



SENIOR BOOK

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Unity in the Church.....	p. 3
Chapter 2 – Family Unity through Obedience.....	p. 7
Chapter 3 – Loving others create Unity.....	p. 11
Chapter 4 – Unity In Christ.....	p. 14
Chapter 4 – The Path to Unity In Christ.....	p. 17

“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

CHAPTER 1

UNITY IN THE CHURCH



“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

CHAPTER 1: UNITY IN THE CHURCH

Objective: Students will determine what it means to be one body with many parts.

Introduction: Begin class with the following activity titled, “Machine Madness” as an introduction to the lesson.

Materials: A list of possible machines for each group

Some machines that are very effective are:

washing machine	jack-hammer
vacuum cleaner	bus
car engine	blender
elevator	toilet
escalator	jacuzzi
typewriter	lawnmower
pinball machine	

Activity

1. Divide the youth into groups of a minimum of 4 (Larger groups are better).
2. Randomly assign each group a machine from your list.
3. Give each group time to prepare. Each group must act out the machine they are given. Sound effects are a must! EVERYONE in a group must be involved in the charade.
4. Have groups take turns presenting their machine while other groups guess the identity of the machines.

Application

After each group has demonstrated their machines; discuss how each machine had specific parts and functions. And while some of the youth may not understand how all the parts work, the person who originally invented / created each machine thought of every part and understood every piece. In the same way God created us and knows how we all fit together. He knows how everything works and our part in the life of the church is integral. Each person offers their gifts and talents to benefit others. To accomplish the things of God, we must work unified.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 (One Body, Many Parts)

Lesson: In this passage, St. Paul reminds us that gifts are given to unite us in our ministry in the one body and for the good of the whole Church. The Holy Spirit imparts these gifts “as He wills” and not as we will.

In the body of Christ, each of us has a gift and talent. Some people feel very guilty because they possess gifts that do not bring attention or popularity to them. It is this attitude that Paul is opposed to and is addressing in this passage. Paul illustrates his point by comparing the different parts of the human body to the different parts of the church. Each member has a purpose and function. Each member has been given different talents to uplift and encourage for the edification of God’s kingdom. We should use the gifts and talents given to us to unite, not to quarrel with others. Each member needs the other members and no

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member can afford to become independent or a ‘solo act’. No member should think that another member is not needed.

When a part of the human body becomes independent, the body will not function properly. Some parts of the body seem to receive more attention and exposure than others, while there are other parts of the body that are never noticed at all. In a healthy human body, all the different parts that make it up cooperate and even help each other when a crisis occurs.

Diversity is healthy when it leads to unity. Competition can also be healthy if the members compete fairly and honestly. However, if one member is dishonest, it will ruin the harmony and progress of the body. If one member suffers, it affects every member. If one member is healthy, it helps the others to be strong. In other words, unless gifts are used in a spirit of love, they are of little value. Divisions and alienation of feelings should never happen in the body of Christ.

Discussion and Application of Lesson

In reference to verses 25 & 26, discuss the following questions:

1. What is your response when a fellow Christian rejoices?
2. How do you respond when someone is suffering?

We are called to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Too often, we are jealous of those who rejoice and apathetic toward those who weep. There is no such thing as private or individualistic Christianity; believers are in this world together. Therefore, we need to get involved in the lives of others.

Life in the Church: Christ and His church form one body, with Christ as the Head and members as the body of Christ. Christians become members of this body through Holy Baptism, the beginning of a new life in Christ. It is by the Holy Spirit that we are made members of Christ's body. We are strengthened through the Holy Eucharist. The word **Eucharist** means **thanksgiving**. We are eating and drinking his Body and Blood in communion (in union) with Christ, with God the Father and by the Holy Spirit.

The sacrament of the Eucharist is also called Holy Communion since it is the mystical communion of the members of the Church with God

Activity:

Have students find a portion of the Divine Liturgy which illustrates unity among members of Christ's body.

One possible answer: kiss of peace- exchanging the kiss of peace is a liturgical act, a sign of mystical unity.

Closure: Have students summarize the lesson or have the class come up with an acronym for the word “UNITED” or “UNITY”. Example: U= United with each other, N=No conflict, etc...

Prayer: Have a student close in prayer, remembering our unity in Christ as members of His body.

“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

CHAPTER 2

FAMILY UNITY THROUGH OBEDIENCE



CHAPTER 2: FAMILY UNITY THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Objective: Students will determine how obeying parents will lead to unity in the family.

Scripture: Ephesians 6: 1-4

Lesson: Obeying parents is one of the most difficult things to do as a teenager. It is a time that independence is desired and teenagers want to prove that they can be a responsible adult. Yet this is still a time where parents are greatly needed and there is still so much to be learned from them. The most important people in our lives are parents and they can lead us in the path God has for us.

