

1 CORINTHIANS  
**CALLED OUT**  
SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM



Sermon: **Love and Unity in the Church (1 Corinthians 11:17-19)**

Date: **January 29, 2017**

Churches can be very fragile. If churches are not careful, the unity that they experience can be ruined in the blink of an eye. The Corinthian church experienced this firsthand. We have already learned about how factions emerged in the Corinthian church as various groups of people rallied behind different spiritual leaders in the church. Although Paul addressed this issue back in chapters 1 & 2, he brings it up again in this week's text. Church division is a very serious problem that runs contrary to the gospel. Christ is not divided. In this week's study we will discuss the importance of church unity, the dangers of division, and how we each have a part to play as we seek to preserve and strengthen the unity of the church.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

**Individual Bible Study**

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 11:17-19 and ensure that you've listened to Sunday's sermon.
  - a. List some other Scriptures that deal with the issue of division in the church. What do they teach about it?
  - b. Paul writes, "*But* in the following instructions I do not commend you," (v. 17). What earlier statement is Paul contrasting this statement with? What is the reason that Paul is not commending them in this next section?
  - c. What is the common theme that runs through chapters 11-14?
  - d. Verse 17b says, "when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse." List some situations in which it would be worse to gather together.
  - e. Read verse 18. Why is Paul saying this about Corinth? (Hint: see 1 Corinthians 1:12)
  - f. What can you do to personally protect the church from factions? How can you help 'vaccinate' the church against division?

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- g. What would you do if you sensed someone was trying to lead a faction or a faction was emerging? How would you react?
- h. Can you think of any historical examples of how God providentially used heresy for the good of the church?
- i. Paul says in verse 18, “there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.” What does he mean by that? How do you discern who is genuine and who is not in a conflict?
- j. Have you ever left a church on bad terms? If so, have you ever reconciled with that church?

### Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. Have you experienced the pain of division in a church? What happened? Is there anything that could have been done to have prevented this conflict?
3. What would you do if you sensed someone was trying to lead a faction or a faction was emerging in the church?
4. What can we do to protect the church from division and factions? How can we continue to grow in unity together?
5. How will you prove yourself to be genuine in the face of a church conflict if one does occur?

### Respond in Prayer Together

Take some time as a small group to pray for the unity of the church. Pray that God would preserve and increase our unity. Pray that he would continue sanctify us in his truth together.