

Audio Transcript of Sermon
January 4, 2025
Unity of the Faith

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. I recently took a walk in El Paso around Ascarate Lake, which originally formed because of its proximity to the Rio Grande River. This particular day was blustery, and the winds were clipping along at a good speed. It's not the first time I've been to this lake, which for lakes would be a small lake, but out in the Chihuahua desert of the American southwest, there aren't too many lakes. Walking along the path next to the shoreline it is normally common to see duck and geese on the lake or near the shore. On this day only a few birds were on the water, and those on the shore were huddled near taller grass and bushes. Unlike other times where the lake has been calm, this time the surface of the water was choppy with the wind causing noticeable waves. As the direction of the wind changed, so did the direction of the waves, and while each wave was created by the wind and propelled in a certain direction, all the waves seemed unified in the direction they were heading.

During the next few weeks, I'll be completing winter landscaping tasks on my cypress trees, and part of what I will do is support weaker branches with twine to keep the shape of the trees. Each roll of twine is made from strands of the thread that is woven together. Individually, each strand of thread would be too weak to support the branches, but woven together, the twine has enough strength. Even larger ropes are made based on the same principle. Another task I'll be completing is raking up leaves from my mesquite tree which during the hot summer months shades the south side of my house from the sun. It's not been cold enough yet during this winter season in the desert southwest for the mesquite leaves to fall. Those leaves resemble miniature fern fronds, and each leaf is divided into smaller leaflets. Each leaf is separate and unique, and of and by itself, no single leaf would be large enough to provide shade during the hot summer months, but as a group, they do a great job in providing enough shade.

The waves on a body of water seem to have a common goal, though each is unique, and the strands of twine are much stronger when banded together, just like all the leaves of a tree are more effective in providing shade than just a single leaf. So, it is for us as Christians. From the very beginning, the intent was for

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Christians to have unity of the faith, which is something we must strive for, meaning we must exert effort, we must work, and we must overcome and spiritually mature to have unity of the faith.

When Jesus was facing the end of His life, He prayed to God the Father on behalf of the disciples asking God to have them filled with the same joy that Jesus had and keeping them from evil. He asked that that they be made Holy through the truth and His own sacrifice, and He prayed for the unity of the faith, that they would be one as God the Father and Jesus Christ are one. John seventeen verse thirteen.

John 17:13-21

13. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

To solidify that unity that those who are called could not be like those in religious authority. He explained how some like to use religion as the basis to gain authority over others, and Jesus taught against that. While the Bible does make it clear there are different gifts of the Holy Spirit and even different offices of the ministry, authority over another person doesn't factor in. Jesus taught that we are not to look to any person as having religious authority over us. Instead of making some greater than others through religious authority, we are to recognize we are all children of God, with no person having religious authority over us. Jesus Christ

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and God the Father do have religious authority over us. Instead of seeking religious authority that can be imposed on another person, we must become servants and humble ourselves. Matthew twenty-three verse one.

Matthew 23:1-12

- 1. Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,**
- 2. Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:**
- 3. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**
- 4. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.**
- 5. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,**
- 6. And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,**
- 7. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.**
- 8. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.**
- 9. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.**
- 10. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.**
- 11. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.**
- 12. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.**

Paul urged the Corinthians to be unified in the faith, that they have the same message of faith, that they have the same thoughts and understanding, and that they come to the same conclusions about how faith fits into their life. While there might be nuances among the brethren with this, the Corinthians had come to a point where faith was a contentious issue, with people taking sides. With the Corinthians the major differences were summed up in the names of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ. Today within the Church of God there are hundreds of differences of contention which is why there are so many different churches with members of one often disregarding members of another church. As Paul reminded the Corinthians that Christ is not divided, nor was Paul crucified, and neither is anyone baptized in the name of a minister, so today it is good to

remember with all the various churches within the Church of God, Jesus Christ is not divided. First Corinthians one verse ten.

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

10. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14. I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15. Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

There are some opportunistic people who seek religious authority and control of other people, and these types of people also find ways to divide the faith. The reality is it is hard enough to keep ourselves in check religiously. We don't need to try and control what others do religiously. When we try and control what others do religiously, we probably think of ourselves more highly than we should. It's one thing to share a message of faith that is left up to the individual to act upon, which has always been the focus of Sabbath Bible Study, and it is another thing to use tactics of coercion to enforce adherence to that message of faith, which Sabbath Bible Study has never done.