There are times when obeying parents is really tough. Sometimes teenagers feel that parents come from a different generation, a different culture. They don't always understand their reasoning behind the decisions they make. At the same time, we don't always understand God either, but we know that what He does is for our own good. Think about Christ who showed wholehearted obedience to God the Father. He did this even when he was suffering (Jesus Praying in Gethsemane). Teenagers should try to identify with their parents and see things from their perspective. God reminds us that a foolish man does not want to become more disciplined and wise (Proverbs 1:7-9).

St. Paul referred to Exodus 20: 12 (Ten Commandments) in this Scripture. It is good for children to obey their parents since it is what God commands and any command He gives is not burdensome for us. Whether it's getting chores completed or turning off the TV when told, obedience toward our parents is pleasing to God.

St. Paul also points out in verse 2 that it is the first command that comes with a promise attached. The promise is for a life of better health, safer habits, wiser ways and the blessing of God to lengthen and enrich life. He also states “that it may be well with you” which means that children who obey their parents will be spared many troubles and mistakes. Verse 2 also says to “honor” parents, this means respecting, loving and speaking well of them even when they are not in our presence.

Lastly, St. Paul exhorts fathers (who are the head of the family unit) not to frustrate, provoke their children to anger or discourage them, rather act in love, treating their children as Jesus treats the people He loves. Often the emphases of parents are to give their child a good education so they may make money and live a happy life. Although this is a reasonable goal, the parents' main responsibility is to teach the child godly obedience and discipline in their lives.

Obeying parents offers the following blessings:

1. Long life
2. Leads to wisdom & discernment
3. A closer walk with God
4. Family unity (with parents & siblings)

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Obedience is not easy and it takes work. So learn to obey out of your love and reverence for God. Pray to God that he may help you to be obedient so that you may live in harmony and unity with your family. A satisfying family relationship is grounded in unity.

How to be Obedient:

1. Listen
2. Show respect
3. Have patience
4. Communicate

If we cannot obey our earthly parents, how are we to obey our Heavenly Father? As we learn to obey, we learn to be wise in making decisions in our lives. Obedience is the first step in living in a Christian life. It gives us strength in our faith and ability to overcome temptations that can easily lead us **astray**.

Life in the Church: St. Paul writes in Ephesians 4:1-6 which states that we are of one body and one spirit through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.

With all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all.”

Church Father: Saint John Chrysostom says that those who cannot honor, love and respect their parents can certainly not serve God, for He is the “**Father of all**” (*Ephesians 4:6*), the One “**from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**” (*Ephesians 3:15*). (Taken from <http://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/spirituality/sexuality-marriage-and-family/family>, Orthodox Church in America)

Group Activity/Application: Some teenagers are good at obeying their parents; some are not so good. Have students break up into groups of 3-4 and give them (or allow them to choose) a typical parent-child scenario to act out. Each group will illustrate (act out) one scenario with a negative outcome and one second scenario with a positive outcome, which promotes obedience and therefore, on-going unity in the family. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Chores
2. Studying/Homework
3. Friends
4. TV/ipad/ipod/facebook/computer games, etc...
5. Driving (new driver)
6. Going to church/attending Sunday School
7. Demanding independence

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8. Purchasing an expensive item
9. Sibling relationships
10. Questioning parental authority, values, rules, etc...)
11. Addictions

Allow students get creative in the details. Stop between group skits to discuss parent and student reactions and responsibilities in each scenario.

Alternate Activity: In groups of 2-3, have students re-write Ephesians 6: 1-4, paraphrasing in their own words. They may add their own thoughts to the verse but not change the idea or concept of what St. Paul is teaching. Additionally, verses 1-3 can be written from their parents’ point of view and verse 4 from their own point of view. Allow students to be creative and share with the class.

Closure: Do a Q&A with students or have students discuss 3 main points of the lesson.

Prayer:

Ask God for strength to obey your parents out of a love for God.

Psalm 133:1-3

Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*
For brethren to dwell together in unity!
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.

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CHAPTER 3

LOVING OTHERS CREATES UNITY



CHAPTER 3: LOVING OTHERS CREATES UNITY

Objective: Students will recognize that loving others leads to a unity in the body of Christ.

Introduction: Read the following story to students. Have students generate one word answers reflecting the story.

During the Korean War, a South Korean Christian, a civilian, was arrested by the communists and ordered shot. But when the young communist leader learned that the prisoner was in charge of an orphanage caring for small children, he decided to spare him and kill his son instead. So they shot the nineteen-year-old boy in the presence of his father.

