



The Well

an ordinary place
where extraordinary
things happen

STSA.CHURCH/THEWELL

What

does

require?

LOVE

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require?

Part 1

There's no point trying to please me if
you're hurting one of my kids.

"Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My
brethren, you did it to Me." Matthew 25:40

Self-centered spirituality gravitates to
RULES over PEOPLE.

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."
John 15:12

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything,
but faith working through love." Galatians 5:6

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your
neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:14

"Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another
has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery,"
"You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false
witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all
summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."
Romans 13:8-10

All the commandments are specific
APPLICATIONS of the law of love.

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” Philippians 2:3

I don't always know what to THINK or to BELIEVE,
but I almost always know what love requires me to DO.

"Whoever sees in himself the traces of hatred toward any man on account of any kind of sin is completely foreign to the love of God. For love toward God does not at all tolerate hatred for man." St. Maximus the Confessor

Jesus: Your love for Me is
authenticated by how you treat others.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” John 13:34

THINK/TALK IT OVER

- In what areas are you tempted to lean towards “rules over people” and being “right” vs being “love”?
- What is the connection between loving God and loving your neighbor? Why is it impossible to do one without the other?
- What might happen if for one week, you paused and asked “what does love require of me” in every situation?

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Part 2 Unity Without Uniformity

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"How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1

Just because there are many wrong ways,
doesn't mean there's only one right way.

"Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him." Proverbs 26:12

Example #1: The Holy Trinity

"The Church is the image of God, the Holy Trinity. It reveals to us the mystery of unity in diversity. Each person bears individual autonomy, but working together in unity of love." Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

Example #2: The Holy Church

"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 2:1

“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people.” Acts 2:46-47

“They were a microcosm of the church they would begin – each unique, but each having his own special place and work.” John MacArthur

“For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.” 1 Corinthians 10:17

We don't need to see EYE-TO-EYE
to walk HAND-IN-HAND.

THINK/TALK IT OVER

- What person/group do you justify being unkind and disrespectful towards because they are “wrong”?
- Proverbs 26:12 says “Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” In what area might this be applicable to you?
- Why is “unity without uniformity” so important today and what difference might that shift in mindset make if you were to adopt it?

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Part 3: TALKING POLITICS

Today's political climate is the greatest threat to the **UNITY** of Christians and the **MISSION** of Christ.

Can we **DISAGREE** politically,
but still **LOVE** unconditionally?

*Are you willing to evaluate your politics through the filter of your faith,
rather than creating a version of your faith to support your politics?*

"A man may have to die for his country, but no man must, in an exclusive sense, live for his country. He who surrenders himself without reservation to the temporal claims of a nation, or a party, or a class is rendering to Caesar that which, of all things, most emphatically belongs to God himself." C.S. Lewis

"Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are." John 17:11

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me." John 17:20-21

Unity has nothing to do with us and
everything to do with the **MISSION** of Christ.

"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves." Acts 20:28-30

CALL TO ACTION

1. PRAY for unity

2. LOVE unconditionally someone you
DISAGREE with politically

“These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.”

Acts 17:6

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

THINK/TALK IT OVER

- What is the relationship between your faith and your politics? Which influences the other?
- Give yourself an honest grade when it comes to “disagreeing politically, yet loving unconditionally”. In what ways can you improve?
- Why did the issue of unity/division matter so much to Jesus, and therefore why should it matter so much to us as well?

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Part 4: THAT WE BE ONE

We can't **stand** when division is at hand.

If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand (Mark 3:24-25)

Why Unity? Last **prayer request** of Jesus Christ

That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us (John 17:21)

Why Unity? **Growth**

From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes **growth** of the body for the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:16)

Why Unity? **We need each other**

But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. (1 Cor 12:20-22)

HOW

1. Believe the **BEST** not assume the worst
2. **HUMILITY** can make us perfectly joined together

UBUNTU means that we are people through other people.

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
(Ephesians 4:3)

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad for the middle wall of partition has been taken away and grief has been silenced, and all kind of difference of opinion has been removed. Christ Savior of us all having awarded peace to His churches and *who by removing the offenses scattered between us*, would crown your Church and ours with harmony and peace. St Cyril of Alexandria - On Unity

What does Love Require?
That we make every effort to be **ONE**

THINK/TALK IT OVER

- Reflect on why we should be united. And think of other benefits to being united.
- Action: Believe the best not assume the worst in your families, coworkers, classmates, church members starting this week
- Action: Pray for humility which will lead you to the truth about yourself and others.

STSA MINISTRIES

BRING AN ANCIENT FAITH
TO YOUR MODERN WORLD

STSA Church was established in April 2012 with a mission to "bring an ancient faith to a modern world." We attempt to do that by presenting the depth and richness of our Orthodox Christian faith, in a way that's relevant and applicable to life in the 21st century.

STSA MINISTRIES IS A
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AND EQUIP ORTHODOX
CHURCH LEADERS IN THEIR
LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

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