



Session 4

The Christ-Centered Community
week starting October 10

Jesus consistently broke down the barriers that people used to distance and divide. His community is designed to reach out to all people with God's grace and truth. The problem is that our broken and divided world has turned our differences into opportunities for fear rather than celebration. Even within the Church, differences in culture, worship, and minor beliefs have become reasons we use to keep others out. This week we explore God's call to unity and how we might reflect his character to the world through our commitment to unity.

GETTING STARTED

In last week's Soul Training you were asked to practice putting others first in various areas of your life. How did this go? What did you learn about God and yourself through this process?

- What is one place in the world you would like to travel to and why?

DISCUSSION

1. Describe a time when you experienced rejection from other Christians. How did that make you feel?
2. Read Matthew 28:19, John 10:16, and John 17:20–21. What do you notice about Jesus' intent for his community in these texts? Where have you seen positive examples of this in our congregation? How would the Church look different if people practiced what was in these verses more consistently?
3. Describe a time when you were in a worship service very different from what you are used to.
4. Have each person in your group read one of these verses aloud: Colossians 3:11, Galatians 3:28, 1 Corinthians 10:16–17; Romans 12:5, 2 Corinthians 13:11, 1 Corinthians 1:10. What do these verses have in common? How can we apply them to our lives today?

SOUL TRAINING

1. Pray for the unity of the church. Pray for unity among the pastors and leaders of the churches in the St. Croix Valley and the Twin Cities.
2. Think of another Christian with whom you disagree. Then engage with them this week using Jonathan Wesley's ways of showing love: treat them as companions, do not think or speak poorly of them, pray for them, encourage them to do good, collaborate with them in ministry.

MEMORIZATION CHALLENGE

"Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all." Colossians 3:11

PRAY

Father, thank you for making the world so beautiful and diverse. Help us to see where you are working in our differences with other Christians. Remind us again that you are bigger than anything that would seek to divide us and give us a supernatural ability to love others even when we disagree. In Jesus' name, Amen.