Later the fortunes of war changed, and the young communist leader was captured by the United Nations forces, tried, and condemned to death. Before the sentence could be carried out, the Christian whose boy had been killed pleaded for the life of the killer. He declared that he was young, that he really did not know what he was doing. "Give him to me," said the father, "and I'll train him."

The United Nations forces granted the request, and that father took the murderer of his boy into his own home and cared for him. Today the Young Communist is a Christian Pastor.

(Taken from www.21st-century-christianity.com/Christian-Stories-14.html, 21st Century Christianity)

Scripture: Luke 10: 25-37, Matthew 5: 43-48, Romans 12: 17-18

Lesson: The story of the Good Samaritan is a well-known parable told by our Lord that beautifully illustrates sacrificial love. In the parable's introduction, a lawyer tests Jesus with two poignant questions. The lawyer gives the only right answer—loving God and his neighbor. He then asks who his neighbor is. This prompts Jesus into giving His parable. The lawyer believes that no Gentile is his neighbor. This parable makes clear who our neighbor is and how we should respond to his needs.

There was deep hatred between the Jews and Samaritans. Jews saw themselves as pure descendants of Abraham, while the Samaritans were an undesirable, mixed race. To the lawyer, the person least likely to help the wounded man would be the Samaritan. In fact, the lawyer could not even bear to say "Samaritan" in answer to Jesus' question. His attitude betrayed the answer he gave earlier that the law commanded love.

From the parable, we learn 2 basic principles about loving our neighbor:

- 1) Our neighbor is anyone of caste, creed or social standing who is in need,
- 2) Love means acting to meet the person's need and
- 3) Lack of love is easy to write off, even though it is right to do so.

Maybe it's another student at school that calls you names, spreads false rumors about you or it could even be another Christian that you have trouble getting along with—but somebody is always giving us the chance to use God's weapon against enemies. Prayer!

“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

God commands us to pray for our enemies. If we sincerely and consistently pray for our enemies, you will see the hand of God move in your situation. You cannot hate and pray at the same time. If you continue to pray, God will miraculously give you love for those who have wronged you. God will also work in their lives; they may not stop hating you but we must trust that God has a plan for each and every person and situation.

Jesus told us that it's easy to love those who show us love but if we as Christians don't love our enemies, then we are no different from anyone else in the world. (Matthew 5:43-48). By loving and praying for our enemies, we can overcome evil with good. Romans 12:17-18 reminds us not to repay evil with evil. Love leads us to live in unity with others.

Activity/Application: In groups of 2-3, assign groups to reflect on specific characters from the parable (Luke 10: 25-37). Students will write down possible thoughts from the character's point of view. Share with the class on butcher paper or dry-erase board.

1. The lawyer
2. The robber
3. The religious men (Levite, priest)
4. The Innkeeper
5. The Samaritan
6. The wounded man
7. Jesus

Life in the Church: In the Holy Qurbana, when the priest has finished the commixture, the Deacon may say the following litany (or general supplication):

Deacon: Grant O Lord, our master, by Thy mercy and compassion, and bestow O Lord, by Thy grace and abundant mercy.

Complete healing to the sick, comfort to the affected, liberation to the bound; return to those who are afar; and goodly preservation to those that are near.

Concord and love to those that are at strife, reassembling to the dispersed, discovery to the lost, consolation to the wailing, composure to the oppressed; satisfaction to those in privation; encouragement and assistance to the widows, sustenance and sufficiency to the poor, complete forgiveness to sinners, High exaltation to the priest hood, and respectability to the deacons.

May Thy peace O Lord, reign in the kingdom of the earth, and there be cessation of wars, repose to the dead and to us forgiveness of debts and sins.

Closure: Have students discuss the different elements of this prayer and how love for others creates unity in the Church and ultimately with Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Have students make a mental list of people they need to pray for and have them spend 5 minutes in silence praying for them.

CHAPTER 4

UNITY IN CHRIST



“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

CHAPTER 4: UNITY IN CHRIST

Objective: To understand what it means to be one in Christ

Pre-Questions:

1. “We are one in Christ”, when you read that verse what image or thoughts come to mind. Write three things down about the verse.
2. Read the following Bible passages: Romans 3:22 and 1 Corinthians 12: 13

“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28). What does this mean? ‘WE’ meaning you and me; ‘ARE’ present tense; ‘ONE’ meaning single unit or entity; ‘IN CHRIST’ which means we are united as one body where Christ is the head. We are one in Christ through our faith.

