

“That They May Be One”

John 17:20-26

1796 – Washington Farewell Address

“The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize...

1796 – Washington Farewell Address

...But as it is easy to foresee that, from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed.”

“That They May Be One”

John 17:20-26

*This unity from above produces a testimony, is prompted by glory,
and is propelled by sincerity.*

Unity produces a testimony – vv. 21, 23

◆ Inward testimony

- ◆ Philippians 1:6 - And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Colossians 3:11 - Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Unity produces a testimony – vv. 21, 23

◆ Outward testimony

- ◆ John 13:35 - By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
- ◆ “As the display of genuine love amongst the believers attests that they are Jesus’ disciples, so this display of unity is so compelling, so un-worldly, that their witness as to who Jesus is becomes explainable only if Jesus is truly the revealer whom the Father has sent.” - Carson

Unity is prompted by glory – vv. 22, 24

- ◆ Isaiah 42:8 - I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.
- ◆ Present glory
 - ◆ John 12:24 - Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
 - ◆ “Just as his true glory was to follow the path of lowly service culminating in the cross, so for them the true glory lay in the path of lowly service, wherever it might lead them.” – Leon Morris

Unity is prompted by glory – vv. 22, 24

◆ Future glory

◆ 2 Corinthians 3:18 - And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

◆ “Christians from every generation glimpse something of Jesus’ glory now, but one day, when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” – DA Carson

Unity is propelled by sincerity – vv. 25, 26

- ◆ Sincerity in knowing.
 - ◆ Jeremiah 31:34 - And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord.

Unity is propelled by sincerity – vv. 25, 26

- ◆ Sincerity in loving.
 - ◆ Romans 5:5 - God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
 - ◆ Jude 1:21 - keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

Unity is propelled by sincerity – vv. 25, 26

- ◇ Romans 8:35-39 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

How might we be approaching unity in the wrong way?

- Unity is not primarily a work that we perform for God but, a work that He performs in us.
- Unity has a reach that spans far wider than our little corner of the Kingdom.
- Unity pushes us to vulnerability.