

# THE CHURCH THE FAMILY OF GOD: PASSIONATE FOR UNITY

Houses of Light Church • August 5-6, 2023 • Pastor Netz Gómez

**Eph. 2:21-22; 4:15b-16**

**“ in whom [Christ] the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit... 4:15b Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”**

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. As we saw last week, through the work of Christ, God has made us part of His family and called us to host His presence. The church is the institution that Jesus left on earth to make His glory known; Because of this call, it is imperative that the church be truly united in the Spirit. When this happens, the power of God is released and the enemy loses ground because new possibilities for restoration and revival open up.
- B. C. S. Lewis said: “everyone loves to talk about forgiveness until it is their turn to give it” and the same goes for the subject of church unity; everyone loves the theme of church unity until they try to live it. It is hard to know what unity looks like when there is serious disagreement or sin and hurt in relationships. Unity is so fundamental that of all the things Jesus could have prayed for in His final prayer before leaving this world, He prayed for the unity of those the Father had given Him (**Jn. 17**).

## II. LA UNIDAD SE BASA EN LA VERDAD

**Jn. 17:11b “...Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”**

- A. According to Jesus prayer, our unity is based on the truth; it is rooted in the Trinity and is essential to fulfill our mission on earth. Unity is the result of being preserved in the name that the Father gave to Jesus. The name of the Father signifies the character and power of Him that has been revealed in Christ. The name of God means testimony of the Father towards the Son.  
**Matt. 17:5 “He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”**
- B. To be kept in the name of the Father is to persevere faithful to Christ and His words. Unity flows from faithfulness to the gospel. We do not have unity with everyone in the world, we have love for everyone, but unity is for those who are kept in the name that the Father gave Jesus.
- C. Unity is more than someone we like, or have the same hobbies. Unity is an objective spiritual reality established by what God has done for us and flows from our union with Christ.

- D. **The order of priorities is not that we focus on unity and then we come to Christ, it is the other way around, by focusing on Christ, we are faithful to Him and unity flows from there.** A. W. Tozer said: *"If you tune a hundred pianos to the same tuner, they are automatically in tune with each other; so a hundred worshipers gather, all looking at Christ, and are closer in heart to each other, than they ever could be."*
- E. **We live in a time in which we are very divided. The family and the church are divided and that weakens us to fulfill our mission. When we are alone or divided we are vulnerable and weak but there is power in spiritual unity.**
- F. An example of nature that can help us understand this more are the redwood trees, which are one of the largest living beings on planet earth, some of which are more than two thousand years old. In a single redwood tree there can be an entire ecosystem. Their bark can be up to a foot thick to protect them from fire and other dangers. Despite being such huge trees, their root is not that big. Usually the bigger the tree the bigger the root because the tree needs a bigger foothold but redwood trees don't have roots that big instead they grow close to each other and intertwine their roots with each other to be able to stand up against the ravages of nature.
- G. **This is a picture of strength through unity. There is strength and stability through unity.** When you isolate yourself it is as if you retracted your roots and without having enough support you can collapse during a storm. **Unity is not a feel good deny all differences thing, it's actually hard work.** We must pray: *Lord, give me sincere affection for those around me both in the family and in the local and global church; give me an open heart, let me see them as you see them.*
- H. **We must remember that what unites us is greater than the things that divide us.** I remind you that if that person you don't like is a true Christian, he/she will be with you in heaven for all eternity. On the other hand we have a common enemy that hates us and we must unite to take authority and defeat him in his attacks against us.
- I. Three opera singers who were very excellent were asked: How do you avoid being in competition with other singers when you are on stage? and one of them said: *you have to put all your focus to open your heart to the music, we can't be rivals when we are making beautiful music together.* **That's how it is in church, all your focus is on hosting the presence of Jesus, on praying for revival and for the advancement of the gospel and in this way it becomes more difficult to be competing with other Christians.** Maybe it's not that you get along with other Christians, but at least the intensity of our tensions is lessened because our minds are already on the big picture and not on things that aren't really significant.

### III. WHAT DOES THIS UNIT LOOK LIKE?

**Jn. 17:20-23** *"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> that they may all be one, just 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 have sent me. <sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE EVEN AS WE ARE ONE, <sup>23</sup> I IN THEM and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me."*

- A. Our unity is rooted in the relationships of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and is our model of unity; all three are equally God and have the same heart, will and purpose. There is no rivalry, no competition, no envy between them. So the kind of unity that we must have in the church is this same kind of unity. It's not just about being together physically in one place but united in purpose.
- B. The key here is our union with Christ; Jesus is in the Father, we are in Christ therefore we are one with the others. Our unity is a spiritual reality that we must manifest and practice through our union with Christ. It is not the same to say that we are close to each other as to say: you are a part of me. This is exactly what Paul expressed when talking about how the body of Christ, which is the church, is taken.

**1 Cor. 12:24b-27** *"But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup> If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. <sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."*

- C. This is what unity looks like, we are interconnected like the redwood tree have you loved someone so much that you feel connected to that person? This is the kind of love and unity of purpose that God wants. The Father and the Son are not cold and indifferent to each other, so we must be his church.

### IV. HOW CAN I DO THIS?

- A. Embrace your spiritual gift and honor the gifts of others: If our model of unity is based on the Trinity, we understand that unity is not ignoring our differences but rather embracing them; just as the Father and the Son are different; This is how we are the members of the church, we have different gifts, personalities and contributions.

**1 Cor. 12:4-5** *"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; s and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;"*

We are a family in which each child is different and has their area of action, just as the children have their own room in their own style, but they all sit at the same table and eat the same spiritual bread, therefore they speak the same thing and are united amid the diversity of gifts and personalities.

For example, if you are an extrovert in a place where everyone is introverted, you don't have to change your personality to have unity; if you are more expressive, that helps others to be more expressive. If your emphasis is mercy and others do not do what you do, it is not to criticize them but to bring what is lacking to the community. **We must know our role in the team and enjoy it and impart it.**

- B. **Prioritize friendships in church:** If you have struggles, burdens and secret sins that no one knows about, you are that redwood tree whose roots are not intertwined and you are in danger. Friends are one of life's greatest blessings. We must cultivate friendship in the body of Christ.

**Jas. 5:16 "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."**

- C. **Let go of grievances or complaints:** Satan feasts in our resentments because there is a place for him to operate from when we are divided. We must take the initiative to heal our relationships even with those who do not treat us well, that shows the reality of our Christianity.

**Mat. 5:47 "And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"**

#### THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **The "Gen Z for Jesus" event will be on September 9 at the Angelus Temple. Please register at [www.housesoflight.org/holy58](http://www.housesoflight.org/holy58) Volunteers are needed to serve during the event; Please scan the QR code on the screens. **We ask for your cooperation in donating NEW towels and clothes (without design or brand), for the young people who are going to be baptized.** You can come during the week to the office or at the end of the service. More information on the table outside.**
2. **Women's Retreat September 1-2. Men's Retreat September 15-16.** You can sign up for the bookstore at [www.housesoflight.org](http://www.housesoflight.org)
3. **The Passion For Jesus Conference and Leadership Summit will take place September 28-30. Please register at [www.nhop.la](http://www.nhop.la)** This year we will not have the children's track. Children 10 years and older need their ticket to enter the event.