writers.

Paul poured his heart out to the Corinthians, saying,

[1 Corinthians 1:10-17 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁰ Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

¹¹ For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you.

¹² Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."

¹³ Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

¹⁵ so that no one would say you were baptized in my name.

¹⁶ Now I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.

He couldn't stand to see divisions in the church. He told the Philippian church to be "striving together for the faith of the gospel" ([Phil. 1:27](#)).

[Philippians 1:27-30 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁷ Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

²⁸ in no way alarmed by *your* opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that *too*, from God.

²⁹ For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

³⁰ experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

His words are just as applicable today.

- 1) Do you see the attitudes mentioned above in your life?
- 2) Is your life characterized by obedience?
- 3) Are you progressing in maturity and becoming more sanctified as you hear the Word and apply it?

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- 4) Do you see yourself growing in such a way that as you get older, you will reach the peak of dedication in your spiritual life?
- 5) Do you have an attitude of humility?
- 6) Are you meeting other people's needs with loving acts that come from a humble heart?
- 7) Do you truly seek to make peace and maintain the unity of the Spirit?

We should seek all those things in our lives. That is God's will for us.