Our journey begins at the time of baptism. In the Church, when infant person is baptized, he/she is baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit. When a human being is born, he/she is born to human parents. When a human being is baptized, he/she is reborn spiritually, and becomes a son to our Father in heaven. During one part of the liturgy of Holy Baptism, the godparent renounces Satan and promises to bring up the person being baptized in the Orthodox faith. It is not only the godparent’s responsibility; it is also the responsibility of the parents and the entire Church. Hence, newly baptized are supposed to be raised as children of God. Holy Baptism and Holy Chrismation are two sacraments of the church that are combined. Therefore, after someone is baptized in water, the bishop or priest applies Holy Myron/Oil on the person from head to toe. This act signifies that the seal of the Holy Spirit be with that person the rest of his/her life. And that the child is in Christ and officially confirmed in the church.

Another sign of being one with Christ is partaking in Holy Qurbana. During the liturgy, the priest/bishop blesses the paten and chalice and repeats what Jesus Christ said during the Last Supper. “Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is my body...” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant...” (St. Matthew 26: 26-28). When we receive Holy Qurbana, Jesus Christ is with us. We pray during the Holy Qurbana, “O, Lord, thy exalted and holy mouth has promised and said ‘Whoever eats my Body and drinks my Blood and believes in me, shall abide in me and I in him.’”

Another example is when Jesus Christ, after the Last Supper, prayed for us to remain as one. In St. John 17: 11, “And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”

Further in St. John chapter 17, Jesus Christ says in prayer, “...I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become

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perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”

Our journey to being one with Christ begins at Holy Baptism and continues through the sacramental life of the church

Discussion Questions

1. Read St. John 17: 11-26 and discuss what the prayer means.
2. What three sacraments take place during the liturgy of Holy Baptism? And why?

Suggested Activity

1. Find or draw an image that describes the theme verse.
2. Create a poster or collage of the Seven Sacraments or of Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Qurbana. Include descriptions of each sacrament.
3. Create a chart which describes each part of the Holy Baptism service. Also include all those who are involved (example: baby, godparent, clergy, etc...) and list what are the essential items needed to conduct the sacrament.

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CHAPTER 5

THE PATH TO UNITY IN CHRIST



CHAPTER 5: THE PATH TO UNITY IN CHRIST

Objective: To understand the path to becoming one in Christ

Pre-Questions:

Look at the picture below. Describe what you see and what the picture means.



Our faith leads us to unity in Christ. H.H. Pope Shenouda III defined faith as “not merely adopting a set of beliefs that you may say in the "Creed", but a way of life or adherence to that which leads to life.” In St. John, chapter 15, verses 4-5 & 9, it states, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **I am the vine, you are the branches.** He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing; As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.”

It is possible for a person to be separated from Christ. In St. John chapter 15, Jesus Christ says we are the branches to a vine. And when the branches are separated or by itself, it cannot bear fruit which means it can not survive on its own. Imagine a grape vine (see image above); the vine is the main body/support to the plant. Branches are like limbs that can grow only if the vine is strong. Hence, we can only grow spiritually, if Christ is our foundation.

When Christ is in your life, He will guide you. Our main source or guidance comes from the Holy Spirit. Before His Ascension, the Lord Jesus said to the Apostles, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” Acts 1: 8. The Holy Spirit helped the Apostles to evangelize. When we have the Holy Spirit, we attain certain virtues, which are known as the Fruit of the Spirit. “...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;” Galatians 5: 22.

Jesus Christ died on the cross to save us because He loved us. We are redeemed by His blood. St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians chapter 2, verse 20, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me”.

“We are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

There are certain steps to take in order to be one with Christ:

1. Obey the commandments that God has given us. For example, listen and honor your parents, teachers, clergy, and elders. And most importantly, love your neighbor as yourself.
2. Have an open communication with God by praying. Pray daily at home and attend church because personal prayer in your room is as important as praying as a worshipping community. Along with prayer, read the Holy Bible because it is your instruction manual to leading a righteous life.
3. Prepare yourself to partake in Holy Qurbana, by repenting and receiving Holy Confession. Finally, serve God by using the talents that He has given you. And remember to help those who are less fortunate and to always build up the Church.

Christ abides in you. Therefore put away your sinful nature and live as a new creation in God. Live your daily life with faith and works. Faith is the bond that binds us to Christ. We need God in our lives. Do not stray from the faith or from God. Our goal should be to walk and live by faith in order to be one in Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Reflection question: How can you be one in Christ?
2. Are you currently one in Christ? If yes, how? If no, why not?
3. Discuss the meaning of the Fruit of Spirit and each attribute.

Suggested Activity

Look up passages from the Holy Bible that describe each attribute of the Fruit of the Spirit. Create a poster listing each attribute and provide one Bible story/verse that describes the attribute.

Example: LOVE: " For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." St. John 3: 16

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