In writing to the Romans, to the lay members, Paul encouraged them to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit that they have been given, including prophesying, ministering, teaching, exhorting, giving charitably, leading, and showing mercy. Those who lead are to lead with diligence, not with tactics of coercion and control. As Jesus showed, those who lead are to be the greatest servants, and as a point of logic, servants are never in a position of coercion and control. Paul

showed equality among those who are of the household of faith. Romans twelve verse three.

Romans 12:3-8

3. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5. So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7. Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8. Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

When Paul warned against judging others and told the Romans to not do that anymore, he was speaking of not judging those of the faith. Instead of finding fault with others of the faith because of whatever weakness in them we might observe, Paul taught to accommodate that weakness and not use that weakness to spiritually judge, accuse, or attack them. Using an example of meat sacrificed to idols, Paul showed we can't use our faith to spiritually harm somebody because of their faith. We should take no action that would cause somebody to be spiritually tripped up and instead of seeking to spiritually trip up other people we should follow that which leads to peace and spiritual growth, and that means we will focus on those things which are not contentious. Romans fourteen verse thirteen.

Romans 14:13-19

13. Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

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16. Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

The idea of causing somebody to spiritually trip and fall may seem strange to us, and when it comes to physical trips and falls, that can result in a civil lawsuit. A way to think of not putting a stumbling block before a person is through physical accessibility. Think about our homes. If we had a person visiting our home who had physical limitations, what changes, even if temporary might we make to our homes to make it easier for our guest to get around? We might temporarily rearrange furniture to make it easier for a person who uses a walker or wheelchair to get around. We might assist a person to step up on the threshold of our front door. That's what Paul is touching on, spiritually.

Paul went on and added that if we see ourselves as spiritually strong, we ought to endure and tolerate those who are spiritually weak, because our faith is not about pleasing ourselves, to make ourselves feel something good about who we are, but to help those who are around us to become spiritually stronger. Whether we see others as spiritually strong or spiritually weak, we need to be helping others to become spiritually stronger, and not to use how we see ourselves as a basis to judge others. Romans fifteen verse one.

Romans 15:1-13

1. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

5. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

- 6. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- 7. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.**
- 8. Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:**
- 9. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.**
- 10. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.**
- 11. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.**
- 12. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.**
- 13. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

The Corinthians were reminded that even though there are different gifts of the Holy Spirit, there is only one Holy Spirit, one Jesus Christ, and one God the Father. Paul showed them how before they were called and given the Holy Spirit how they were collectively no different than all who have never been called. First Corinthians twelve verse one.

1 Corinthians 12:1-20

- 1. Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.**
- 2. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.**
- 3. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.**
- 4. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.**
- 5. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.**
- 6. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.**

For some the presence of the Holy Spirit is shown through wisdom and for others it is knowledge. Yet others demonstrate incredible faith while others heal and work miracles that can only be attributed to God. Some are led with the gift of prophecy and others are quick to understand when they are in the presence of

the spiritual forces present in this world. When it comes to foreign languages, some learn to speak other languages and others become skilled at interpreting these other languages. All of these are gifts of the Holy Spirit given to us by God to serve His purpose. Verse seven.

7. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9. To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10. To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Even though we are given different gifts of the Holy Spirit, it doesn't mean that one person is more important than another person, because we are all members of the same spiritual body of believers. Just like a foot or hand are distinct parts of the human body, neither the hand nor foot is more important, because the entire body works together. Verse twelve.

12. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14. For the body is not one member, but many.

15. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19. And if they were all one member, where were the body?

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20. But now are they many members, yet but one body.

When it comes to the body of believers, our gender and race make no difference. Before Jesus Christ and God the Father, we are all the same. Galatians three verse twenty-six.

Galatians 3:26-29

26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Paul also told the Ephesians that they were fellow citizens with the saints of the household of God through the blood of Jesus Christ. With Christians there is no longer a distinction as there was with the people of Israel where those of other nations were seen as distinctly different. Through the blood of Jesus Christ we are all equal before God without regard to our national identity, and it is through the Holy Spirit that we are united in the faith. Ephesians two verse thirteen.

Ephesians 2:13-22

13. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17. And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21. In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

The Philippians were reminded that through the Holy Spirit they were to be likeminded, have the same love, resolve, and mind. They were also told there is nothing about our faith that causes one to cause strife or to seek one's honor, but that through the Holy Spirit and our faith we should think of others more highly than we think of ourselves. Philippians two verse one.

