

V. Interview

Core Seminar

Unity and Diversity in the Local Church

Class 2: How God Builds Unity and Diversity



I. Introduction

II. Unity and Diversity is God's Work

Ephesians 2:11-3:21

- Grammar hunt!!!
- Unity in diversity is something God *has* done.
- What matters is what God has done—not what we build.

Course Schedule

Class 1: Diversity? Unity? For God's Sake!

Class 2: How God Builds Unity and Diversity

Class 3: The Image of God in Our Unity and Diversity

Class 4: God's Purposes for Similarity in the Church

Class 5: Working Through Disunity

Class 6: Counsel for Christians in the Majority

Class 7: Counsel for Christians in the Minority

If you have questions or comments on this class, please contact Jamie Dunlop at jamie.dunlop@capbap.org or Isaac Adams at isaacnadams@gmail.com.

III. When God-Built Unity and Diversity Go Missing

What we lose:

1. Preservation of the Gospel

Ephesians 4:11—Christ gives us ministers of the word

Ephesians 4:12—they equip us to build up the body

Ephesians 4:13—so we have unity and maturity

Ephesians 4:14—and so our doctrine is stable

“Rather, *speaking the truth in love*, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 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.”

- Ephesians 4:15-16

Relationships based on nothing but Christ can actually be *more* close and grounded than those where we share a lot in common.

2. Confirmation of the Gospel

John 13:35 (“if you have love for one another”)

→ Ephesians 3:11 (love in diversity)

Putting these together: Matthew 28:18-20.

The importance of *God*-created unity in diversity.

IV. What’s Our Responsibility?

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” – Ephesians 4:3

The paradox of the Christian life: working *and* resting.

Examples: 1 Cor. 3:6, 1 Thes. 4:3

Why? If God does the work, it glorifies his power. If he does the work through our work, our faith also glorifies his goodness.

1. We need to stop getting in the way

Extreme example: racism, homogeneous growth principle

Lots of other examples

- Picking church/small group based on similarity
- Ministry by similarity

2. Cultivate unity in diversity

- Recognize the invisibility of your own culture if you’re in the majority (and note: you’re probably in the majority culture in more ways than you think)
- Seek those who are different from you
- Embrace sacrifice as honoring to God
- Avoid the fear of man