

Make Us One - Part 1 (Christmas Series 2020)

"Unity through Humility"

December 6th, 2020

Intro:

HFTH OFFERING

- **Create Tension for them individually!!! Where they're at!**
- **We've all been tempted to pull back & not trust b/c of all we've been through.**
- **We are beginning our Christmas Series entitled, "Make us One!"**
 - **Jesus' prayer for His people was that they would all be One!**

John 17:20-21 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

- **Jesus wants His church to be Unified!**
 - **For the next 3 weeks leading up to Christmas we are going to talk about 3 components of Unity.**
 - **Today, we are talking about the 1st component: Humility.**

PRAY

- **When I think of the Christmas Story, I think of Mary.**
 - **This common, ordinary teenage girl that God chose to use in a Miraculous way.**
 - **One of the defining Characteristics of Mary was her Humility.**
- **In [Luke 1](#), it says that an angel of the Lord came down & announced that she was going to be the Mother of God's son, the Messiah, the Savior of the World!!!**
 - **That He was going to be great & that the whole world through Him, would be saved!**
 - **I love Mary's Humble response...**

Luke 1:38 "I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May your word to me be fulfilled.'

- If ever there was a moment for a Human Being to get Puffed up & Prideful, it was this one!

- God just chose you to be the Mother of the Savior of the World!!!

- But she doesn't get prideful, she does the opposite, she stays Humble.

- She goes and visits her cousin, Elizabeth, who was also with child, John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Jesus the Messiah!!!

- When she arrives the baby in Eliz's womb leaps for joy!!!

- Elizabeth greets her & then Mary responds in what has come to be known as "Mary's song"...

v. 46-49 "And Mary said, 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me - holy is his name."

v. 50-51 "His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

v. 52 "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble."

- Mary breaks out in a monologue about those with whom God chooses to dwell.

- In short, she says, "God chooses to dwell with those who are humble. But those who are full of pride, God is far from & brings down!"

- Throughout the Bible, this truth is made abundantly clear!

Proverbs 16:18 "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."

James 4:6 "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

Proverbs 16:5 "The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished."

Proverbs 11:2 "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom."

Proverbs 18:12 "Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor."

- Church family, when I read these Bible verses, I get so concerned.
 - I have been overwhelmed & burdened for our country this year.
 - We have become so "ME" focused in our society!
 - We have allowed Pride to rule our hearts!
 - We've bought into the lie that Freedom means, "I can do whatever I want! I don't have to think about anybody else."
 - That's not Freedom, that's rebellion & it's pride.
 - & it is a Dangerous, Slippery slope.
 - We've lost the Virtue of Humility in our Country.
- When you study the way of Jesus, He was never Prideful, but always Humble and Mindful of others!

- Here's why this matters:

- I'm concerned that we in the Church can fall into this same "Prideful Trap," if we're not careful.
- I hope you'll open your heart to what God might want to say to us.

3 Thoughts on Pride:

1. Pride Focuses on Itself.

- A. We live in a world that lives by the belief: *"If it doesn't affect me, then it doesn't matter!"***
- But Jesus didn't live that way!
 - Jesus lived by: "If it matters to you, than it matters to me!!!"

- B/c you are created in the Image of God, then it **MUST Matter** to me!!!

B. WEATHERMAN ILL.

- He literally said, "So, Good News... it's not going to affect us!"
- A Category 5 Hurricane is going to absolutely demolish tens of thousands of people's lives in Niguaragua and El Salvador, but good news... our tee time isn't going to be disrupted!
 - It's only Good News if it's Good News for everyone!!!
- There are 100 other ways to say that, other than, "Good News..."

C. FYI: Part of our HFTH Offering is going toward this!

2. Pride is Defensive... when Threatened.

A. We all have a Worldview... a Way of Viewing the World.

- Our worldview is shaped by our upbringing, our education, & our life-experiences.
- We naturally listen to, seek out & have a bias toward anyone & anything that confirms & supports our Worldview!
 - The Scientific Term is: "*Confirmation Bias.*"

B. Not everyone's Worldview is like ours!

- There's no Right or Wrong Worldview, there's only **OUR Worldview!**
 - Which, b/c we've had it all our life seems like the Most Logical & Best One!
 - Just ask a Newlywed Couple!!! :)

- CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS ILL.

