

## MONDAY 01.19.26 - John 17:20-23

Some family resemblances are so strong, there's no doubt the relationship is real. Is that true of your relationship with your Christian brothers and sisters? Jesus prayed for unity—essentially asking the Father to provide a family resemblance down through the ages in which His glory would be displayed through His spiritual offspring.

Sometimes we get in the way of that, don't we? We begin to look more like the world and less like Jesus. We promote the world's values and priorities, mimicking what's popular, not what's holy. When our shared life in Christ is eclipsed by competing loyalties, unity erodes.

Jesus' prayer for the apostles and for all believers who would follow spawns humble introspection. Is there a family resemblance between you and your spiritual siblings? Can people see you share the same Heavenly Father? May we show a holy, glory-displaying family resemblance—in Christ!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## TUESDAY 01.20.26 - Romans 14:19

What contentious times we live in. There are calls for protests, boycotts with phrases used like "we will not go quietly." These are not signs of peace but of disruption and confusion. The context of today's verses show people arguing and disputing over practices, lifestyle and religion. But God's command is to seek peace, because the Kingdom of Heaven is about righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

There has been much teaching in America concerning unity based on division and differences. But unity does not come from such things, but from buying into the core principles of the organization. Here, Jesus is building his church, which shall never fail, and it is about righteousness, peace and joy. Seeking peace and pursuing it in daily decisions, activities, interactions and interpersonal relations should produce by the Holy Spirit what our God desires.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## WEDNESDAY 01.21.26 - Ephesians 4:7-16

Paul emphasizes the need for spiritual maturity in Ephesians 4:7-16. Paul never envisioned believers to be Lone Ranger Christians. We need each other in the Body of Christ to help us to grow in Christlikeness.

Author Max Anders writes: California's giant sequoias have roots just barely below the surface of the ground. That seems impossible. If the roots don't grow deep into the earth, it seems that they would blow over in a strong wind. But not sequoias. They grow only in groves, and their roots intertwine under the earth's surface. So, when the strong winds come, they hold one another up. There's a lesson there. People are like giant sequoias. We need to grow in groves. Our roots are just below the surface. We need to intertwine our roots, our lifelines, with others. If there are enough of us, the winds can't blow that hard. We'll stand in groves and grow towards the sun.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## THURSDAY 01.22.26 - Jeremiah 17:7-8

"But I will bless anyone who trusts in me. I will do good things for the person who depends on me. They will be like a tree planted near water. It sends out its roots beside a stream. It is not afraid when heat comes. Its leaves are always green. It does not worry when there is no rain. It always bears fruit."

A plant needs water more than anything else. What a beautiful picture for us as Christians realizing that if our lives are planted close to Christ and our roots grow deep into Him that we can

enjoy a life of peace and blessing that will produce much fruit. However, this promise is conditional. In other words you must do your part if you expect to receive the blessing. First, you are called to trust Him. Even when the situation seems impossible and there is no light at the end of the tunnel you must believe that He loves you and nothing is beyond His control. Second, you must be dependent on Him for the strength and wisdom you need to make it through whatever you are facing. Just like the old song says, "trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey."

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## FRIDAY 01.23.26 - Psalm 92:12-15

Aging is not a fun process--ask any senior citizen. Aches and pains, illnesses, and body parts wearing out dominate the conversations of older folks. Our physical bodies just don't last. Contrast this deteriorating reality of physical aging with what happens to those who are spiritually "mature." Psalm 92 presents a vivid picture of the righteous being compared with flourishing, productive trees that stay fresh and green and bear fruit in old age. Just like those trees, our spiritual lives grow stronger and more vigorous. We gain wisdom and spiritual strength as we walk with the Lord. We are blessed and refreshed with this closeness as we focus on Jesus and not ourselves. It could be foreshadowing of eternity when we gain perfect bodies as we dwell with the Lord in a holy, sin-free state. As verse 15 states, "The Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no wickedness in Him." We shall be like Him (1 John 3:2)

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## E2 GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

### SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:40am

- Kids** CHILDREN’S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level  
NURSERY (through Age 3) \*9:40AM ONLY  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
- Youth** E2 CLASS (5th – 12th Grade)  
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** **WINTER QUARTER** - Sunday Mornings at 9:40  
LOCATION: B8-10 - Gene Steinruck- began Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>.  
**EXPLORE THE BIBLE:**  
**Matthew 1-13**  
For Christ followers, we have no greater example than what we see in the life of Jesus.  
LOCATION: B11 - Dave Delcamp - began Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>.  
**BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:**  
**Limited Resources, Limitless God**  
God never intended for us to stand alone but to rely on Him. God is more than enough to help us live life to the fullest.  
LOCATION: Rm 2 - Elizabeth Williams, Denise Whitefield, & Ali Farwell. Began Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> - 9:40 am.  
**THE WAY OF WISDOM** - Ladies Study of Proverbs.

### SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:00pm

- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)  
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** LOCATION: Worship Center
- LADIES THURSDAY MORNING STUDY - HEAVEN,**  
When Faith Becomes Sight - began Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> at 9am - Rm 2.  
Led by: Brenda Peters, Brenda Ross, & Chris Knepley.
- WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS** - began January 7<sup>th</sup> Meal starts at 6pm, Bible Study begins at 7pm. Bring your place setting for the meal. Sign up at the Information Table or Connect Card.  
Studies Offered:  
Everyday Revolutionary by J.D.Greear - Book of Daniel  
Tame Your Thoughts by Max Lucado - Thought Management

TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY OF THESE GROUPS OR CLASSES, USE THE CONNECTION CARD IN THE BULLETIN. THANK YOU.

## Ephesians 4:1-6 Living Life Together

The Book of Ephesians is about the Church—the Body of Christ. That is, those who have placed their faith in Jesus for eternal life.

In chapters 1-3, Paul reveals the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Church. In chapters 4-6, he reveals the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Church.

Paul begins in chapter 4 by giving a series of commands, using the word “walk” or “live.”

What steps do we need to take to walk in unity?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

We share one ...

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
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God wants us to talk the talk—to recognize and verbalize the riches that we have in Christ. However, He also wants us to walk the walk. He wants us to live in a responsible way as believers in the world today, and that includes first and foremost—walking in unity.



TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



## January 19 – January 23

### INTRODUCTION:

Part of our purpose and strategy as a church is to Edify and Equip (E2) every believer. We desire to see every person take their next step with God, both individually as well as with families and small groups (E2 Communities). This devotional is to aid us in just that. We invite you to join us in daily devotion.

### OVERVIEW:

Monday and Tuesday’s readings will be a follow up on Sunday’s message from, January 18<sup>th</sup>, “Living Life Together”, with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday’s through Friday’s devotions will help prepare us for the message on January 25<sup>th</sup>, “Grow Up!”, with Pastor Doug Lyon.

### KEY/MEMORY VERSE:

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever  
Hebrews 13:8