Philippians 2:1-18

1. If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2. Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

They were also told to have the mind of Jesus Christ who through his death became a servant to all for the betterment of others. Verse five.

5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

What the Philippians did was to be done without holding back and was to be done without hard feelings. They were to do all things so they would be blameless and harmless, meaning there was nothing that they would do where others could consider them to be at fault, and there would be nothing they would do that would harm another person. Verse twelve.

12. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14. Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16. Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

We are to individually and collectively seek those things which are above, heavenly, and much more than we could ever be on earth, knowing that if we seek these things, when Jesus Christ does return, those things will be ours. Colossians three verse one.

Colossians 3:1-17

1. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Knowing we are to seek those things which are heavenly and above, we do not seek those things which reflect what is evil on earth. We seek to be a new person through Jesus Christ knowing that among believers all are united in faith. Verse five.

5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7. In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

When we think what qualities lead to the unity of the faith, there are many we must have, and if we lack any of these we must strive to obtain. We must be merciful and kind. We must not see ourselves as more than we are nor do we seek to show off. We have patience and tolerance and are quick to forgive. We will do all these things, and these things will be done not out of some sense of loyalty, duty, or obligation, but these things will be done through love which is the bond of perfectness. If we want to be united in spiritual maturity, what we do will be based in love. Verse twelve.

12. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

The love that we are to have has no place where we hate other people. We will hate evil that we see, but we won't hate people. The love that we have that will lead to a united spiritual maturity, will not allow us to be led astray by every new teaching that we might hear. Instead, we will examine teachings to determine whether they be of God or not knowing that the spirit of antichrist is already present in the world. First John four verse one.

1 John 4:1-21

1. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

4. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

The unity of spiritual maturity will lead us to love one another because God loved us and sent Jesus Christ to die for our sins when we were yet sinful. Verse seven.

7. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Loving one another will cause us to have less fear in our life, because perfect love displaces fear. It's normal to be afraid when there is a direct threat to our safety and well-being. For instance, if the building you are in catches fire, it's normal to be afraid. John isn't writing about this type of fear. He's writing about baseless fear that is mostly directed at other people. In its most basic form this type of fear is discrimination, but it can be much more than that. If we have any type of baseless fear, we have room to grow in love, and love is important because Jesus commanded, we are to love one another. Verse twelve.

12. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19. We love him, because he first loved us.

20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21. And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Peter reminded that we are to be of one mind and showed that having one mind includes having compassion for each other, showing pity when appropriate, being

courteous, and offering blessings to people instead of criticizing them. First Peter three verse eight.

1 Peter 3:8-17

8. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

9. Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

11. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

13. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14. But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16. Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

The prophets wrote of unity. Amos simply asked if two can walk together unless they be agreed. If you have ever walked a dog that had a different opinion about the direction in which to walk, you know how hard it can be to walk together when there is lack of agreement. Amos three verse three.

Amos 3:3-8

3. Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

4. Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?

5. Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him? shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?

6. Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?

7. Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

8. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

Malachi, in book written to priests, rhetorically asked why man treats fellow man badly considering we have one God the Father of us all. He implored the reader to consider the spirit, and for those of us today, that is the Holy Spirit, when interacting with others and that we never treat others treacherously, including those closest to us, like our spouse and children. Malachi two verse ten.

Malachi 2:10-16

10. Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

11. Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

12. The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts.

13. And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

14. Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

15. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

David beautifully wrote how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Let's read Psalm one hundred thirty-three starting in verse one.

Psalm 133:1-3

- 1. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!**
- 2. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;**
- 3. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.**

Finally, it's worth noting that unity of the Holy Spirit is something we must endeavor to keep. That means we must actively work to keep the unity of the Holy Spirit. It may not always be easy to keep that unity, but we must keep the unity of the Holy Spirit not out of a sense of duty and obligation, but through love which leads to the bond of peace, knowing there is one body, one Holy Spirit, one Jesus Christ, one faith, one baptism, and one God the Father. Ephesians four verse one.

Ephesians 4:1-6

- 1. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,**
- 2. With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;**
- 3. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**
- 4. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;**
- 5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism,**
- 6. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.**

Before His death, Jesus prayed so we could have unity of the faith, and unity of the faith is something we must work for. We cannot allow anything to disrupt unity that comes through faith and the Holy Spirit remembering the words of David who said, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.