

Psalm 133

"Seemingly an Impossibility"

If all we had to go on was the current state of affairs one might deem unity an impossibility. We live in such a divided world. We are divided politically, ethnically, educationally, generationally, religiously, and so on. Not only that, we seem to welcome such division. This would not be as alarming to me if this wasn't the case in the church. Unity is seemingly an impossibility. It is extremely difficult to achieve and to maintain. "Behold", David writes to imply that what one was gazing upon was rare. So rare it was both good and pleasant. One theologian writes, "many things are good and yet not pleasant. And there are many things that are pleasant and yet not good". End quote. Unity is one of those rare things that is both good and pleasant! With this said, I want to share three truths regarding unity drawn from the text. **First, unity is a powerful witness to the truth of God, of Jesus the Christ. V1 "Behold"**. By this one word, David instructs us to gaze upon it, to look intently at it, to examine the result of it, so that we might be inspired to attain it, unity. One of the greatest threats to the church's faithful witness is our lack of unity, universally. I believe the primary reason we struggle with unity is we put other things at the center of our life together in place of the only person that should be at the center of our life together, Jesus. We put things like baptism (full immersion or not), speaking in tongues, the sevenfold ministry, the working of miracles, seminary training or not, our political views, our titles, our money, our ethnicity, and the buildings we inhabit at the center and all along becoming more divided and less impactful on this sin sick world. Giving the world the license to shout back at us, who are you to tell us how to live together when you, church, have yet to do so. Unity is a powerful witness to the truth of God, of Jesus Christ. How are we doing with that?

1 Cor 1:7-13 “⁷ Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. ⁹ God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. ¹⁰ I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. **Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.** ¹¹ For some members of Chloe’s household have told me about your quarrels, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹² Some of you are saying, “I am a follower of Paul.” Others are saying, “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Peter,” or “I follow only Christ.” ¹³ Has Christ been divided into factions? Was I, Paul, crucified for you? Were any of you baptized in the name of Paul? Of course not! **NLT**

Col 3:8-14 “⁸ But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹ Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. ¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” **ESV**

Second, true lasting unity is achieved by a common faith. V1
“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren (sisters and brothers) to dwell (live) together in unity!” David writes this Psalm following the end of the feud between his house and King Saul’s. Both Jews, both enemies of the Philistines, both chosen by God. And

yet unity alluded them and, as a result, alluded the kingdom of Israel. The thing that separated them was their faith in and obedience to God. Simply stated, David believed and obeyed God, Saul did not. Church, unity is not achieved by having a common enemy or ancestry. There can be no true lasting unity when we do not believe the same thing regarding God, regarding Jesus the Christ. When a divide exists faith-wise there will be a divide relationally. Thus, disunity. We see this pattern in Israel's history, as well as in the history of the church of our Lord Jesus the Christ. If Jesus is truly Lord of our lives, we should be able to live, to dwell together. And let me say this, we will not agree on all points of the faith but there are some points we must. I believe the Trinity, the virgin birth, Jesus crucified and resurrected, and Jesus as the only means of salvation, are a few big ones we must agree. Unity is very important, but not more important than biblical truth.

Amos 3:3 ³ "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" **NKJV**

John 17:20-23 ²⁰ "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me." **NKJV**

Gal 1:6-10 ⁶ "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. ¹⁰ For am I now

seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.” **ESV**

Finally, the blessing of unity is far-reaching. V2-3 *“It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. ³It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.”* We will notice in David’s two similes the focus is not necessarily the source of unity but more so unity’s far-reaching impact. The anointing oil applied upon the head of Aaron does not stay in its place, but rather it flows down even to the lowest parts, the edge of his garments. The dew of Hermon falls down to the mountains of Zion. That is to say, the blessing of unity is not static but flows to all things in contact with and proximity to the source. When there is unity in in the community of faith all attached to or touched by that community flourishes. The blessing of unity is far-reaching. So, when see the ravishes of disunity, we should first look at ourselves. Are we the cause? If we are truly dwelling in unity then the things we touch, the things under us should flourish as well. The blessing of unity is far-reaching. Unity, seemingly an impossibility, but not impossible. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.