- Open presents on Xmas Eve vs. Xmas Morning!
- **XMAS EVE - STEAK DINNER vs. Going to Church!**
- **FAKE TREE VS. REAL TREE - US THIS YEAR!**

C. Let me go a step deeper: Our Brain is always looking for Shortcuts!

- In order to function in the world, our brain creates shortcuts that allow it to process information quickly & then keep moving!

- We would literally shut down constantly if we had to start from scratch every day!

D. Our Worldview is a Shortcut!

- Here's the Problem: This year has "threatened" our worldview in so many ways!
 - It has caused our Brain to literally have to Question our "Firmly held ways of processing and navigating the world!"
- Here's the Point: When our worldview gets threatened by Information that isn't like our existing Worldview, that is when Pride kicks in!
 - B/c our Brain (& our flesh) naturally opposes anything that doesn't mesh with our Preconceived Way of Seeing the World!
 - We don't want to hear it or see it or believe it!
 - Pride says: "Turn it off, cancel it, unfriend them, quick!"
 - Challenging what we've always believed or held to be true is so Hard... b/c of Pride!

3. Pride is Sneaky.

A. And can look like Holiness if we're not careful.

- The Bible word is: "Self-Righteousness."
- This was the Pharisees!!!

B. I like to say, "Pride Hides."

- Pride is so hard to see in the mirror!
- The Pharisees thought they were pleasing God when they were actually doing the exact opposite!!!
 - Jesus rebuked them!!!

C. That was David... as he was becoming King, he wrote...

Psalm 139:23-24 "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

- He is basically saying, "God I know that all I've been through has shaped me & I don't want that Bias to affect how I lead your people now that I am in charge!!!"
- David prayed, "God expose the pride in my heart!!!"
- MWK - 3 1/2 years ago ILL.
 - I was full of pride & I didn't even know it!
- The Antidote to Pride is Humility.
 - That's what Mary embodied so well... ? What is Humility?

Humility is 2 things:

1. Total Dependence on God.

- A. Humility is not self-deprecation, it is Total Dependence on God!!!
 - It's not just saying, "I need less of myself," it is saying, "God I need more of You!!!"
- B. Every hour, every decision, every moment, every conversation, I need more of You, God!!!

2. Considering others above ourselves.

- A. "If it matters to you, then it matters to me!"
- B. That's called Empathy, which is different than Sympathy.
 - Sympathy - Feeling Compassion, Sorrow or Pity for the Hardships of another.
 - Sympathy says, "I'm sorry for you."
 - In sympathy, our heart stays disconnected!
- C. Empathy - "Putting yourself in the shoes of another."
 - Empathy says: "I've never walked in your shoes, but I'm willing to." "If you are hurting, then I hurt with you too."
 - When we empathize with someone, we allow our heart to get involved!

- When we do, we are always moved to action!!!
- That's what Jesus did!!!
- Jesus was the Ultimate Empathizer.

Mark 1:40 "A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean," he said.

v. 41-42 "Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!" Instantly the leprosy disappeared, and the man was healed."

D. Empathy says, "My experience isn't your experience, but if you're in pain than so am I."

E. MAN IN OUR CHURCH - "I WOULDN'T WANT TO DO WHAT YOU DO!"

- You'll never sit in my chair, nor do I need you to, but having you acknowledge that my pain & my struggle & my journey is different than yours means everything!!!

F. ASKING OUR TEAM: "WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE TO BE YOU THESE LAST 9 MONTHS?"

- The conversation lasted an hour!
- There was "Empathy" all the way around the circle as we understood better what each of us had been through & experienced this past year!

Challenge:

- Ask this question of SOMEONE WITH ANOTHER WORLDVIEW OR BACKGROUND OR RACE in the next 30 days!

- ? What has it been like to be you in the last 9 months?
 - I promise you, your heart will be Moved with Compassion, like Jesus, & you'll see the world a little differently than you did before!!!

- If we will, then we will be a little more Unified & we will be able to be the answer to Jesus' prayer!

PRAY