

February 8, 2021

**“HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT
IT IS WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE
LIVE TOGETHER IN UNITY! IT
IS AS IF THE DEW OF
HERMON WERE FALLING ON
MOUNT ZION. FOR THERE,
THE LORD BESTOWS HIS
BLESSINGS, EVEN LIFE
FOREVERMORE.”**

PSALM 133:1, 3



Hello Friends at Atwater Baptist!

I don't think anyone would disagree when I say that we are in a politically and socially divided season, especially in the United States. This state of affairs is unfortunate all-around, but as a pastor, my greatest concern is the manner in which it impacts the church.

Right now, millions of Christians feel fervently about the rightness of their side, and this is affecting how they treat each other. Yet the truth remains that unity is a foundational value for the people of God. In fact, the Bible says that there's a blessing in oneness, and as the Bride of Christ, we should always strive to obtain it. Unfortunately, many are under the impression that spiritual togetherness means total agreement, and this is not the case. Even when emotions run high and feelings are strong, the call to unity demands that we elevate the priorities of God's Kingdom above those of the world around us.

Though we may not be able to come to a place of accord on issues of politics, as brothers and sisters in Christ, we can find connection in our spirits. When we stand side-by-side to affirm that Jesus is Lord, we can lock hearts in purpose, focus on exalting His Name, and proactively pursue His values together.

As we grow in maturity and Christlikeness - always making His Word our standard - He will bond us together in a manner that is much deeper and more lasting than any we could fashion in our own power.

Friends, I beg you not to "write off" your fellow believers because of the political or social views they express. While I know you feel strongly, remember that the devil's strategy is always to divide and conquer. As a spiritual leader who walks in wisdom, you are endowed with eyes to see above the things of this world and to elevate the

heart, mind, and Kingdom of Christ above all other issues. While you need not surrender your convictions, through love, you can win the right to be heard and fight your battles in the Spirit rather than in the flesh. Make prayer, praise, and supplication your first line of defense, and you'll inherit the blessing that's commanded when God's people live together in unity!

Prayer:

Jesus, teach me to love unity and proactively seek peace with my brothers and sisters in your family.

With Christ's love,

Pastor Bob Tharlsen

Interim Pastor, Atwater Baptist Church